

## January 2022 Staff Picks

**Author: Steven Wolf Title: Comet's Tale**

This memoir was humorous and sweet. The story of how this rescue dog in-turn 'rescued' her owner is honest and heartwarming. This book is not just for dog lovers; it's for anyone who enjoys reading about dealing optimally with our limitations. Additionally, it's very informative about the plight of the dogs who are racers.

**Author: Elizabeth Letts Title: The Eighty Dollar Champion**

If the true stories of horses Secretariat or Seabiscuit kept you spellbound, then consider leaving the racetrack setting to learn about the equestrian world's shock in 1958 when an eighty-dollar plow horse arrived to compete in its top show. The book vividly recounts the excitement of the shows and the world of the Eisenhower fifties. It is joyous, heartfelt, and an eloquent reminder that hope can be found in the unlikeliest of places.

**Author: Deanna Raybourn Title: Silent in the Grave**

This is a great historical fiction female detective series. This book captured my attention from the opening lines and I really enjoyed the protagonist Lady Julia Grey. A great read with mystery, hard truths, action, adventure, and a sprinkle of romance.

**Author: Donna Andrews Title: Murder with Peacocks**

A fun, breezy read. Meg's summer as maid of honor in three weddings for three different demanding brides is complicated enough before a dead body shows up. And there's the attractive man in town for the summer as well. This is a fun, enjoyable series debut with plenty of humor.

**Author: Colin Towell Title: The Survival Handbook: Essential Skills for Outdoor Adventure**

This book has useful information, techniques and illustrations for how-tos or issues that may arise while hiking or camping. It's a good reference book, and I plan on buying it to have in my own library.

**Author: Cory Doctorow Title: Radicalized**

The phrase, ripped from the headlines, has become a tired cliché, but it's very apt to describe Radicalized, a collection of four stories by Cory Doctorow. The author explores many modern hot button issues: Immigration, Technology, Health Care, and Survival Prep. What would you do if you discovered the toaster you bought would only work if you had the right kind of bread? What if your insurance company refused to pay for life saving procedures for a loved one due to a technicality? What would really happen in a secure compound when a deadly plague finally swept across the country? Each story will take the reader further down a rabbit hole and force them to think about these questions and the answers they would give.

**Author: Leni Zumas    Title: Red Clocks**

Since the Supreme Court is getting ready to overturn the Roe V Wade decision, allowing states to once again ban a woman from having an abortion, I need to recommend the book Red Clocks. This book takes place in a post-Roe United States. It deals with the lives of four women and how these circumstances bind their prospects. Mattie is a gifted student whose future ambitions are thwarted by one misguided mistake. Ro is a high school teacher and single, who's trying to have a baby of her own. Susan is unhappily married and trying to raise two children. And Gin is a hermit, living in the forest just the outside of town.

This book forces the reader to confront issues they may not be comfortable with, dealing with motherhood, identity and freedom. Not everyone will be happy after turning the last page, but if they read Red Clocks with an open mind, they will learn something.

**Author: Stanley Tucci    Title: Taste: My Life Through Food**

Not only is he recognized from so many movie roles, but he has become famous for his cooking talents now, too. I really enjoyed the show "Searching for Italy" where he travelled around that country to meet chefs and sample cuisine. Stanley Tucci's new memoir is charming and I didn't realize that he had battled cancer recently. I enjoy when celebrities share more about themselves so they become relatable humans with complicated lives that make you respect them for their acting/culinary gifts.

**Author: Lydia Poultney    Title: The Simpsons Secret**

Written by the creators of The Simpsons Secret show on YouTube, this is full of analysis and callbacks from all eras of the show. This book opened up a lot about the various theories, how a theory gets made, fake news, and many other interesting topics from the Simpsons. A great read for die-hard Simpsons fans.

**Author: Jim McPartlin    Title: The Enneagram at Work**

Who you are affects how you work. In The Enneagram at Work, Jim McPartlin harnesses the insight of the enneagram (a nine-sided figure used in personality type analysis) with practical tools and techniques that will change how you do work. He provides a system and practical guide to understand yourself and others. You'll find this to be an invaluable resource to enhance your leadership and team effectiveness.

**Author: Jonathan Fields    Title: Sparked**

What Sparktype® are you? Discover your unique imprint for work that makes you come alive, fills you with meaning, joy, purpose, and possibility, then spend the rest of your life doing it.

Fans of personality tests like Enneagram, Meyers Briggs, Strengthsfinder, will enjoy this new test to discover more about themselves. Personally, I had looked at the various Sparktype® options and went in thinking I knew exactly what I was. However I was pleasantly surprised at my outcome and truly did get an Aha! moment for what fits my deeper impulses.

**Author: Nancy Kress Title: Yesterday's Kin**

In *Yesterday's Kin* members of the scientific community try to stop an airborne virus from harming earth's population. Notably, Kress wrote *Yesterday's Kin* in 2014 well before the current Covid crisis. While the panic and the desperate quest for a vaccine are eerily familiar, this story focuses upon genetics and family connections.

This story revolves around Marianne Jenner and her three children, Ryan, Elizabeth, and Noah. Noah, the youngest, has always felt like an outcast—the black sheep of the Jenner family. These feelings of alienation grow worst after he learns that his family has been hiding a secret from him. Kress skillfully interweaves scientific facts about DNA with fiction.

**Author: Matt Haig Title: The Midnight Library**

*The Midnight Library* is the perfect book to read in January—a time for starting over and making New Year's resolutions. Nora Seed, the novel's protagonist, needs to start over; she has lost touch with her dreams. She is also unmarried, estranged from her brother, and friendless. She has lost contact with her best friend, Izzy, who moved to Australia. Adding insult to injury, Nora was recently fired from her retail job and her cat, Volts, has just died. Nora decides to end her life but, fortunately, she is given a second chance in this humorous yet metaphysical novel.

Nora ends up at the “Midnight Library” a place people go when they hover between life and death. While it's a construct of their minds, it's also a place where individuals called “sliders” can make new choices. Nora becomes everything—from a scientist, to world class swimmer, to rock star—yet still feels hopeless and lost. In an ingenious twist, Nora gets the perfect life yet still feels unsatisfied. Nora's despair nearly leads to catastrophe, yet, she ultimately prevails in this inspiring novel.

**Author: Mary Roach Title: Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law**

Join "America's funniest science writer" Mary Roach on an irresistible investigation into the unpredictable world where wildlife and humans meet. Roach tags along with animal-attack forensics investigators, human-elephant conflict specialists, bear managers, and "danger tree" faller blasters. She taste-tests rat bait, learns how to install a vulture effigy, and gets mugged by a macaque. This book is a funny investigation into an unfamiliar scientific realm full of bizarre facts.

**Author: Michael Swanwick Title: Not Much Said the Cat**

A collection of stories with fascinating alternate histories and chilling future possibilities. This author is a Nebula-award winner and five time Hugo Award winner.

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**Author: Eric Metaxes    Title: Is Atheism Dead?**

A readable text (even for non-scientific minds) that is entertaining, wide-ranging topics, and decidedly provocative. Delving into scientific discoveries, archaeological finds, and facing head-on the question of whether faith and science can co-exist, conservative radio host Eric Metaxas shares the evidence.

**Author: Greg Peters    Title: Our National Forests**

This book does a great job explain what national forests are, what their purpose is, and their history in this country. I loved the photographs included in the book. It is not a light, easy read—very much a nonfiction informative book. However, the information is engaging and makes me want to visit these beautiful, remote spaces soon.