

Across the Fence – Book List for National Library Week 2019

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Bree Drapa, Director of the Westford Public Library

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Albert, Melissa. *The Hazel Wood*. 2018. 368p. Flatiron Books, \$16.99 (9781250147905). Ages 12 – up.

Everything a good YA book should have...magic, intrigue, stilted romance, and a super creepy fairy tale come to life. Alice hunts for her missing mother; her only clue being “Stay away from the Hazel Wood.” Second book coming out soon!

Backman, Fredrik. *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry*. 2015. 384p. Atria Books, \$25.00 (9781501115066).

In a story that entwines fantasy and reality and gently promotes trust, compassion, and the courage to resist conformity, irresistible 7-year-old Elsa learns that people are not always what they seem, and that everyone has a superpower.

Grann, David. *Killers of the Flower Moon: the Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*. 2018. 400p. Vintage, \$16.95 (9780307742483). (paperback)

This true crime story unfolds the horrors of the Osage Indian Murders, an event so shocking it cemented the role of the FBI in American. Delves into criminology and highlights the sobering inequality still present in Native American relations.

Gratz, Alan. *Ban This Book*. 2018. 256p. Tor/Forge, \$7.99 (9780765385581). Ages 8-12.

Fourth grader AmyAnne's favorite book is banned from the school library! Fighting back, she creates a Banned Book Library in her locker. Amidst challenges from the School Board, teachers, and parents, AmyAnne learns standing up for your beliefs isn't easy.

Joyce, Rachel. *The Music Shop: a Novel*. 2018. 320p. Random House, \$27.00 (9780812996685).

Aging British record store owner meets mysterious woman. Romance and an enthralling backstory coexist with a superb dive into iconic music. A love story and a love of music story – it even has its own Spotify playlist!

MacArthur, Robin. *Half Wild*. 2017. 224p. Ecco, \$24.99 (9780062444394).

Eleven stories of complex characters, the most memorable being rural Vermont itself: love of place, ambition juxtaposed with lack of opportunity, intergenerational family bonds and strife, people who can grow and make things, the harsh intersection of winter and poverty.

Obama, Michelle. *Becoming*. 2018. 448p. Crown, \$32.50 (9781524763138).

The expected components are great: life story, political initiatives, White House anecdotes, inspiration. Even better is when this book veers into less anticipated realms: career advice, relationship insight, humor, the description and importance of strong female friendship. A must read!

Orange, Tommy. *There There*. 2018. 304p. Knopf, \$25.95 (9780525520375).

A fictional look at twelve Urban Indians in Oakland as they convene for the Big Oakland Powwow. Twelve different reasons for attending, twelve relationships with the past and choices about how to navigate the present, an intense and surprising ending.

Orlean, Susan. *The Library Book*. 2018. 336p. Simon & Schuster, \$28.00 (9781476740188).

Arson investigation and mystery, some education about the science of fire, a large cast of real people ranging from inspiring to disturbed. Above all, a love letter to libraries, both historically and in all their contemporary innovative glory.

Reid, Taylor Jenkins. *Daisy Jones and the Six*. 2019. 368p. Ballantine, \$27.00 (9781524798628).

The wild world of 70s rock and roll, with characters and scenes so real it's hard to remember they're fictional. Terrific in audio format, with a full cast of voices expressing the passion, nostalgia, and regret of aging rock stars.

Sendker, Jan-Philipp. *The Art of Hearing Heartbeats*. 2012. 352p. Other Press, \$16.95 (9781590514634). (paperback)

Julia seeks her missing father in his homeland of Burma. She discovers there is more to her father than she ever realized. Infused with true love and Buddhist philosophy; vivid, lyrical writing give this satisfying novel a modern fable-like quality.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Day You Begin*. Illus. by Rafael López. 2018. 32p. Penguin/Paulsen, \$18.99 (9780399246531). Ages 5-8.

Lush illustrations and beautiful prose highlight the differences that make us all unique, and the struggle to share those differences with others. It can be hard to take the first step, but that is how you begin.