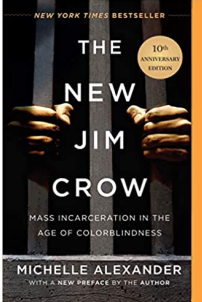
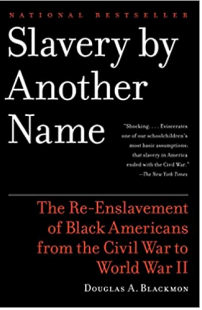
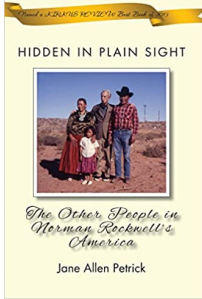


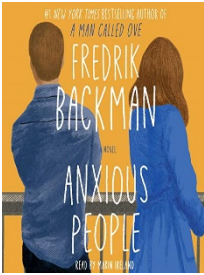
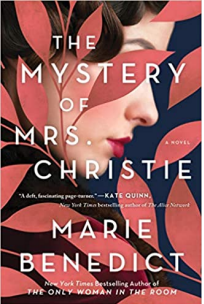
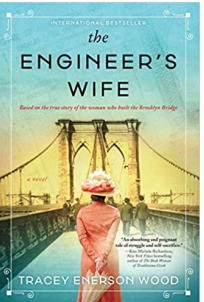
Best and Worst Books Read in 2021

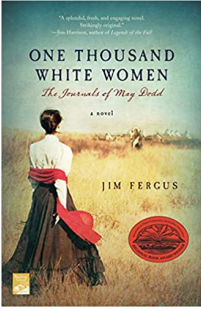
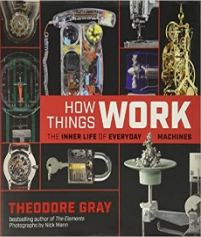
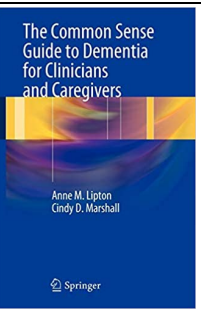
Category: Can't Stop Thinking About

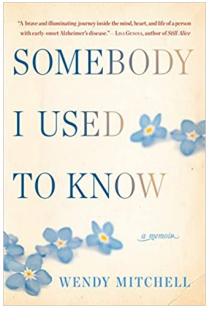
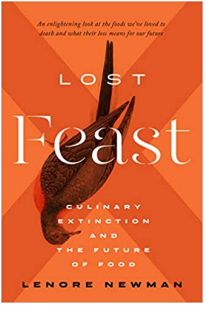

 <p>NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER 10th ANNIVERSARY EDITION THE NEW JIM CROW MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS MICHELLE ALEXANDER WITH A NEW PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR</p>	<p>Alexander M. <i>The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness</i>. New Press; 2012.</p>	<p>Jan Niehaus</p>	<p>Much of the same data as in <i>Slavery by Another Name</i>. Both are worthwhile, but if you have time for only one, go with <i>Slavery by Another Name</i>. Another one that every (white) person should read.”</p>
 <p>NATIONAL BESTSELLER Slavery by Another Name Thinking... <i>Essays on the history of race in America's most hated institution, the history of slavery, and the Civil War.</i> —The New York Times The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II DOUGLAS A. BLACKMON</p>	<p>Blackmon DA. <i>Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II</i>. Anchor Books; 2008.</p>	<p>Jan Niehaus</p>	<p>“Want every (white) person to read”</p>

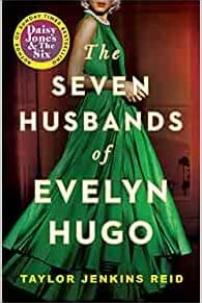
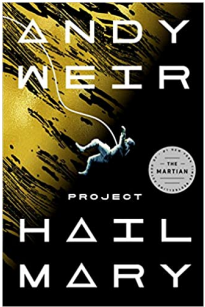
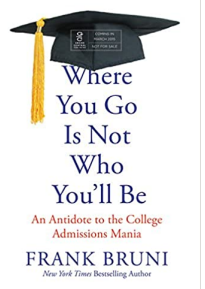
Category: Recommended

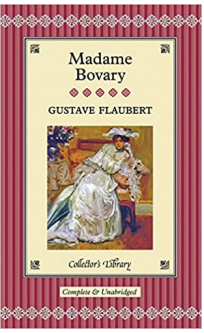
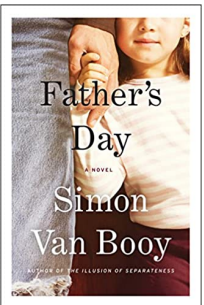

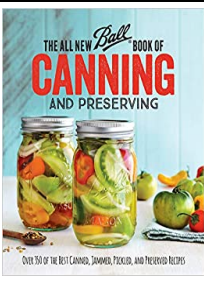
Cover	Citation	Recommended By	Comments
 <p>HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT The Other People in Norman Rockwell's America Jane Allen Petrick</p>	<p>Allen Petrick J. <i>Hidden in Plain Sight: The Other People in Norman Rockwell's America</i>. Informed Decisions Publishing; 2013.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“I love his paintings, and this book researchs some of his lesser known subjects.”</p>

	<p>Backman F, Smith N (translator). <i>Anxious People</i>. Atria Books; 2020.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“A charming novel about a group of very different people forced to spend time together, and what they learn in the process”</p>
	<p>Benedict M. <i>The Mystery of Mrs. Christie</i>. Sourcebooks Landmark; 2020.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“May or may not be true, but a great mystery”</p>
	<p>Enerson Wood T. <i>The Engineer's Wife</i>. Sourcebooks Landmark; 2021.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>Lisa: “Emily Roebling refuses to live conventionally—she knows who she is and what she wants, and she’s determined to make change. But then her husband asks the unthinkable: give up her dreams to make his possible. Based on the true story of an American icon, <i>The Engineer's Wife</i> delivers an emotional portrait of a woman transformed by a project of unfathomable scale, which takes her into the bowels of the East River, suffragette riots, the halls of Manhattan’s elite, and the heady freewheeling temptations of P.T. Barnum. The biography of a husband and wife determined to build something that lasts—even at the risk of losing each other.” (from Goodreads)</p>

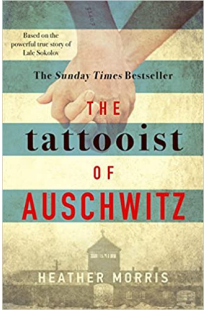
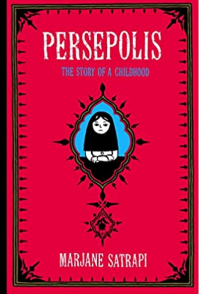
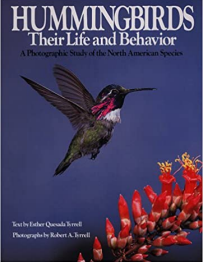
			Joanne: “Outstanding historical fiction book about the wife of the Brooklyn Bridge engineer and the role that she played in the construction of the bridge”
	Fergus J. <i>One Thousand White Women: The Journals of May Dodd (One Thousand White Women, #1)</i> . St Martin’s Griffin; 1999.	Lisa Balbes	“ <i>One Thousand White Women</i> is the story of May Dodd and a colorful assembly of pioneer women who, under the auspices of the U.S. government, travel to the western prairies in 1875 to intermarry among the Cheyenne Indians.” (from Goodreads)
	Gray T. <i>How Things Work: The Inner Life of Everyday Machines</i> . Black Dog & Leventhal; 2019.	Lisa Balbes	“Beautiful photographs and detailed explanations of how locks, clocks, scales, and textiles work”
	Lipton AM, Marshall CD. <i>The Common Sense Guide to Dementia for Clinicians and Caregivers</i> . Springer; 2012.	Lisa Balbes	“Sadly, the clear explanations and down to earth tips in this volume have come in very handy as I deal with a family member with these issues.”

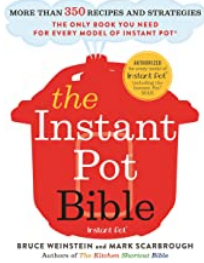
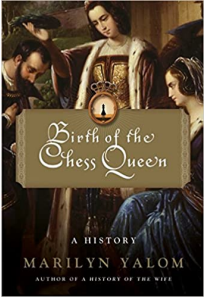
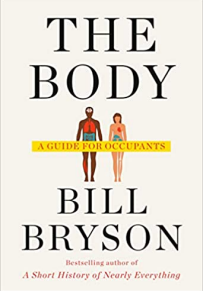
	<p>Mitchell W. <i>Somebody I Used to Know: A Memoir</i>. Ballantine; 2018.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“Recommended to me by Leslie Neistadt; an inspiring memoir written by a woman who has early-onset Alzheimer’s disease and lives independently in the UK.”</p>
	<p>Newman L. <i>Lost Feast: Culinary Extinction and the Future of Food</i>. ECW Press; 2019.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“In <i>Lost Feast</i>, food expert Lenore Newman sets out to look at the history of the foods we have loved to death and what that means for the culinary paths we choose for the future. Bracketing the chapters that look at the history of our relationship to specific foods, Lenore enlists her ecologist friend and fellow cook, Dan, in a series of ‘extinction dinners’ designed to recreate meals of the past or to illustrate how we might be eating in the future.” (from Goodreads)</p>
	<p>Quinn J. <i>The Duke and I</i> (Bridgertons #1). Avon; 2020.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“A romance set in the Regency era. The entire Bridgerton series (8 books) is full of detailed character descriptions and enough intrigue to keep me interested. A nice escape from the pandemic, and definitely better than the TV series.”</p>

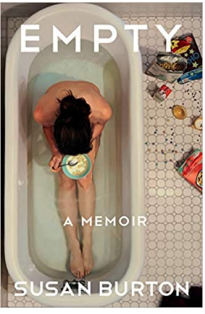
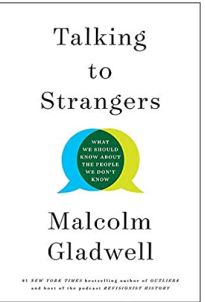
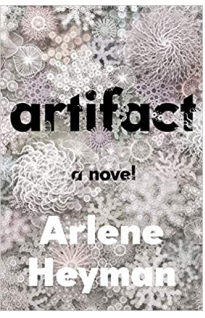
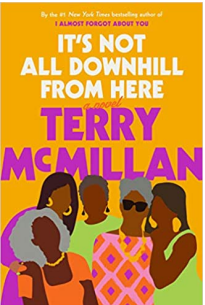
	<p>Reid TJ. <i>The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo</i>. Generic; 2020.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now?” (from Goodreads)</p>
	<p>Weir A. <i>Project Hail Mary</i>. Ballantine Books; 2021.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“Ryland Grace is the sole survivor on a desperate, last-chance mission—and if he fails, humanity and the earth itself will perish.” (from Goodreads)</p>
	<p>Bruni F. <i>Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania</i>. Grand Central Publishing; 2015.</p>	<p>Dana Delibovi Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>Dana: “College sanity from a very thoughtful writer.” Leslie: “Every parent of a college-bound senior should read this book. He makes a great case that not getting into his or her #1 choice may be the best thing that ever happened to your child.”</p>

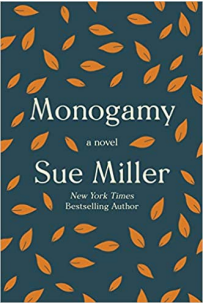
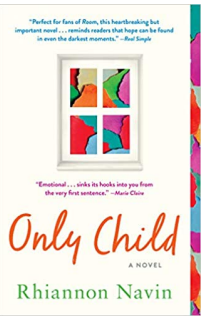
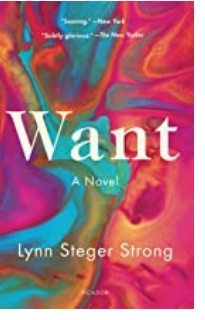
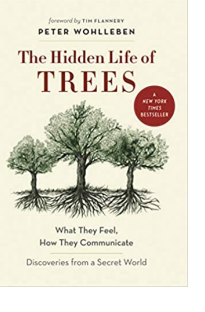
	<p>Flaubert G. <i>Madame Bovary</i>. MacMillan; 2014. (Many other editions are available.)</p>	<p>Dana Delibovi</p>	<p>“Yes, a 19th century novel, which I re-read and also listened to. But this book is a wonder. Great plot, so much to say about human folly caused by sex, money, and status seeking, images that could be lines of poetry.”</p>
	<p>Van Booy S. <i>Father's Day: A Novel</i>. Harper; 2016.</p>	<p>Dana Delibovi</p>	<p>“Heart-felt novel about family love in an unusual family. And with an O-Henry like twist at the end.”</p>
	<p>Vuong O. <i>Night Sky With Exit Wounds</i>. Copper Canyon Press; 2019.</p>	<p>Dana Delibovi</p>	<p>“Incredible, emotional poetry.”</p>
	<p>Ball. <i>The All New Ball Book of Canning and Preserving: Over 350 of the Best Canned, Jammed, Pickled, and Preserved Recipes</i>. TI Inc Books; 2016.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“A fantastic collection of water bath canning, pressure canning, and other "preserving" recipes to try. Looking forward to canning blueberry-lemon jam and making peach-bourbon preserves, among other recipes!”</p>

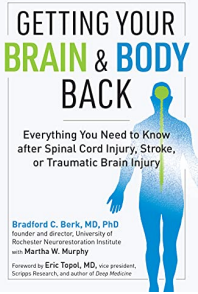
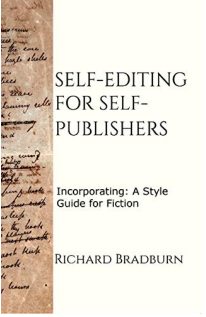
	<p>Bechdel A. <i>Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic</i>. Mariner Books; 2007.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“A moving memoir and graphic novel by a talented artist”</p>
	<p>Haig M. <i>The Midnight Library</i>. Viking; 2020.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“A wonderful book about choices and how they affect the path that your life takes”</p>
	<p>Kelly S. <i>Endurance: A Year in Space, A Lifetime of Discovery</i>. Vintage; 2018.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“For fans of space travel/exploration--U.S. astronaut Scott Kelly describes his year spent living on the International Space Station and the training that it took to get there.”</p>
	<p>Lahiri J. <i>Whereabouts: A Novel</i>. Knopf; 2021.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“A novel set in Italy (where the author now lives). She wrote it in Italian and then translated it into English.”</p>

	<p>Morris H. <i>The Tattooist of Auschwitz</i>. Zaffre; 2018.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“Based on a true story, this is book #1 of a trilogy. I hope to read books #2 and 3.”</p>
	<p>Satrapi M. <i>Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood</i>. Pantheon; 2004.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“A wonderful graphic memoir about the author's growing up in 1970s/1980s Iran and them emigrating to Europe”</p>
	<p>Tyrrell Quesada E. <i>Hummingbirds: Their Life and Behavior. A Photographic Study of the North American Species</i>. Crown; 1985.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“For hummingbird fans like me! Lots of great photos and information about their habits”</p>

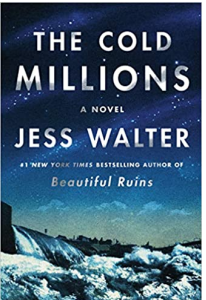
	<p>Weinstein B, Scarbrough M. <i>The Instant Pot Bible</i>. Voracious; 2018.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“This cookbook has over 350 recipes and is loaded with good ideas on how to use your Instant Pot. I have tried the Chicken Mole Rojo recipe on page 306 and the Tex Mex version of Stuffed Peppers on page 313 and have earmarked many other recipes to try! This would make a nice gift for someone who owns an Instant Pot.”</p>
	<p>Yalom M. <i>Birth of the Chess Queen: A History</i>. Harper; 2004.</p>	<p>Joanne McAndrews</p>	<p>“Chess is an ancient game, and the queen was not always a piece on the board. This wonderful book outlines the history of this chess piece and women’s involvement in the game over time.”</p>
	<p>Bryson B. <i>The Body: A Guide for Occupants</i>. Doubleday; 2019.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“A terrifically engaging book, whether you’re fascinated by anatomy or not. Full of fun facts: eg, No matter their size, animals generally have a lifespan of 800 million heartbeats. However, humans reach that milestone at age 25.”</p>

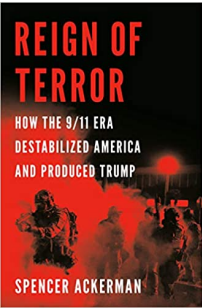
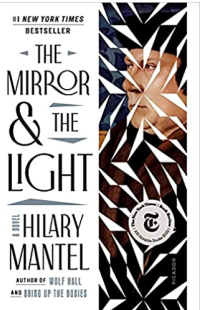
	<p>Burton S. <i>Empty: A Memoir</i>. Random House; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“The author describes the eating disorders she’s dealt with throughout her life.”</p>
	<p>Gladwell M. <i>Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know</i>. Little, Brown & Co; 2019.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“How we make judgments about strangers and why so many of them are wrong”</p>
	<p>Heyman A. <i>Artifact</i>. Bloomsbury Publishing; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“A female scientist’s difficult journey to a fulfilling balance between work and life”</p>
	<p>McMillan T. <i>It's Not All Downhill From Here</i>. Penguin Random House; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“A good read when you’re feeling your age. As the author says, ‘it ain’t over til it’s over.’”</p>

 <p>Book cover for <i>Monogamy</i> by Sue Miller. The cover features a dark blue background with scattered orange and yellow leaves. The title "Monogamy" is in white, with "a novel" below it, and the author's name "Sue Miller" in a larger white font. Below the author's name, it says "New York Times Bestselling Author".</p>	<p>Miller S. <i>Monogamy</i>. Harper; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>"The complications of a long-term marriage"</p>
 <p>Book cover for <i>Only Child</i> by Rhiannon Navin. The cover is white with a central window showing a colorful abstract pattern. Above the window, there is a quote: "Perfect for fans of Room, this heartwarming but important novel... reveals truths that begin to be found in even the darkest moments." -Red Tangle. Below the window, another quote: "Emotional... sticks its hooks into you from the very first sentence." -Marie Claire. The title "Only Child" is in a large, orange, cursive font, and "A NOVEL" is in a smaller green font below it. The author's name "Rhiannon Navin" is at the bottom in green.</p>	<p>Navin R. <i>Only Child</i>. Alfred A. Knopf; 2018.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>"The aftermath of a school shooting through the eyes of a 1st-grade survivor"</p>
 <p>Book cover for <i>Want</i> by Lynn Steger Strong. The cover features a vibrant, abstract, colorful pattern in shades of red, orange, yellow, and blue. The title "Want" is in a large, white, serif font. Below the title, it says "A Novel" and the author's name "Lynn Steger Strong".</p>	<p>Steger Strong L. <i>Want</i>. Henry Holt & Co; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>"An English professor works multiple jobs to try and keep her family afloat. Her favorite reads help her along the way."</p>
 <p>Book cover for <i>The Hidden Life of Trees</i> by Peter Wohlleben. The cover is white with a central illustration of three trees with their roots exposed. Above the trees, it says "Foreword by the author PETER WOHLLEBEN". The title "The Hidden Life of TREES" is in a large, black, serif font. Below the trees, it says "What They Feel, How They Communicate" and "Discoveries from a Secret World". A red circular badge on the right side says "A 2015 PULITZER PRIZE WINNER".</p>	<p>Wohlleben P. <i>The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate</i>. Greystone Books; 2015.</p>	<p>Jan Niehaus</p>	<p>"This is absolutely fascinating! Falls into the LOVED category."</p>

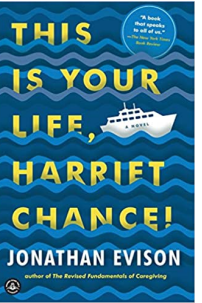
	<p>Berk B. <i>Getting Your Brain & Body Back: Everything You Need to Know after Spinal Cord Injury, Stroke, or Traumatic Brain Injury</i>. The Experiment; 2021.</p>	<p>Ruth Thaler-Carter</p>	<p>“By a high school classmate who experienced a horrible injury when he was hit by a car while on a bicycle ride”</p>
	<p>Bradburn R. <i>Self-Editing for Self-Publishers</i>. Incorporating—A Style Guide for Fiction. Reen Publishing; 2020.</p>	<p>Ruth Thaler-Carter</p>	

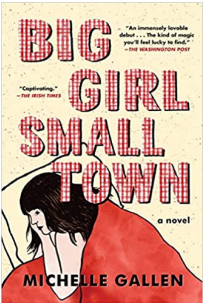
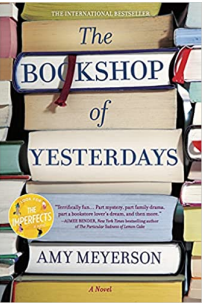
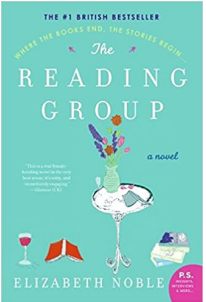
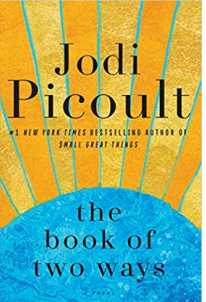
Category: Annoying or Disappointing

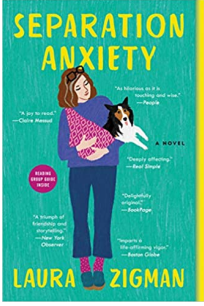
Cover	Citation	NOT Recommended By	Comments
	<p>Walter J. <i>The Cold Millions</i>. Harper; 2020.</p>	<p>Lisa Balbes</p>	<p>“Story of two hobo-ish brothers in the northwest in the very early 20th century. Probably historically fairly accurate (unions, suffrage) but dark, cold and depressing.”</p>

	<p>Ackerman S. <i>Reign of Terror: How the 9/11 Era Destabilized America and Produced Trump</i>. Viking; 2021.</p>	<p>Dana Delibovi</p>	<p>“Connections between 9/11, the War on Terror, and the rise of right-wing populism in the US. But the connections aren’t logically worked out, and the author buries you in data to hide the absence of coherence.”</p>
	<p>Mantel H. <i>The Mirror and the Light</i>. Picador; 2021.</p>	<p>Dana Delibovi</p>	<p>“Last book in the Wolf Hall trilogy of historical fiction about Thomas Cromwell. The first two books are fantastic—taut, austere, careful. The last one...someone needed to tell her to cut it in half, but of course it’s scary to do that to Hilary Mantel. Would help her to go back to her Muriel-Spark-inspired earlier books.”</p>

Category: Not Necessarily Literature to Stand the Test of Time But Fun or Interesting Reads Nonetheless

Cover	Citation	Recommended By	Comments
	<p>Evison J. <i>This is Your Life, Harriet Chance!</i> Algonquin Books; 2015.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“Recent widow Harriet is visited by her husband, who tries to make amends for his mistakes.”</p>

	<p>Gallen M. <i>Big Girl Small Town</i>. Algonquin Books; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“Majella is autistic and works in an Irish ‘chip’ shop. Her many dislikes can be categorized under ‘Other People.’”</p>
	<p>Meyerson A. <i>The Bookshop of Yesterdays</i>. Park Row Books; 2018.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“An inheritance in the form of a bookstore reveals long-held family secrets.”</p>
	<p>Noble E. <i>The Reading Group</i>. HarperCollins; 2005.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“The joys and tribulations of a British women’s book club.”</p>
	<p>Picoult J. <i>The Book of Two Ways</i>. Random House; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“A modern love story against the backdrop of an Egyptian archaeological dig.”</p>

	<p>Zigman L. <i>Separation Anxiety</i>. HarperCollins; 2020.</p>	<p>Leslie Neistadt</p>	<p>“Judy is 50 and depressed, and she feels invisible. Her career and marriage are faltering. So she starts carrying her dog around in a baby sling, which comforts her.”</p>
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