HISTORY

Atkinson, Kate. *A God in Ruins*. Little, Brown, 2015. $28. 978-0316176538. Paper, 2016. $17.99. 978-0316176507. Teddy’s story from the bombing of Germany through the 21st century; magnificent companion to *Life after Life,* 2013, 1910 through the blitz. AH\*\*\*

Brownstein, Carrie. *Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl.* Riverhead Books. 2015. $27.95. 978-1594486630. Fans of the hilarious IFC series Portlandia may find themselves surprisingly moved by Brownstein’s account of her coming-of-age as a member of the post-punk, riot-grrrl inflected rock trio Sleater-Kinney. SC

Hawdon, Lindsay. *Jakob’s Colors*.  Quercus, 2015. $26.99. 978-1-68144-8.  Remarkable, evocative and disturbing novel about a Gypsy boy in WW II. ED

Kiernan, Stephen. *The Hummingbird*. William Morrow, 2015. $26. 978-0062369543. Paper, 6/28/16. VT author. $16. Double tale, a dying history professor who remembers the Japanese; and his hospice nurse, who tries to understand her war-damaged husband. AH

MacFraquhar, Larissa. *Strangers Drowning: Grappling with Impossible Idealism, Drastic Choices and the Overpowering Urge to Help.* Penguin Press. 2015. $27.95. 978-1594204 333. Unexpectedly original prose litters these case studies about individuals pushing altruism to its ethical, philosophical and practical limits. SC

Shepard, Jim. *The Book of Aron*.  Knopf Doubleday, 2015. $23.95. 9781101874318. Paper, 2016. $15.95. 978-1101872741. Children alive in the Warsaw ghetto, struggling to evade police, blackmailers, and Gestapo. National Book Award finalist. ED

SENSE OF PLACE

Fossum, Karin. *The Drowned Boy*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. $24. 978-0544483965. Paper, 8/9/2016. $14.95. 978-0544704848. Quiet pace and a calm Inspector lead to the leisurely unraveling of a child’s death by Norwegian Inspector Sejer. AH

Jackson, Naomi. *The Star Side of Bird Hill.* Penguin Press. 2015. $25.95. 978-1594205958.  When Avril’s mental health crisis sends her daughters Phaedra and Dionne from Brooklyn to Barbados to live with their grandmother, the sisters find themselves redefining family and their relationships to Caribbean culture. SC

Jemisin, N.K. *The Fifth Season.* Paper. Orbit, 2015. $15.99. 978-0316229296. Masterful world-building introduces us to the quake-ridden Stillness and Essun’s quest to find and rescue her daughter amidst its destruction, in this first novel from the *Broken Earth* series. SC

Moreno- Garcia, Silvia. *Signal to Noise.* Paper, Solaris, 2015. $9.99. 978-1781082997. Music, magic and romance abound in this then-and-now, not-quite-young-adult story, as Meche’s adolescent friendships are tested and re-visited in her hometown of Mexico City. SC

Rebanks, James. *The Shepherd’s Life: Modern Dispatches from an Ancient Landscape*. Flatiron Books, 2105. $25.99. 978-1250060242. Paper, 9/27/16. $15.

978-1250060266. Sheep farming in the Lake District, as old as the hills. How will the next generation survive and thrive? AH

Watkins, Clare Vaye. *Gold Fame Citrus*. Penguin, 2015. $27.95. 978-1594634239. A celebrity and an AWOL warrior with a newfound child are lost in the Mohave. A first novel about what the future without water may look like, from one of the 5 under 35. AH

CURRENT EVENTS

Harrison, Margot. *The Killer in Me*. Disney-Hyperion, 7/12/ 2016. $17.99. 978-1484727997. Vermont author’s debut young adult novel is an un-put-down-able psychological thriller that takes us into the mind of a serial killer and the complexity of family ties, via teen protagonist Nina’s psychic connections. Book a visit, [margotfharrison@gmail.com](mailto:margotfharrison@gmail.com) SC

Jahren, Hope. *Lab Girl.* Knopf, Doubleday, 2016. $26.95.“People are like plants: they grow toward the light. I chose science because science gave me what I needed—a home as defined in the most literal sense: a safe place to be.” Lyrical prose and a driving story line. AH

Mayer, Jane.  *Dark Money: the Hidden History of the Billionaires behind the Rise of the Radical Right*. Doubleday, 2015. $29.95. 978-0-385-53559-5. Tightly argued and well-researched history of how money sways politics. ED

Waldman, Michael. *The Fight to Vote*. Simon & Schuster, 2016. $28. 978-1-5011-1648-3. Important summary of the fights against voter suppression. Two hundred years as working class white men, former slaves, women, and eventually all Americans won the right to vote. ED\*\*\*

Yanagihara, Hanya. *A Little Life.* Doubleday, 2015. $30. 978-0385539258. Paper, Anchor, 2016. $17. 978-0804172707. Four friends make satisfying careers in New York as lawyer, architect, actor, and artist. The story of one man’s unbearable pain, which we cannot dismiss. AH\*\*\*

Yapa, Sunil. *Your Heart is a Muscle the Size of a Fist.* Lee Boudreaux Books. 2016. $26. 978-0316386531. Powerful debut novel follows seven characters, including an estranged father and son, on a single day of the 1999 Seattle World Trade Organization protests.SC

STRONG CHARACTERS

Egan, Timothy. [*The Immortal Irishman: the Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero*](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-immortal-irishman-timothy-egan/1122371627?ean=9780544272880). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016. $28. 978-0544272880. Egan finds romance and irony in this tale of a magnificent orator, leader, and epicenter of history. AH

Fleming, Fergus. *The Man with the Golden Typewriter: Ian Fleming's James Bond Letters.* Bloomsbury USA, 2015. $30. 978-1632864895. What does it take to become a world famous novelist? Panache! ED

King, Lily. *Euphoria.* Grove/Atlantic, 2014. $25. 978-0802122551. Paper, 2015. $15. 978-0802123701. Stunning novel based on the triangle of Margaret Mead, Reo Fortune, and Gregory Bateson, as anthropology is born in New Guinea studies. AH

Lythcott-Haims, Julie. *How to Raise an Adult:* [*Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kid for Success*](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/how-to-raise-an-adult-julie-lythcott-haims/1120327547?ean=9781627791779). Holt, Henry, 2015. $27. 978-1627791779. Amusing and useful book about the damage helicopter parents do to their kids. ED

ART AND MUSIC

Denby, David.  *Lit up: One Reporter. Three Schools. Twenty-four Books That Can Change Lives*. Holt, 2016.  978-0-805095852. $30.00. A lovely, Kozol-esque look at three teachers' work with struggling students. A delight for book lovers. ED

Hunt, Samantha. *Mr. Splitfoot.* Houghton Mifflin. 2016. $24.00. 978-0544526709. Ruth broke free from the Love of Christ! foster home years earlier with a lucrative business talking to the dead and now leads her pregnant niece Cora on a mysterious, silent walking journey across New York State, until past and present convene with eerie, glorious precision. SC\*\*\*

Nelson, Maggie. *The Argonauts.*  Graywolf Press. 2015. $23. 978-1555977078. Paper,$15. 978-1555977351. Part memoir, part prose poem, part identity theory, part love letter, *The Argonauts* documents the author’s pregnancy, motherhood and marriage to the gender-eschewing artist Harry Dodge. SC

Seabrook, John. *The Song Machine: inside the Hit Factory*. W.W. Norton, 2015. $26.95. 978-0393241921. Paper, 10/2016. $16.95. How popular music became a commodity, mass-produced by machines. Global origins for the hook-based songs on the charts. ED

JUST FOR FUN

Burgo, Joseph.  *The Narcissist You Know: Defending Yourself against Extreme Narcissists in an All-about-me Age*.  Touchstone, 2015. $25.  978-1476785684. Paper, 9/27/2016. $16. 978-1476-785691. 30 years of studying and treating narcissists in the wild; you can spot them too. ED

Disabato, Catie. *The Ghost Network.* Paper. Melville House, 2015. $16.95. 978-1612194349. This intricate, witty puzzle of a novel detailing the disappearance of pop star Molly Metropolis is perfect if your heart craves a footnote-riddled mystery story with deep references to the Situationist movement. SC\*\*\*

MacLaughlin, Nina. *Hammer Head: the Making of a Carpenter*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2015. $25. ISBN 978-0393239133. Paper, 2016. $15.95. ISBN 978-0393352320. Boston writer is dissatisfied with life and applies for Assistant Carpenter on Craig’s List. Be smarter than the tools, her mentor Mary tells her. AH

Mann, Sally. *Hold Still*. Little, Brown, 2015. $32. 978-0316247764. Paper, Back Bay Books, 2016. $19. 978-0316247757. Talented photographer, wretched mother, and brilliant memoirist? Excellent fodder for discussion, and worth considering on several levels. Putney School… AH

McCallum David. *Once a Crooked Man*. Minotaur, 2016.  978-1-250-08045-5. $25.99. The actor has a fiction debut. NY actor overhears plot to murder a man in London. He jumps on a plane, creating an action-packed spy thriller. ED

Stevenson, Noelle. *Nimona.* HarperTeen, 2015. $17.99. 978-0062278234. Paper, $12.99. 978-0062278227. Noelle Stevenson’s debut graphic novel introduces a shape-shifting heroine, alternates humor and tenderness, and overturns readers’ assumptions about villains, heroes, sidekicks, monsters, and the forces that drive them. SC

Wilson, Bee. *First Bite: How We Learn to Eat*.  Basic Books, 2015. 978-0-465-06498-4.  $27.99. Delightful social history of food. ED\*\*\*

\*\*\* indicates the two top books for each reviewer

AH Amy Howlett, Director, Springfield Town Library

ED Ernie Drown, Director of Music, the Church of Christ at Dartmouth College

SC Selene Colburn, Associate Library Professor, University of Vermont

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