

Staff Picks

February 2018

Favorite BOOK Reviews



FEBRUARY FEATURE



Only Killers and Thieves by Paul Howarth (\$26.99)

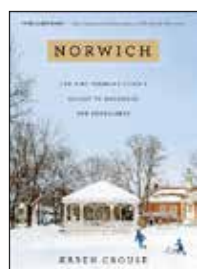
A heart-wrenching story of a child forced to lose his innocence. Set in the Australian outback in the years of settlement, this is a brutal filleting of frontier life, race relations, and the ambition of men. The characters are unforgettable and the writing is effortless yet juicy. Such a great read!

~Chris Morrow

Two brothers join in the search for their parents' killer with a fanatic whose authority-sanctioned mission is to exterminate a tribe of Aborigines in Australia in the 1880s. What begins as a quest for revenge soon degenerates into a coming-of-age nightmare for the teenagers as they are drawn into a miasma of death and depravity. Written in prose as brutal and unsparing as the landscape in which it is set. ~Alden Graves

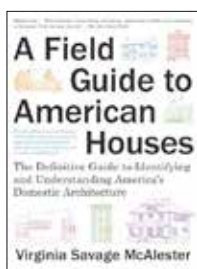
NONFICTION

H A R D C O V E R



Norwich by Karen Crouse (\$26). Read why this small Vermont town has produced more Olympic athletes per capita than any other town in the nation. The author interviews past Olympians who were

raised in Norwich and the people who work, teach, and coach these kids. She discovers that these gifted athletes were encouraged to experience multiple sports, participate in activities which they might enjoy but not excel in, and how the hands-off approach to parenting has worked not only in sports, but in fostering future community leaders. A must read for athletes, coaches, and, especially, parents. ~Suzanne Rice



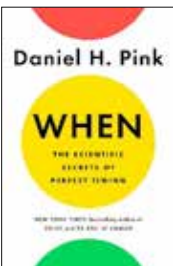
A Field Guide to American Houses by Virginia McAlester (\$35). Interested in learning about the architecture of American houses? Start here. Jam-packed with photos, drawings, and clear descriptions

of architectural history, motifs, and trends, this book will allow you to see, and appreciate, the homes where we live in an enhanced light. ~Mike Hare



Escape Artist: Memoir of a Visionary Artist on Death Row by William A. Noguera (\$28.95). While defending his violent life before and during his imprisonment, Noguera glorifies his creation of art. The

acclaim his paintings have received justifies his artistic identity, and provides tangible proof that genuine creativity cannot be barred. ~Mike Hare



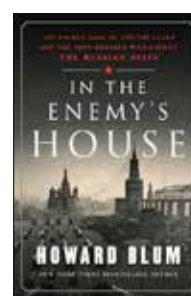
When by Daniel H. Pink (\$28). Mastering time, a centuries-old human endeavor, is not always futile...if your timing is right. Citing scientific, social, and economic studies, Pink reveals how

times of the day impact emotions, decision-making, creativity, and other traits. According to Pink, enhancement comes from learning how to tell time. ~Mike Hare



I Am I Am I Am by Maggie O'Farrell (\$25.95). This was one of the most mesmerizing memoirs I have ever read. The episodes are told as though each distinct part of her body had its own voice and wanted my sole

attention. Even the years between each event are full of meaning and nuance. The scope of Maggie's 17 brushes with death are told in a strong, indelible voice that cautions the reader that life is to be treasured, but not treated too delicately. ~Maeve Noonan



In the Enemy's House by Howard Blum (\$29.99). In a race to protect the country from atomic attacks, a genius code breaker and an FBI supervisor, working together to decipher the KGB's codes, ultimately

uncover the locations of strategically placed spies in the United States. This is a real-life mystery that is as tightly wound and suspenseful as any work of fiction. ~Suzanne Rice

P A P E R B A C K

How to Break Up With Your Phone by Catherine Price (\$12.99). Feel that you can't go a day, an hour, or even a few minutes without checking your phone? Price probes reasons for phone dependency, and offers practical pointers to swap phone addiction for real-life engagement. ~Mike Hare



The Stranger in the Woods by Michael Finkel (\$16). Christopher Knight's choice to live a 27-year life of solitude in the woods of Maine was a radical and random decision and it makes for a fascinating read. "I was never lonely," Knight says. The author delivers all the details through his interviews with Knight in his jail cell. This is the book to read if you are one who wanders in search of the marrow of life. ~Nancy Scheemaker

Y O U N G A D U L T

Rookie on Love by Tavi Gevinson (\$14.95). I wish I had this book as a teenager! It's perfect for when you're feeling confused or overwhelmed about the meaning of platonic and romantic relationships. Through poems, illustrations, and heart-felt pieces by women of all ages **Rookie on Love** gives readers the courage & confidence to get them through their adolescence. ~Laura Knapp



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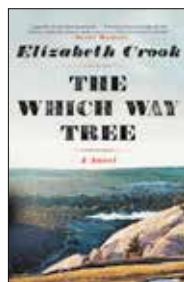
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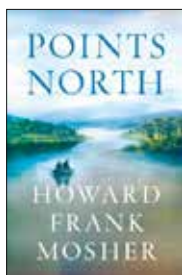
H A R D C O V E R

Everything Here Is Beautiful by Mira T. Lee (\$26). This novel is a heartbreaking tale of Lucia, her mental illness, and the people who love her. The story takes you up and down along her harrowing journey trying to maintain a normal life. Her sister Miranda is her keeper, although she lives far away. Told from the point of view of people and places in a very unique way. This is a story of strength, love, and dedication. ~Molly Halpin



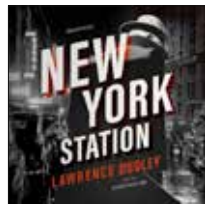
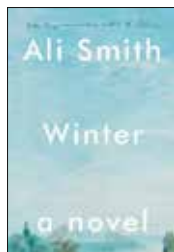
The Which Way Tree by Elizabeth Crook (\$26). A child makes it her life's mission to hunt down the panther that killed her mother and scarred her for life, enlisting her reluctant older half brother, Benjamin, in the quest. The entire narrative is told in a series of letters written by Benjamin to a frontier judge in which he also recounts his witnessing the aftermaths of a brutal mass hanging. This is a rousing adventure story in the tradition of *True Grit*, *The Sisters Brothers*, and *News of the World*. ~Alden Graves

Points North: Stories by Howard Frank Mosher (\$25.99). If Vermont's Northeast Kingdom had a literary king, it was Howard Frank Mosher. His final book is a collection of linked short stories all taking place in that lovely landscape near the Canadian border. Spanning the centuries, these stories touch on universal themes like love, race, home and death but with exquisite attention to the details of his characters and their natural surroundings. We lost Howard a year ago this month but his words are very much alive. Long live the king. ~Stan Hynds



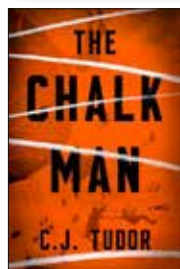
Fire Sermon by Jamie Quatro (\$24). This impressive literary debut is an incredibly honest and often painful look at a marriage. I was moved by the author's fierce honesty and her bravery by tackling a subject that is very common, but rarely approached with such brutal frankness. ~Whitney Kaaz

Winter by Ali Smith (\$25.95). A man pays a young woman to pose as his girlfriend while he visits his reclusive, difficult mother over the Christmas holidays. Her injection into a spectacularly dysfunctional family causes all of the members to reassess their lives and to make tentative steps onto the bridge across chasms that have separated them for decades. Strikingly original and written with a sure sense of the fragility of human relationships. ~Alden Graves



New York Station by Lawrence Dudley (\$27.99). While German tanks roll through Europe in the summer of 1940, Nazi spies and propaganda hit the States. Agent Roy Hawkins, juggling demands by the British, the FBI, and his new girlfriend, tracks the fascists from New York City to Saratoga, where bloodshed looms at the grand hotels, casinos, and at the racecourse. ~Mike Hare

La Belle Sauvage (The Book of Dust #1) by Philip Pullman (\$22.99). Probably my favorite fantasy book of 2017! Fans of His Dark Materials will not be disappointed, as it is classic Pullman that captures the feel of the original trilogy, even after 17 years. Floods, disgusting villains (and their terrifying daemons!), and heroic characters abound with the tension climbing faster and faster toward a dark and brutal climax. I was devastated to have to leave this world and wait longingly for the next installment. ~Tambra Johnson Reap

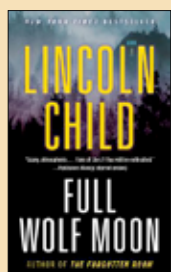


The Chalk Man by C. J. Tudor (\$27). In 1986 a group of young friends finds a headless corpse. The aftermath of that discovery resonates long after, culminating in a new murder 20 years later. There are so many twists and turns your head will be spinning by the time all the mysteries are solved. And that ending? You'll NEVER see it coming. It's hard to believe this is a debut novel. ~Tambra Johnson Reap



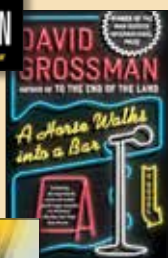
Need to Know by Karen Cleveland (\$26). Read the first two pages and you'll be hooked. Written by an ex-CIA analyst, this book is fast-paced and full of suspense and action. If I tell you more I will spoil it for you! ~Suzanne Rice

P A P E R B A C K



Full Wolf Moon by Lincoln Child (\$9.99). A Yale professor and self-proclaimed "enigmologist" on a writer's retreat in the Adirondacks begins to suspect that a series of savage killings deep in the wilderness may be the work of something beyond the realm of natural science, especially given the full moon factor. A genuinely creepy excursion into the supernatural that expertly resurrects one of its most fierce and formidable denizens. ~Alden Graves

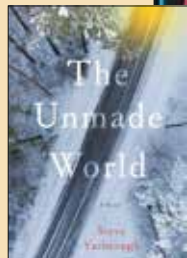
A Horse Walks Into a Bar by David Grossman (\$15.95). A remarkable, unusual story! To watch this stand up comedian bare his soul and relive painful memories during the course of his routine in an Israeli comedy club is psychologically and emotionally hard. ~Liz Barnum



A Separation by Katie Kitamura (\$16). Through language as calmly assertive and magnetic as that of Elena Ferrante, a woman searches for her estranged husband in scorched southern Greece. A disquieting, probing story about the secrecy at the heart of every relationship, no matter how intimate. ~Cathy Taylor



The Unmade World by Steve Yarbrough (\$18). An American in Poland loses everyone he loves in a car accident. An unremarkable petty criminal is responsible but never caught. How do these two strangers go on with their lives - one consumed by grief, the other by guilt? This is page-turning literary fiction. Excellently crafted characters, propulsive narrative (plus a generous dose of suspense), sparkling prose. In a word--superb. ~Stan Hynds



The Perfect Nanny by Leila Slimani (\$16). The new nanny was everything the young couple sought: conscientious, caring, and completely devoted to their two little children. She practically joined the family. But she had troubles, compulsions, and secrets, and the family learned that perfection pays a deadly price. ~Mike Hare

