

OHIOana QUARTERLY

FALL 2020 | VOL. 63 NO. 4



Collecting, Preserving, and Celebrating Ohio Literature

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OHIOana QUARTERLY

FALL 2020

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From the Director

Dear Friends,



One of my favorite musicals is Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II's glorious *South Pacific*. Its tuneful score, with songs like "Bali Hai" and "Some Enchanted Evening," have indeed enchanted audiences for more than seventy years. I especially like Nellie Forbush's "A Cockeyed Optimist," about how her friends tease her about always looking at the bright side of EVERYTHING.

Well, I have to confess—I'm a LOT like Nellie Forbush. And even I have to admit this has been a very difficult year to keep your spirits up, think positively, and other upbeat admonitions.

But I'm proud to say the Ohioana Library has tried our best to do just that. With the library closed since March, our staff, working remotely, has shifted gears, serving the public while keeping everyone safe: from holding book talks online to introducing an exciting new program, the Ohio Literary Trail. We produced our largest event of the year, the Ohioana Book Festival, as a three-day virtual program with nearly 140 authors. The entire festival, we're delighted to say, is now completely available online for viewing anytime, anywhere.

While COVID-19 may still be making it difficult for us to gather in person, that's not going to stop us from inviting you to join us virtually for the 2020 Ohioana Awards! This free evening celebrating Ohio authors and books will take place Wednesday, October 21, at 7 p.m. In the next few pages, you'll meet this year's stellar winners of the Ohioana Book Awards. You'll also meet the 2020 recipient of the Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant, our special prize for emerging Ohio writers.

We couldn't have kept going without your friendship and support. We appreciate it so much, especially in times like these. The toll of this pandemic—physically, emotionally, economically—has been devastating. I know we're all grateful for the many selfless caregivers everywhere who have been on the front lines through it all.

I am cautiously hopeful and confident about the future. Perhaps it's the cockeyed optimist in me. So as this remarkable year draws to an end, may we wish you and yours all the best through the holiday season, and especially a happy, prosperous, and healthy 2021.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Weaver". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Weaver
Executive Director

ON THE COVER

We're safely celebrating the 2020 Ohioana Awards, as depicted on our fall cover, designed by Kathryn Powers and featuring images of this year's award-winning books. See the article starting on the next page.

2020 Ohioana Awards



The Ohioana Book Awards were established in 1942 to recognize excellence in writing by Ohioans and about Ohio and are the second oldest state literary prizes in the nation. Each year, juried awards are given to outstanding books in the categories of Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, Juvenile Literature, Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature, and About Ohio or an Ohioan. A seventh award, the Readers' Choice Award, is selected by readers across the state in an online poll.

FICTION

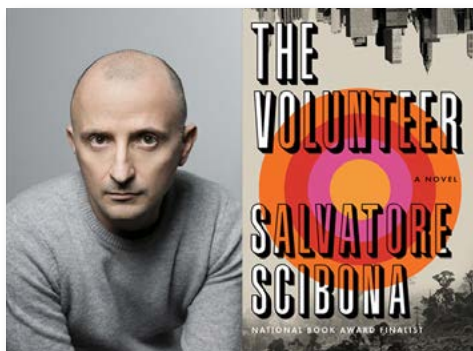


Photo by Beowulf Sheehan

Salvatore Scibona, *The Volunteer*, Penguin Press.

Salvatore Scibona's talents have taken him from being the recipient of Ohioana's Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant as an emerging writer in 1998 to becoming a finalist for the National Book Award and winner of the Young Lions Fiction Award for his first novel, *The End*. His work has won a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Pushcart Prize, an O. Henry Award, and a Whiting Award, and the *New Yorker* named him one of its "20 Under 40" fiction writers. A

native of Cleveland, he lives in New York, where he is the Sue Ann and John Weinberg Director of the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library.

A small boy speaking an unknown language is abandoned by his father at an international airport, with only the clothes on his back and a handful of money jammed in the pocket of his coat. So begins *The Volunteer*. But in order to understand this heartbreaking and indefensible decision, the story must return to the moment, decades earlier, when a young man named Vollie Frade, almost on a whim, enlists in the United States Marine Corps to fight in Vietnam. Breaking definitively from his rural Iowan parents, Vollie puts in motion an unimaginable chain of events, which sees him go to work for insidious people with intentions he cannot yet grasp. From the Cambodian jungle, to a flophouse in Queens, to a commune in New Mexico, Vollie's path traces a secret history of life on the margins of America, culminating with an inevitable and terrible reckoning. An odyssey of loss and salvation ranging across four generations of fathers and sons, *The Volunteer* is a triumph in the grandest traditions of American storytelling.

NONFICTION



Photo by Dennis Drenner

Jeannie Vanasco, *Things We Didn't Talk About When I Was a Girl*, Tin House Books.

Jeannie Vanasco was the 2014 recipient of Ohioana's Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant for emerging writers. She is the author of *The Glass Eye: A Memoir* (Tin House Books, 2017). Her work has appeared in the *Believer*, the *New York Times Modern Love*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. A native of Sandusky, she lives in Baltimore and is an assistant professor at Towson University. *Things We Didn't Talk About When I Was a Girl* is her second book.

Jeannie Vanasco has had the same nightmare since she was a teenager. It is always about him: one of her closest high school friends, a boy named Mark. A boy who raped her. When her nightmares worsen, Jeannie decides—after fourteen years of silence—to reach out to Mark. He agrees to talk on the record and meet in person. Jeannie details her friendship with Mark before and after the assault, asking the brave and urgent question: Is it possible for a good person to commit a terrible act? Jeannie interviews Mark, exploring how rape has impacted his life as well as her own. Unflinching and courageous, *Things We Didn't Talk About When I Was a Girl* is part memoir, part true crime record, and part testament to the strength of female friendships—a recounting and reckoning that will inspire us to ask harder questions, push towards deeper understanding, and continue a necessary and long overdue conversation.

ABOUT OHIO OR AN OHIOAN

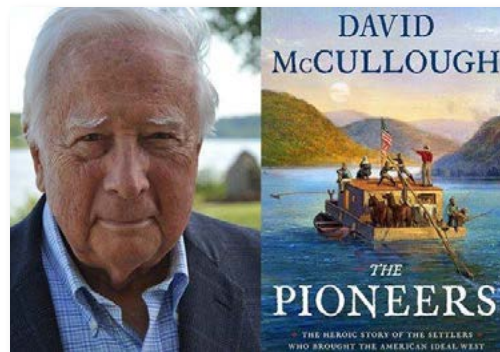


Photo by William B. McCullough

David McCullough, *The Pioneers*, Simon & Schuster.

David McCullough has twice received the Pulitzer Prize, for *Truman* and *John Adams*, and twice received the National Book Award, for *The Path Between the Seas* and *Mornings on Horseback*. His other acclaimed books include *The Johnstown Flood*, *The Great Bridge*, *Brave Companions*, *1776*, *The Greater Journey*, *The American Spirit*, and *The Wright Brothers*, for which he won the 2016 Ohioana Book Award in About Ohio or an Ohioan. He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. He lives in Massachusetts.

As part of the Treaty of Paris, in which Great Britain recognized the new United States of America, Britain ceded the land that comprised the immense Northwest Territory, a wilderness empire northwest of the Ohio River containing the future states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. A Massachusetts minister named Manasseh Cutler was instrumental in opening this vast territory to veterans of the Revolutionary War and their families for settlement. Included in the Northwest Ordinance were three remarkable conditions: freedom of religion, free universal education, and most importantly, the prohibition of slavery. In 1788, the first band of pioneers set out from New England for the Northwest Territory under the leadership of Revolutionary War veteran General Rufus Putnam. They settled in what is now Marietta on the banks of the Ohio River. Drawn in great part from a rare and all-but-unknown collection of diaries and letters by the key figures, *The Pioneers* is a uniquely American story of people whose ambition and courage led them to remarkable accomplishments.

POETRY

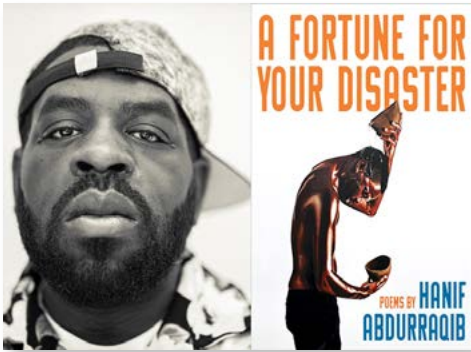


Photo by Marcus Jackson

Hanif Abdurraqib, *A Fortune for Your Disaster*, Tin House Books.

Hanif Abdurraqib is a poet, essayist, and cultural critic from Columbus, Ohio. His first poetry collection, *The Crown Ain't Worth Much*, was named a finalist for the Eric Hoffer Book Award and was nominated for a Hurston-Wright Legacy Award. His collection of essays, *They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us*, was named a best book of 2017 by *BuzzFeed*, *Esquire*, *NPR*, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, and *Pitchfork*, among others. His most recent book, *Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes to A Tribe Called Quest*, was a finalist for the 2020 Ohioana Book Award in nonfiction, making him only the third author in the history of the awards to be nominated in more than one category in a single year.

In his much-anticipated follow-up to *The Crown Ain't Worth Much*, Abdurraqib has written a book of poems about how one rebuilds oneself after a heartbreak, the kind that renders them a different version of themselves than the one they knew. It's a book about a mother's death, and admitting that Michael Jordan pushed off, about forgiveness, and how none of the author's black friends wanted to listen to "Don't Stop Believin'." It's about wrestling with histories, personal and shared. Abdurraqib uses touchstones from the world outside—from Marvin Gaye to Nikola Tesla to his neighbor's dogs—to create a mirror, inside of which every angle presents a new possibility.

MIDDLE GRADE/YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

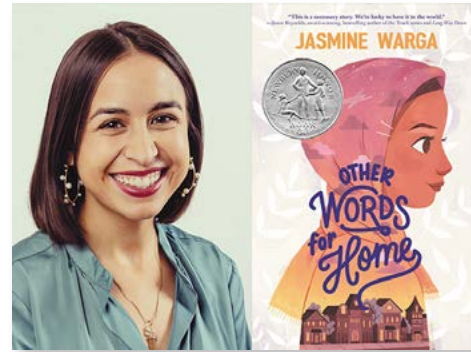


Photo by Braxton Black

Jasmine Warga, *Other Words for Home*, Balzer + Bray.

Jasmine Warga's debut middle grade book, *Other Words for Home*, is a Newbery Honor Book. She is the author of the novels for teens *My Heart and Other Black Holes*, which has been translated into over twenty languages, and *Here We Are Now*. Originally from Cincinnati, she now lives and writes in Chicago.

Jude never thought she'd be leaving her beloved older brother and father behind, all the way across the ocean in Syria. But when things in her hometown start becoming volatile, Jude and her mother are sent to live in Cincinnati with relatives. At first, everything in America seems too fast and too loud. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the U.S.—and her new label of "Middle Eastern," an identity she's never known before. But this life also brings unexpected surprises—there are new friends, a whole new family, and a school musical that Jude might just try out for. Maybe America, too, is a place where Jude can be seen as she really is. This lyrical, life-affirming story is about losing and finding home and, most importantly, finding yourself.

JUVENILE LITERATURE



Photo by Abigail Best

Oge Mora, *Saturday*, Tin House Books.

Oge Mora graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design with a BFA in illustration. When not painting in her studio, Oge is in the kitchen cooking her late grandmother's recipes. Her first picture book, *Thank You, Omu!*, won many accolades including a Caldecott Honor, a Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent illustrator award, an Ezra Jack Keats illustrator award, a *New York Times* Notable Book and Editors' Choice, a Junior Library Guild selection, and the 2020 Floyd's Pick. *Saturday* is her second picture book. A native of Columbus, Ohio, she now lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

In this heartfelt and universal story, a mother and daughter look forward to their special Saturday routine together every single week. But this Saturday, one thing after another goes wrong—ruining storytime, salon time, picnic time, and the puppet show they'd been looking forward to going to all week. Mom is nearing a meltdown...until her loving daughter reminds her that being together is the most important thing of all. Mora's highly anticipated follow up to *Thank You, Omu!* features the same magnificently radiant artwork and celebration of sharing so beloved in her debut picture book.

READERS' CHOICE

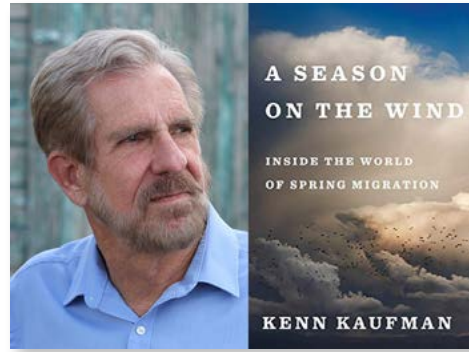


Photo by Kimberly Kaufman

Kenn Kaufman, *A Season on the Wind*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Kenn Kaufman is a writer, artist, photographer, world traveler, and renowned bird expert. He has authored or coauthored a dozen books on nature, including his own *Kaufman Field Guides* series and the cult classic *Kingbird Highway*. A Field Editor for the National Audubon Society and a Fellow of the American Ornithological Society, he has received the American Birding Association's lifetime achievement award—twice. Currently he lives in Oak Harbor, Ohio, famed as a bird migration hotspot.

Every spring, billions of birds sweep north, driven by ancient instincts to return to their breeding grounds. This vast parade often goes unnoticed, except in a few places where these small travelers concentrate in large numbers. One such place is along Lake Erie in northwestern Ohio. There, the peak of spring migration is so spectacular that it attracts bird watchers from around the globe, culminating in one of the world's biggest birding festivals. Millions of winged migrants pass through the region, some traveling thousands of miles, performing epic feats of endurance and navigating with stunning accuracy. Now, climate change threatens to disrupt patterns of migration and the delicate balance between birds, seasons, and habitats. But wind farms—popular as green energy sources—can be disastrous for birds if built in the wrong places. This is a fascinating and urgent study of the complex issues that affect bird migration.

Congratulations also to the 2020 Ohioana Book Award Finalists! These books have appeared on numerous bestseller lists, and the writers have won many prestigious literary awards. All have made an impact on the literary life of Ohio, and we are proud to support their work. Look for these titles at your local library or bookstore.

FICTION

Alex DiFrancesco, *All City*.

Kameron Hurley, *The Light Brigade*.

Jess Montgomery, *The Widows*.

Jacqueline Woodson, *Red at the Bone*.

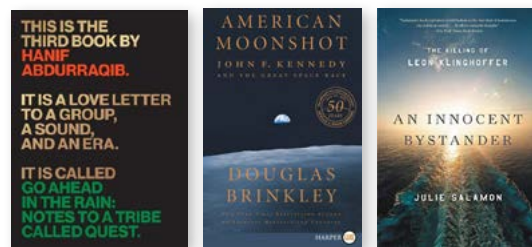


NONFICTION

Hanif Abdurraqib, *Go Ahead in the Rain: Notes to a Tribe Called Quest*.

Douglas Brinkley, *American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race*.

Julie Salamon, *An Innocent Bystander: The Killing of Leon Klinghoffer*.



ABOUT OHIO OR AN OHIOAN

Karen Abbott, *The Ghosts of Eden Park: The Bootleg King, the Women Who Pursued Him, and the Murder That Shocked Jazz-Age America*.

Sigmund Brouwer, *Moon Mission*.

Jill Grunenwald, *Reading Behind Bars: A True Story of Literature, Law, and Life as a Prison Librarian*.

Howard Ruffner, *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970*.



POETRY

Russell Atkins, *World'd Too Much: The Selected Poetry of Russell Atkins*.

Anne Lesley Selcer, *Sun Cycle*.

Ann Townsend, *Dear Delinquent*.

Bruce Weigl, *On the Shores of Welcome Home*.



MIDDLE GRADE/YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Jean Daigneau, *Code Cracking for Kids: Secret Communication Throughout History, with 21 Codes and Ciphers*.

Ronni Davis, *When the Stars Lead to You*.

Mindy McGinnis, *Heroine*.

George Takei, with Justin Eisinger and Steven Scott, Illus. by Harmony Becker, *They Called Us Enemy*.



JUVENILE LITERATURE

Rukhsanna Guidroz, Illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova, *Leila in Saffron*.

Kate Hoefler, Illus. by Sarah Jacoby, *Rabbit and the Motorbike*.

Michelle Houts, Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline, *Sea Glass Summer*.

Laura Purdie Salas, Illus. by Angela Matteson, *In the Middle of the Night: Poems from a Wide-Awake House*.



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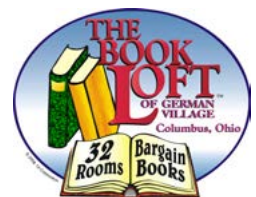
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"True Owl" and "Problembär"

Essays by Brendan Curtinrich, 2020 Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant Winner

True Owl

Barred owls are true owls. That is to say they are members of the Strigidae family, one of the subdivisions of the order Strigiformes. Your typical owls. They are common everywhere east of Texas, but the old-growth sugar bush and grazed-over horse pastures of northeast Ohio host a larger-than-average collection. I grew up twenty-five miles inland of Lake Erie, in a rural county known for its vernal pools and plots of summer sweet corn. It's home to other owls too—great horned and barn, two-tined silhouettes and ghoulish shadows startled off branches in the dark—but the call that rose most often those Midwestern nights was the forlorn staccato query, *who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?*

My dad taught me this mnemonic device sometime when I was a kid as we tramped around the yard, listening to a barred owl bark and fuss from its perch somewhere in the colossal white pines. The night world was large and dark, and I remember feeling imperiled, expansive and mysterious as it was. Mine was the world beneath my bed, safe and small with my bow-tied teddy bear, Buster.

Hoo-hoo-huh-hoo, hoo-hoo-huh-hoo-ahhh. The last note—quavering, ethereal as a loon, exotic as a kookaburra—was the sound of the night world. At an age when I was afraid of the dark, the howl of the midnight spook reverberated down from the inky blots of trees like a warning: *You shouldn't be, you shouldn't be here.*

My dad put his hands over his mouth like a blues harmonica player and spoke to the owl in its own tongue. There was a beat. Somewhere in the sap-scabbed branches above our heads, the creature swiveled to appraise us. Then, against the hum of katydids and crickets, the owl called back.

There are boxes of reversal film photo slides in the closet of my parents' house, and an old Kodak 4200 Carousel Projector. Photos of my dad, lanky and bearded, appeared sometimes on the blank wall of our living room after my sister and I begged to see the slides of him and our mom in their twenties: shots of them in national park green and grey—Stetsons squared—and the anoraks now dry rotting in the basement.

My dad dropped out of college to hike the Appalachian Trail, a sabbatical in his nine-year endeavor to gain a diploma. I waited until after graduation, but then went off too—sick of school and aimless—on a one-way flight to Atlanta in a rainstorm. 124 days later, wilderness-haggard and 2,000-mile lean, I took my last steps on the trail, up tumbled rock to the top of Mount Katahdin in Maine. Slumped against the summit sign, I rested my forehead on the weather-worn planks, every arrow pointing back the way I had come: *Thoreau Spring, Penobscot West Branch, New Hampshire State Line, Springer Mountain, Georgia.* I was weary and relieved. And, unexpectedly, heartbroken. A hard September breeze snatched the tears from my cheeks.

My folks drove me home after that, them in the front seats, me in the back, carsick. I shaved and gained some weight. I fought the post-trail depression that kept me in bed until noon. I'd walked across the country. What else was there to do? I tried running again—my obsessive pursuit since junior high school—but my body was chewed and sore, evolved so much to marching that anything more made it stumble. Tender and knotted, I continued my feeble jogs because that's all I could think to do.

One night in December, months after anyone cared how far I had hiked, I ran half a mile and then gave up, pacing the pavement between poplars and maples—earth and smalt-glass sky. The night world smelled like cat food and cigarettes. Off in the trees, a barred owl called. *Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?*

The notes were whispers as they glided down to me. I put my fingers to my mouth and hooted back. Nothing but heavy silence followed. I left the road and scrambled up the frozen mud on the far side of the ditch and peered into the branches at the edge of the woods and called again. This time, the hoots came back. *Hoo-hoo-huh-hoo, hoo-hoo-huh-hoo-ahhh.* I leaned my shoulder against a tree and closed my eyes to the night world and listened as the barred owl called and called and called.

Our thanks to *Gigantic Sequins*, which originally published this essay.

Problembär

In early May 2006, a 220-pound Eurasian brown bear known as JJ1 wandered across the Dolomite Mountains of northeast Italy, traversed the Austrian Alps, and became the first bear to set foot on German soil in 170 years. By the end of June, he'd been shot and killed by Bavarian hunters.

The Eurasian brown bear, *Ursus arctos arctos*, was largely extirpated from the Alps by the early 1800s, and now survives only in isolated pockets of Slovenia and Italy and the Austrian alpine lake region called Carinthia. JJ1—nicknamed Bruno by the local media which picked up his story even amid the racket of the German-hosted World Cup—was the son of Jurka, a bear released as a collaborative conservation effort between Austria, Slovenia, and Italy to reintroduce the species to its historical range.

But Bruno roamed farther than anyone expected and developed habits displeasing to the Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwel (Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment): robbing beehives, ransacking chicken coops, and harassing livestock. At the final count, he killed more than thirty sheep and goats, and a handful of chickens, doves, and rabbits. He spoiled nine beehives, damaged at least four silage bales, fence lines, and deer troughs, and snacked on one German family's pet guinea pig. The first bear to enter Bavaria in nearly two centuries, Bruno didn't know to keep his interests to morels. He saw only a smorgasbord of fat mutton and succulent honey. There was no orchestra or choreography—only meat. Everywhere he turned.

Of concern to the Staatsministerium was that Bruno's hunting habit was not just for food. In a behavior known as surplus killing, he left bloodied corpses of livestock uneaten and bloated on meadow slopes. First, the government tried to capture Bruno alive. But whether they would've returned Bruno to Italy or shipped him off to the Mönchengladbach Zoo, we will never know. He dodged U.S.-built grizzly traps and nipped back into Austria whenever chasers closed in. The State flew in a team of expert trackers from Finland, but the slippery bruin eluded the posse until their Norwegian elkhounds collapsed from exhaustion.

Surplus killing is not behavior exclusive to bears. In 2004, nine wolves in Idaho killed seventy sheep in a

single night. Weasels in northern Alaska hunt voles in excess. My aunt's cat leaves soggy goldfinches on the doormat several times a week.

The goldfinches are flicked—with the toe of a house slipper—into the mulch beneath the hydrangeas, the cat dismissed back to the yard, but the wolves, all nine, were executed by federal agents, and Bruno the bear was pursued through the Mangfall Mountains and shot until dead.

In the wild, surplus killing is no tragedy. If predators cull more than they can eat—a survival tactic to exploit opportunity in particularly harsh seasons—the spare meat is sometimes cached in deep snow or shallow graves to be returned to when prey is scarce. If not, there is no shortage of scavengers to clean up the scraps. The tragedy occurs when humans flood hillsides with livestock and reconstruct the law of the jungle from survival of the fittest to survival of whichever we decide.

Thirty sheep may seem excessive until we realize that not only are we moving the bear (after removing, replacing, returning, and then removing again), but that, globally, humans are the largest surplus killers of any species. *National Geographic* reports that American sport hunters imported more than 1.26 million wildebeest, black bears, ducks, leopards, rhinos, snow geese, and other exotic game trophies through U.S. Customs ports between 2005 and 2014.

For a while it seemed Bruno would defy the odds, burgling farmers and paddling alpine ponds until he decided to wander on—maybe to Belgium or the hills of southern France. Aided by hard weather and false sightings called in by panicked civilians, Bruno evaded his pursuers for almost two months. Mountain bikers, hikers, and motorists glimpsed the bear hundreds of meters off, flitting between valleys and dashing across roads. Most proof of Bruno's prowling was limited to day-after evidence of slaughtered lambs and crippled bee houses, some of which was fabricated, or caused by wild dogs.

But then Bruno was spotted outside Kumpflalm Hut, near Rotwand Mountain, and Bavarian hunters were dispatched to the location overnight. Just before 5 a.m., in the early light of June 26, the first bear to visit Germany since 1836 was shot twice in the body. "The

bear was killed immediately,” Otmar Bernhard, an official in the Bavarian State Ministry of Environment, told the press.

Bruno is now stuffed and displayed in the Museum Mensch und Natur (Museum of Man and Nature) in Munich, eternally poised on the wrong side of a fence, mouth full of honeycomb, ravaging a beehive. He’s paused mid-chew, tufted ears perked, as if he hears something coming in the distance. His new black, glass eyes glimmer dully under the bulbs in the museum, as though his two-year-old brown bear mind is puzzling over the word reflected backward on the walls of his case: Problembär.

Our thanks to *Appalachia*, which originally published this essay.

The Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant, named for Ohioana’s second director and established by his family, is a competitive prize awarded to an Ohio writer age 30 or younger who has not yet published a book. The 2020 Marvin Grant recipient is Brendan Curtinrich.

A native of Geauga County in northeast Ohio, Brendan studied creative writing at Hiram College and holds an MFA in creative writing and environment from Iowa State University. He has served as a nonfiction editor at *Flyway: Journal of Writing and Environment* and is currently a contributing editor at *Split Rock Review*. A triple-crown backpacker, he writes primarily about ecological issues, particularly the ways human animals affect and are affected by the world around them. His work is published or forthcoming in *Trail Runner* magazine, *Appalachia*, *Gigantic Sequins*, *Sierra*, and *Footnote*.



A Look Back at the 2020 Ohioana Book Festival

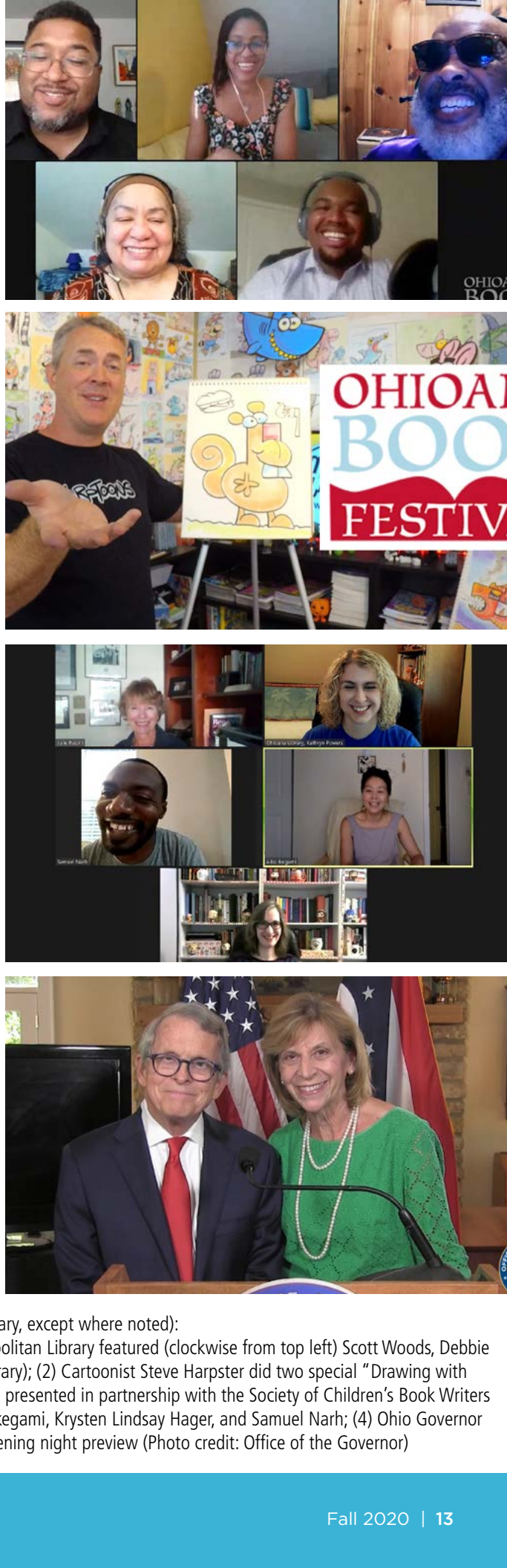
Where there's a will—and the internet—there's a way!

COVID-19 may have prevented us from presenting the fourteenth annual Ohioana Book Festival live, but thanks to technology, we moved the event online over the last weekend in August. And we're happy to say that it was a great success!

Obviously, we're disappointed that we weren't able to see our featured Ohio authors and illustrators and all the event attendees in-person. But we felt it was important to still gather for this annual celebration of Ohio books and authors in a fun and accessible digital format that would keep everyone safe.

And now the 2020 virtual Ohioana Book Festival is completely archived online! Check out the panels, discussions, outreach programs, and media interviews, along with drawing and story times for kids, individual author readings, and more. This is your chance to catch something you might have missed—or revisit a program you enjoyed for a second or third time. Simply go to our festival schedule page: <http://www.ohioana.org/programs/ohioana-book-festival/schedule/>. Click on the title of any linked program and it will take you right there. You can also visit (and subscribe) to the Ohioana Library's YouTube channel where all the festival videos are compiled on convenient playlists.

Thanks again for your patience and understanding during this difficult time. And special thanks to our festival authors, sponsors, and partners who hung in there with us. We hope to see everyone "live" back at the Columbus Metropolitan Library's Main Library next April 24, 2021, for the fifteenth anniversary Ohioana Book Festival! Stay safe until then.



Scenes from the 2020 Ohioana Book Festival, top to bottom (photo credits Ohioana Library, except where noted):

(1) The Black Stories, Black Voices panel presented in partnership with Columbus Metropolitan Library featured (clockwise from top left) Scott Woods, Debbie Rigaud, Dr. jw Smith, J.L. Raynor, and Lyn Ford (Photo credit: Columbus Metropolitan Library); (2) Cartoonist Steve Harpster did two special "Drawing with Steve" programs for kids; (3) Across the Genres – The World of Children's Books, a panel presented in partnership with the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, featured (clockwise from top left) Julie K. Rubini, Kathryn Powers, Aiko Ikegami, Krysten Lindsay Hager, and Samuel Narh; (4) Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and First Lady Fran DeWine greet festival authors and attendees in the opening night preview (Photo credit: Office of the Governor)

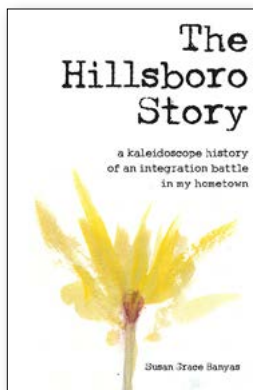
NONFICTION

Banyas, Susan Grace. *The Hillsboro Story: A Kaleidoscope History of an Integration Battle in My Hometown.*

Spuyten Duyvil (New York, NY) 2019. PB \$35.

Susan Grace Banyas' artistic, storytelling approach in *The Hillsboro Story: A Kaleidoscope History of an Integration Battle in My Hometown* brings to life a little-known historical event. The setting is the 1950s in the small southwestern Ohio town of Hillsboro, not long after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against school segregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education*. Banyas was in third grade, growing up in Hillsboro and living through an event that challenged the social and racial norms. As her third grade teacher reads *Charlotte's Web*, Banyas and her classmates watch out the classroom window as local African American mothers and their children are denied access to attend her school. Eventually, with time, persistence, and court cases, these families are allowed to attend the same school. While discrimination continued to exist after this, one hurdle was completed and a community awareness had started.

Banyas' unique storytelling techniques weave together a recounting of the town's history before, during, and after the desegregation protests. The events become personal as Banyas connects the reader to many of the townspeople who were involved—protestors, students, teachers, and desegregation supporters. Her use of interviews, quotes, diaries, journaling, poetry, character cast lists, letters, illustrations, and photographs creates an artist's assemblage that keeps the reader interested and involved in the events. Techniques, such as using a word from *Charlotte's Web* to describe a feeling or asking a protester what word they would want to have Charlotte weave into her web, provide a unique continuity that threads the story together.



As an educator, I found Banyas' book fascinating and an ideal teaching tool. Her lively writing style brings the events to life and is a perfect read for the classroom, especially for middle and high school students. This little-known historical event demonstrates the need to teach about our past and how change can and should be made to create equality and understanding among people.

The Hillsboro Story: A Kaleidoscope History of an Integration Battle in My Hometown is an ideal book choice to discover more about a significant, but overlooked, historical event that happened in Ohio. The passion of the author strengthens the reader's understanding of how this event sparked the need for desegregation and how this need continues today. Banyas' story has an even greater impact in today's society as we struggle to create a world in which equality is universal. With all of the diversity unrest occurring today, now is an appropriate time to read *The Hillsboro Story: A Kaleidoscope History of an Integration Battle in My Hometown*, as well as to see the play Banyas created on this same topic.

REVIEWED BY CHARLOTTE L. STIVERSON, EDUCATOR & RETIRED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Giffels, David. *Barnstorming Ohio to Understand America.*

Hachette Books (New York, NY) 2020. HC \$28.

David Giffels—winner of the Ohioana Book Award for *Furnishing Eternity: A Father, a Son, A Coffin, and a Measure of Life*—has written a new book, *Barnstorming Ohio to Understand America*. A life-long resident Ohioan, Giffels has been writing about Ohio for many years. His work is always interesting, often entertaining, and usually inspires the reader to see beyond the everyday external world. Barnstorming is no different.



What Giffels has done in this new book is similar to what we've read in *Blue Highways: A Journey into America* by William Least Heat-Moon and John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley: In Search of America*. Giffels journeys into America as well, but does it by visiting Ohioans, believing that the citizens of the Buckeye state can represent most residents of the other forty-nine in their attitudes about working and living, struggling, and looking for renewal.

Trying to make sense of America in this time of pandemic virus, intense economic stress, mass protests against what is seen as an inherently racist culture, a White House in crisis of character and focus, folks learning how to work from home while trying to keep an eye on their kids, and an education system foundering between in-person and online teaching, Giffels decides to hit the road. He wants to figure out why the nation turns to Ohio every four years to understand itself. One woman told him, "I feel like we are poked and prodded because we look like what America looks like."

"I was beginning to travel around," Giffels wrote, "in an attempt to understand just what the hell was happening to our country."

He explains why he believes that Ohio can represent America: "Geographically and culturally, the state is an all-American buffet, an uncannily complete everyplace." Across eighty-eight counties, Ohio mashes up what the Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, in Akron, has described as a microcosm of the nation.

"...which journalists and political observers refer to as 'the five Ohios': (1) the densely populated, urban, industrial/postindustrial Northeast; (2) the rural, agricultural, more culturally 'midwestern' Northwest; (3) the central region whose epicenter is state capital Columbus, a growing modern city defined by government and the huge Ohio State University campus as well as prosperous exurbs; (4) the more sparsely populated, Appalachian Southeast; and (5) the conservative, southern-influenced Southwest, anchored by Cincinnati, which abuts the Ohio River."

Giffels reports that the sense of lost livelihoods—and by extension, lost community identities—pervades much of the state. The rubber industry rolled out of Akron, General Motors turned off the ignition at their huge Lordstown assembly plant, coal mines in

eastern and southeastern Ohio closed in the face of environmental concerns, and major steel mills from Cleveland to Youngstown and near Cincinnati banked their furnaces—and their profits—and crept out of town. Tens of thousands of employees across the state lost their jobs immediately while thousands of support businesses to the factories, and the people who worked in them, suffered the same fate.

Giffels notes, "Few people work in factories for the love of it. They do it for the good pay and benefits, the steadiness that allows them the possibility of a comfortable, meaningful existence beyond work. There's dignity in that transaction, a basic American contract of trust: hard work traded for its reward." Thousands of Lordstown laborers and other Ohioans feel that the contract was broken.

The sense of bleakness extends from factories to fields. Farming has been hard hit across the state, as it has for farmers nationwide. Farmers decried the weather-affected climate change in combination with trade policies. Recent historic rains coincided with a trade war with China that was killing their business—policies affecting their farms in which they had little voice, though the families may have tended the same land for many generations.

Continuing the litany of vanished jobs, the book turns to landscapes which have been part of the definition of America.

"In some ways, the twentieth-century suburban shopping mall stood like a secular cathedral of our worst traits: superficiality, greed, white flight, gluttony, waste. The dead mall is no different from the block of foreclosed homes or the generation dying of opioids or the pregnant impoverished teenager or the holding cell packed with immigrants. The decisions we make about what to do with them determines our character."

Ohio became over-retailed in the rush to profits, earned on the backs of hourly salespeople, thousands of whom have been laid off. Many once booming (and profitable) malls all over the state either closed or were limping along with boarded-up shopfronts, much like the downtowns which began boarding up when malls stole their business to the suburbs.

Much like the other states, racial strife has been an Ohio problem. Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus,

as well as other smaller cities, have all struggled at times to maintain a sense of community among all races, including the substantial influx of immigrants looking to become productive Americans while enduring frequent racism. “Cities’ Main Street renewal is generated by whites, not African Americans, who sometimes get forced out with gentrification of old blighted neighborhoods where they have struggled to survive for years.”

Hardscrabble southeastern Ohio represents a larger Appalachia, ravaged by drugs, driven by high unemployment caused by the closing of mines, which had provided good, if unsafe, jobs for several generations. Ohio has been one of the unwelcome leaders in deaths by opioids, a national problem by any standard. With so many people unemployed, many have turned to opioids and other drugs.

In the middle of all that has been lost, there have been many signs of hope, of renewal. “I don’t think we’re coming back,” a Mansfield man opined. “I think we’re making something totally new.”

Ohio has found itself at the epicenter of a strategy to convert malls into Amazon distribution centers. “With its abundance of failed retail properties, relatively cheap real estate, a transportation infrastructure that was built to the hilt during the manufacturing heyday, and a nationally central location, Ohio had a lot to offer.” Amazon stated it had invested more than \$5 billion in Ohio since beginning business in the state.

Craft breweries have exploded in towns large and small, in Ohio and around the United States. It’s a thriving business model; the breweries have been the core of urban renewal, as entrepreneurs committed to a sense of community open shops and cafés near the breweries to form a new version of the old sense of a downtown vibe. “It’s an economic driver in the state, and that’s why state law-makers have been friendly,” one man told the author. “These breweries can turn around a neighborhood.”

Regarding drug deaths, multi-agency efforts have caused a decline in Ohio and nationally in 2018 for the first time in decades, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Ohio still ranks among the states with the highest death totals, but progress is being measured.

In Lordstown, the latest effort to bring decent-paying jobs back focuses on building electric trucks in the old plant, creating skeptical optimism. While the author was talking with someone about a derelict building, the local said, “That building, like much in this part of America, asks an all-important question: Is this something to be saved, or something beyond salvation? Is it an end or a beginning?”

And that is the book’s balance to the lengthy discussion on what has been lost.

With the 2020 election upcoming, it was inevitable for politics to arise in the author’s conversations, the biggest question being: who understood us— who understands me? Giffels found great concern about the Trump presidency:

“When I talked to people around (Lordstown), their anger and concern distilled into two distinct but inseparable messages (to Trump): save our jobs, and keep your promises. Many harkened back to a much-publicized 2017 Trump rally in downtown Youngstown, where the president said Ohio’s departed manufacturing jobs are ‘all coming back.’ They quoted his sound bite again and again: ‘Don’t move; don’t sell your house.’ But now many see the president as The Music Man, making unsubstantial promises. Few have forgotten when Trump decried the Rust Belt region as ‘rusting and rotting.’

The further I had traveled in this strange unraveling year, the more vexed I had become about the question I was chasing, the question of whether America was broken, of whether Donald Trump and a binarily divided Congress and a degraded national dialogue were matters of the moment or our new way of being. I am not a person who despairs easily and yet I had begun to wonder what was worth yearning for. What even is an American dream?”

Leonte Cooper, a young black man Giffels befriended, had found the question the author had been chasing: the question of the individual, the question of the voter, the question of the candidate, the question of Ohio, the question of America: Who will listen to me? And what do they want in return? And Cooper finished, “I guess maybe it’s the idea of the future—I’m just really, really optimistic about it.”

Giffels quotes Warren Buffett from a Cleveland speech: “America will always prevail.” Buffett urged against

reacting to whatever the moment suggests, insisting that in the long view, “We have always been okay, that times have been worse than now and we have endured them, and there is no evidence to prove anything other than that: America will prevail because that’s what America has always done.”

The author concludes, “Eventually. Maybe that was it. The wisdom of patience, the hope of promise.”

You get the feeling that Giffels did his best to be an unprejudiced sponge as he traveled the state and talked to its citizens. If what he reports is accurate, then Ohio, and by extension the country, is very anxious for change, for improvement in jobs creation, for a government which is working to restore the state/country by listening with compassion to Ohioans/Americans, prioritizing not the already-rich-and-determined-to-keep-all-of-it, but the folks on Main Street, the unemployed and the under-employed, the uninsured and underinsured, teachers and social workers, farmers and laborers, and many more who feel disenfranchised by their own government and its policies.

He concludes his stimulating book with a one-word exhortation: Vote.

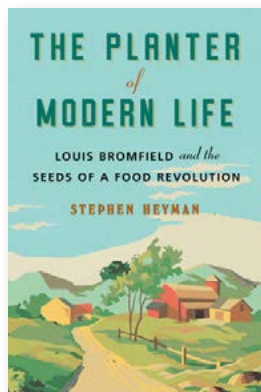
GEORGE COWMEADOW BAUMAN WAS THE CO-OWNER OF THE LATE ACORN BOOKSHOP. HIS RETIREMENT IS FILLED WITH READING, WRITING, GARDENING, AND HIS AND LINDA’S THREE CATS

Heyman, Stephen. *The Planter of Modern Life: Louis Bromfield and the Seeds of a Food Revolution*.

W. W. Norton & Company (New York, NY) 2020.
HC \$26.95.

The Planter of Modern Life: Louis Bromfield and the Seeds of a Food Revolution is one of the best books I’ve read recently. Heyman has written an engaging biography of a very important Ohioan.

Most Americans, if they know Bromfield at all, think of him as a popular fiction writer, probably unaware that he received the Pulitzer Prize for *Early Autumn* (1926). Some Ohioans, especially in the center to



northeast of the Buckeye state, know of Malabar Farm, his famous experimental farm, though those who have heard of it might think of it more as the site of Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall’s famous wedding than of a noted writer’s residence. And these days it might be better known, even to Ohioans, as a state park. Even in my now-closed bookstore, customers seldom asked for Bromfield, though we did keep him in stock.

Heyman has done an amazing job of weaving the many aspects of Bromfield’s life into a very readable biography. Here was a man from Mansfield, Ohio, who volunteered to drive ambulances in France during WWI, and became a *bon vivant* in Paris—Heyman says he was the head of the ex-pat “Lost Generation” community in France—as he was just beginning his writing career. He became well-known on Broadway and in Hollywood, and founded an internationally-known farm which practiced scientific methods of agriculture.

“Above everything else, he was a farmer...and should be remembered because he sounded one of the earliest alarms about DDT,” writes Heyman.

Bromfield’s ambulance driving duties shifted from helping the French out, to being in the employ of the U.S. Army, once America had joined the war. He saw action and was briefly captured by the Germans. Around that time, Bromfield switched his name from Lewis Brumfield to the “nobler sounding” Louis Bromfield.

The book is split between France and Ohio, but is not confined to them. Bromfield traveled extensively, eventually naming his famous farm in Ohio, “Malabar Farm,” after a region of hills in India. “He loved the landscapes of India, the music, the temples, the food,” Heyman writes. He was happier there, he told Gertrude Stein, “than I had ever been in my life.” He wrote *The Rains Came* about his experience there, and his fans placed it on the bestseller list, the strongest-selling American novel since Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind*. A very popular movie was made of the novel, both bringing a fortune to Bromfield. He used that money to finance Malabar Farm.

His typewriter went everywhere with him; Bromfield even wrote in meadows and on trains, according to the author. Regardless of where he wrote, he was always trying to balance his love of literature and nature.

Yet he was a party man from the beginning. Edna Ferber wrote that she never met anyone else who had Bromfield's "capacity for enjoying life and his gift for communicating that enjoyment to others." Janet Flanner said of Bromfield that he collected people like some men collected stamps. But the pull of the soil was a siren call in France. He began writing *The Farm*, which would become another bestseller, and which caused him to reconsider his exile in France, as Hitler had Paris in his sights.

While yet in France Bromfield got involved in various political issues, which was to become a hallmark of his life. He invested himself in the Free French Movement, the noted underground resistance. One of his broadsides that appeared in London's *Daily Herald* warned Britain in dire and prophetic terms about making appeasing gestures toward an increasingly "predatory" Germany. He was important in getting the American Hospital in Neuilly to set aside beds for the first wave of wounded Americans. He claimed to have received the French Legion of Honor Award, though Heyman says there is no external evidence of that—which is quite curious. At the end of the Spanish American War, he served as chair of the Emergency Committee of the American Wounded, which helped repatriate Americans who had fought in the Abraham Lincoln brigades in Spain.

He was a humanitarian hero, giving selflessly of his time and money, willing to support organizations which protected international refugees. He was a firm supporter of the cause of getting a homeland for the Jews, for whom he hosted a benefit for Jewish refugees in the Algonquin Hotel back in the States. And the press always covered his involvements in causes, for Bromfield was a very famous man in his day.

While in France, he moved from Paris to Senlis, where he developed a huge, magnificent garden. On Sundays he hosted an open salon, to which the famous people of Paris came by the dozens to stroll among the flowers, drink Bromfield's wine, and eat his food. He was close friends with Edith Wharton and Gertrude Stein, both of whom were also caught up in gardening, which claimed more and more of his time. He told one friend, "I have half a suspicion that I shall end up a horticulturist rather than a novelist," which would have shocked his American audience, but which was prescient. Janet Flanner recognized this when she wrote, "He's a country man who happens to plow with his pen."

Heyman has been meticulous with his research, and does a credible job of linking all the disparate Bromfield lives together. I enjoyed all the quotes he provides from Bromfield's many friends in each phase of his life.

After fourteen years of exile, Bromfield returned to the U.S., both with enthusiasm for the founding of Malabar Farm, but also with great sadness as he left his French and ex-pat friends, and his garden behind. But with Hitler looking to Paris, he knew it was time to return home, to search for land upon which he could develop a farm much like his grandfather's, yet one which focused on ecological, organic, sustenance farming, and the conservation of natural resources.

His return to Ohio inspired him. "All he knew then was that he wanted to raise his children on the kind of farm that had sustained his grandparents: a self-sufficient world, cut off from war and politics and economic privation."

However, the land which he personally selected as an ideal farm with great soil ("That's paying dirt," he told a journalist, "look at that soil!") was "practically worthless." It was going to be a long haul to turn Malabar into the farm Bromfield envisioned.

As in Paris, he became very active in organizations which were aligned with his interests, especially with Friends of the Land, for whom he traveled extensively. He hired people to run his farm, knowing he wanted to be free to lecture widely on the scientific principles on which he founded Malabar Farm.

Heyman writes about Bromfield's reception as a writer after coming home: "Bromfield's newfound interest in agriculture and environmentalism coincided with a collapse of his literary reputation." Critics like Malcolm Cowley and Edmund Wilson dismissed his later fiction as contrived and superficial. J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI called him a "radical writer...definitely tied up with left-wing organizations." Yet Bromfield's books continued to be popular with readers; his 1947 novel *Colorado* sold more than 1 million copies.

I liked the author's insight into Bromfield's sensitivity to women. "He had a real gift for creating characters. He liked to write a lot about women, specifically independent-minded women. A lot of his books are set in Ohio mill towns and his characters are trying to break free from whatever restrictive background they come

from. So there is almost proto-feminist quality to some of his early novels.”

Malabar Farm became nationally known in 1945 when Bromfield hosted the wedding of his good friend Humphrey Bogart to Lauren Bacall, a huge event for Hollywood and movie fans everywhere. Malabar was regularly visited by celebrities, including James Cagney and Joan Fontaine. E. B. White wrote a poem about Malabar which appeared in *The New Yorker*.

Bromfield was often away from the farm. True, he was usually lecturing all over the country about his new system of farming, because he had become one of the top farming authorities in the country, but he also loved to participate in the good life of Broadway and Hollywood—where movie people threw money at him to put his name on a project; he was that hot with the public.

He left specific instructions for his absences about what to do and how to do it. He was a micromanager, which didn't work well when he was gone so much. He invited dozens of visitors to come visit and perhaps stay at Malabar, including English refugees. Scientists came to study his agricultural practices. He never knew how many would be at dinner, six or twenty-six.

Using his connections, and working with Clifton Fadiman and Dorothy Parker, he sold millions of dollars in war bonds. But all was not well in Paradise. His right hand man, George Hawkins, who had guided each Bromfield book to publication, and who ran things when Bromfield was gone, died, taking much of Bromfield's spirit with him.

When his daughters married men who wanted to be farmers, he rejected their worthwhile ideas for improving Malabar Farm. He was jealous of anybody getting any credit for what he considered his, and only his, farm. That jealousy got in the way of his desire for the perfect farm, for his children and spouses had many good ideas to improve the farm, since they had worked on it all their lives and had practical insights which he refused to consider. As a result, his daughters and their husbands left, he got ill, and Malabar Farm suffered as he declined. His farming scheme was too grand not to have full-time, quality overseeing. “The brooding tyrant now watched over his kingdom from an empty castle.”

Louis Bromfield died of pneumonia in March 1956.

Heyman said that news of his death was carried in every paper in the land. *The New York Times* ran his obituary on the front page. “Either of his intertwined careers would have been enough to insure fame to the tall, loose-limbed restless Ohioan.”

Ambulance driver to Parisian *bon vivant*, Broadway insider to Hollywood man-about-town, a wealthy writer of bestsellers, Ohio farmer to international activist; Bromfield led many lives, never slowed down, and enjoyed his fame. He made tons of money from his books and Hollywood and spent it all, loving the good life with famous people who loved his friendship and parties.

Malabar never became the research center Bromfield envisioned. The farm was taken over by a foundation and eventually passed to the state of Ohio, which turned Malabar into a state park.

Heyman has taken a very complex man and written an excellent biography which engrosses the reader in all of Bromfield's lives, creating a sympathetic portrait of a man who turned difficult once his writing career was over and his farm was not going to turn out the way he, and the nation, expected.

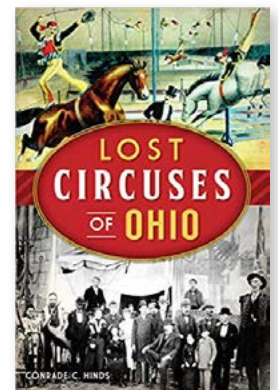
Highly recommended.

GEORGE COWMEADOW BAUMAN WAS THE CO-OWNER OF THE LATE ACORN BOOKSHOP, AND HAS WRITTEN FOR THE OHIOANA QUARTERLY FOR MANY YEARS. HE LOVES BOOKS, BASEBALL, READING, CATS, AND LINDA

Hinds, Conrade C. *Lost Circuses of Ohio*.

The History Press (Charleston, SC) 2019. PB \$21.99.

Who knew that Ohio was a home base for so many circuses and their people? In this thoroughly-researched and captivating book, Conrade C. Hinds introduces readers to the important role Ohio played in the nineteenth and twentieth century circus industry. *Lost Circuses of Ohio* explores the place of the circus in Ohio's history by describing the main circuses based in Ohio, the Ohioans who created and/or worked in these circuses, and the impact they had on Ohio.



The beginning chapters of the book outline the main circus companies that were in nineteenth century Ohio—The Robinson Circus (Cincinnati), The Sells Brothers Circus (Columbus), and the Walter L. Main Hometown Circus. Specific information describes the beginning and development of each company over time, with the buyouts, mergers, and restarts. Through these company changes and expansions, the reader learns that circus life involved many people, detailed logistics, and planning, with many ups and downs, especially financially. These Ohio circuses hired many well-known performers such as Clyde Beatty and Annie Oakley. One of the book's chapters is devoted to these famous personalities, and another describes some of the disasters that happened along the way, including fires, train derailments, and animal mishaps. The final chapter makes connections to the Ohio circuses that appeared in the twentieth century. Illustrations and photographs add important visuals and information to this historical book.

While reading *Lost Circuses of Ohio*, my curiosity was piqued, causing me to delve further on the Internet to discover more details about John Robinson's house in the Terrace Park section of Cincinnati, Peter Sells' house on Goodale Park in Columbus, and the talents and history of Clyde Beatty and Annie Oakley. Robinson's and Sells's homes are still intact, and at the time of this reading both are for sale. Clyde Beatty is a native of Bainbridge, Ohio, and a museum in Bainbridge honors and shows his contributions to the circus world. At the Garst Museum in Greenville, Ohio, more information about Annie Oakley can be obtained and viewed. Hinds' book even sparked some fascinating conversations with others, such as my ninety-year-old mother, to discover what they remember about Clyde Beatty and the Fred J. Mack Circus. *Lost Circuses of Ohio* is a fun, educational read, and one that opens our eyes to an important and often overlooked part of Ohio's history.

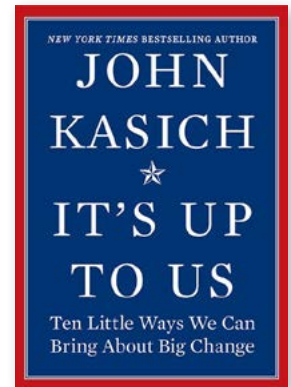
REVIEWED BY CHARLOTTE L. STIVERSON, EDUCATOR & RETIRED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Kasich, John. *It's Up to Us: Ten Little Ways We Can Bring About Big Change.*

Hanover Square Press (New York, NY) 2019. PB \$19.99.

John Kasich's *It's Up to Us: Ten Little Ways We Can Bring About Big Change* is a timely book for thinking about our role in society, especially as our world struggles to understand the social and political impact

of COVID-19. Throughout the book, Kasich presents ideas of how to create a positive, uplifting approach when dealing with others, including family, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances. An uplifting quote introduces each chapter's theme. Within the chapters, real life examples are included to demonstrate how it is possible for everyone to make a positive change and impact, whether small or big, on society.



Kasich's positive approach inspires the reader. He reminds us that, "What we do matters. We are blessed with the ability to make a difference." These differences can be made by calling a friend to check on him, using our gifts and talents wisely, being tolerant of differing viewpoints, standing up for one's convictions, or slowing down to be in the present. Kasich provides two or three examples for each chapter theme. In "Be the Change Where You Live," he describes how a broadcast on a local news channel inspired Albert Lexie to donate all of his shoe-shining tips to Pittsburgh's Children's Hospital's Free Care Fund, which over the years amounted to over \$202,000—a simple act that became a major donation. Plus, Lexie developed an emotional connection to his donation by visiting the children in the hospital.

When I read *It's Up to Us: Ten Little Ways We Can Bring About Big Change*, it was during my own COVID-19 stay-at-home period. With time to reflect on our world, I found this book even more insightful and inspirational. Life is at a vulnerable place, and it is important to remember that each one of us can make a positive difference. Kasich's *It's Up to Us: Ten Little Ways We Can Bring About Big Change* presents helpful ideas and techniques, as well as real life examples, in order to approach change and to give back to society.

REVIEWED BY CHARLOTTE L. STIVERSON, EDUCATOR & RETIRED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Kaufman, Kenn. *A Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration.*

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (New York, NY) 2019. HC \$26.

As an avid birder, I was familiar with Kenn Kaufman's expertise and own a well-thumbed copy of his *Field*

Guide to Birds of North America. I looked forward to reading *Inside the World of Spring Migration*, hoping for a well-written and fact-filled book. I got more than I bargained for with this lyrical tale of science and magic.

Guiding you along northwest Ohio's Lake Erie shoreline, Kaufman points out the refuges and sanctuaries that make up the unique ecosystem that draws in the migrating birds. He gives a brief history of the Black Swamp area and the circumstances that saved this region from development.

The magic of spring migration brings birders from around the world to this area. Although species migration is usually late February to June, experience has shown the most optimal time is early May. Around this time, a festival has sprung up known as the "Biggest Week in American Birding." Organized by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, the Biggest Week includes workshops, guided tours, and social mixing. Meeting fellow enthusiasts and renewing old acquaintances is just a plus to the main attraction—birds.

Sighting elusive species—some rare, some endangered, and some exotic—is thrilling for birders, new or experienced. The boardwalk at McGee Marsh is filled with clusters of birders tracking warblers (small, vocal, insect-eating birds) that rest and feed before making the big push north across Lake Erie. When a cry goes up pointing out a particularly desirable species, the crowd's rush to observe, note, and photograph the visiting stars reminds you of paparazzi at the red carpet.

Kaufman takes the opportunity to educate readers on the potential for ecological damage and the impact wind turbines have on birds. Kaufman says "...wind turbines placed in the middle of essential stopover habitats are likely to kill a disproportionate numbers of long-distant migrants, birds that are already pushing the limits of survival." To be clear, Kaufman is careful to point out he isn't against wind power, but advocates for responsible and reasoned choice of locations.

Birders will appreciate the insight and magic of *A Season on the Wind*, and even if you don't know a cardinal (red bird) from a blue jay (blue bird) this book will you have you reaching for binoculars.



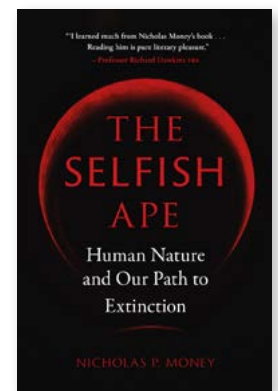
For additional reading, grab Kaufman's *Field Guide to Birds of North America*. The guide includes all you need to get started in birding, breaking down information by picture, traits, and range in an easy to follow format. Happy birding!

REVIEWED BY LINDA MILLER, A WRITER, AVID BIRDER, AND FREQUENT VISITOR TO THE WONDERS OF THE LAKE ERIE SHORELINE

Money, Nicholas P. *The Selfish Ape: Human Nature and Our Path to Extinction*.

Reaktion Books (London, England) 2019. HC \$20.

Given that *The Selfish Ape* makes the case for our inevitable extinction, it is a surprisingly pleasant read. The scientific background, which is crucial for making his case, stays focused on a few important concepts and never overwhelms even the layperson. By demonstrating our kinship with even the simplest forms of life, he pokes away at our notion of self-importance. Religion, of course, takes a beating for such vanities as eternal life, but refreshingly, science is not spared either, noting, for example, the suffering test animals must endure for the noble cause of making our lives better.



The Selfish Ape can at times be judgmental, offensive, and more than a little cynical about the fate of *homo sapiens*. And yet, the author does not advocate giving up.

In fact, in the final chapter, he speaks in a fresh and eloquent way about why we should improve our relationship with the natural world and each other. Doing this without the assurance that our species will be saved may just be our first step to a more selfless future, however long that might last.

REVIEWED BY DALE KILLIAN, RETIRED FROM ODNR

FICTION

Harper, Karen. *Deep in the Alaskan Woods: An Alaska Wild Novel.*

Mira Books (New York, NY), 2020. HC \$27.99.

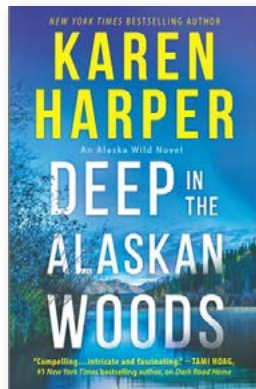
Karen Harper fans will enjoy the most recent mystery thriller from the pen of our beloved Columbus author. *Deep in the Alaskan Woods* is the first in Harper's *Alaska Wild Novel* duet. It is the perfect combination of mystery, romance, and suspense.

Deep in the Alaskan Woods features Alexandra Collister, who is escaping her fiancé, the local veterinarian, Dr. Lyle Grayson. He's a stalker and abusive, and she can't get away soon enough. Within a few chapters, Alexandra packs her bags and escapes to Falls Lake, Alaska, to her cousins' bed & breakfast nestled deep in Alaska's woods, hence the name of the book. At Falls Lake Lodge, Alexandra agrees to run their gift shop, where she can also sell her line of organic creams and lotions. It's here she meets Quinn (Q-Man) Mantell, a wilderness tracker and all-around nice guy.

This wouldn't be a romance-suspense novel without some mystery and lots of thrills. So when Alexandra finds bear claw marks on the wall outside her window that are the same as on a murder victim, her fear levels spike. Add mysterious noises in the middle of the night and some vandalism, and you have the recipe for a thriller. Q-Man applies his extraordinary tracking and investigative powers to uncover these mysteries. Add Q-Man's sex appeal and, voila! How can any reader, any Harper fan resist?

Karen Harper's current book themes revolve around romance and suspense, mystery and thriller. Exotic and common locations become part of her character set and play an essential role in each of her novels. That's how Karen writes and crafts mysteries and historical fiction.

Deep in the Alaskan Woods fits squarely into the romance-suspense genre, with vivid descriptions of rural Alaska that draw the reader into the drama. The last book in the Alaska Wild series, *Under the Alaskan*



Ice, is scheduled for release in December 2020. Alas, Karen passed away in late April 2020, silencing her pen and ending her amazing writing career all too soon.

If you want to read more mystery/romance/suspense by Karen Harper, try the first book in the *South Shores* six-part series, *Chasing Shadows. The Queen's Secret*, about the Queen mum, set in the years before WWII, was released in May 2020, and is the last of her historical fiction works.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, MLS, COLUMBUS, OH

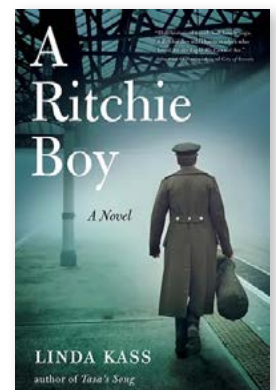
Kass, Linda. *A Ritchie Boy.*

She Writes Press (Berkeley, CA), 2020. PB \$16.95.

Kass, Linda. *Tasa's Song.*

She Writes Press (Berkeley, CA), 2016. PB \$16.95.

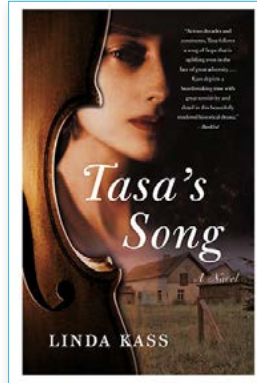
Columbus author Linda Kass pens a fictionalized biography of her family members and their experiences during WWII and afterwards. In *A Ritchie Boy*, Kass follows the story of the family patriarch Eli Stoff, who escapes with his family from Austria in 1938 and ends up in Columbus, Ohio. After settling into Columbus, finishing high school and going to college at OSU, Stoff is drafted in 1943. Because he's fluent in German, Stoff is transferred to Camp Ritchie in Maryland where he trains in intelligence and spy craft. He and his fellow "Ritchie Boys" interrogate Nazis and Germans at the end of WWII and spend its aftermath looking for spies and escaping Nazis.



A Ritchie Boy is told as a flashback or a memory, beginning with the present and an invite to a reunion of Ritchie Boys. The narrative quickly moves to 1938 and just a little before, as the Nazis come to power and then overrun Austria in the Anschluss. From 1938, the story follows a steady timeline ending somewhat abruptly in 1948, with his wedding to Tasa. Of course, that leaves the impression that, perhaps, there's another book in the offing. In reality, *A Ritchie Boy* is a companion to Kass' earlier *Tasa's Song* about Eli Stoff's girlfriend, then wife. Tasa plays a large role in the second half of *A Ritchie Boy*.

Tasa's Song centers around Tasa Rosinski, a Jewish violinist from the eastern Polish town of Podkamien, near Lwow (Lvov) in what is today Ukraine.

Tasa's Song begins *in media res* in 1943 as Tasa describes in a diary entry how she, her father, her cousin Danik, and friends escape the Russians and go into hiding under the floor of a Catholic neighbor's barn. After the prologue, Kass begins this tale of WWII and surviving the holocaust.



Tasa begins playing violin at age six and is quite skilled. After finishing primary school, her well-off, middle class parents send her to Brody, a larger town filled with Jews, to continue her education and instruction in violin. She lives with Frau Rothstein and her cousin Danik. All is well until the Germans and Russians invade Poland, divide the country, and impose their rules and ruthlessness upon the inhabitants of the country.

By 1942, Tasa and Danik are back in Podkamien struggling to survive. In a dramatic escape recounted again as in the prologue, they evade deportation by hiding under the neighbor's barn. By 1945, they've survived and are determined not to live under Soviet rule but in a free country—America. It's where her parents' sisters and brothers have escaped to. *Tasa's Song* ends and is picked up in the middle of *A Ritchie Boy*.

Both *Tasa's Song* and *A Ritchie Boy*, while fiction, are the stories of Linda Kass' family and their escape from Nazi destruction and survival against all odds. *A Ritchie Boy* hones in on life for those who escaped Europe before 1938 and their determination to give back to the country that saved them. Stoff is determined to fight against Germany, to serve his new country in any way he can.

Tasa's Song centers around escape from detection, a life in hiding, and the pain of having family members disappear into Siberia or at the hands of the Nazis. Throughout *Tasa's Song*, readers are treated to descriptions of classical music, the notes and themes of compositions, and the beauty of images created by the tunes. In many instances, Tasa uses music to escape from life's evils.

Kass uses her journalism and narrative skills to weave

her stories together with love for her family and a passion to recount the life stories of her parents. Her writing is fluid with just the right amount of gravitas, humor, and suspense for a WWII memoir. Kass uses letters and diary entries in *Tasa's Song* to move the story along, shedding light on Tasa's thoughts and emotions.

Both books provide views of Jewish life during the 1930s and 40s. *A Ritchie Boy* and previously published *Tasa's Song* should be staples for Jewish book clubs. And for music lovers, Kass includes readers' guides and lists of music described within the stories—the perfect accompaniment to these stirring stories.

Linda Kass is a resident of Bexley, Ohio, a journalist, and a novelist. She owns Gramercy Books, the local, independent bookstore, in downtown Bexley.

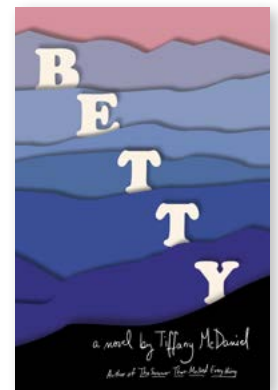
REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, MLS, COLUMBUS, OH

McDaniel, Tiffany. *Betty*.

Alfred A. Knopf (New York, NY) 2020. HC \$26.95.

"What I've just told you is the beautiful lie," he said. "Would you like to hear the ugly truth?"

The highly-anticipated follow-up to Tiffany McDaniel's debut, *The Summer That Melted Everything* (St. Martin's Press, 2016), can be read as a prequel to that Ohioana Book Award-winning novel. The bulk of *Betty* takes place in the same town as *Summer*—Breathed, Ohio (pronounced "Breath-Ed"), several decades earlier. It opens with a dedication to the author's mother, "and all your ancient magic."



Sadly, the insidious racism and child abuse that pervaded the pages of *The Summer That Melted Everything* are even worse in *Betty*, due to the time period. This new book is based on the life of McDaniel's own mother, also called Betty, and tales from her childhood growing up in Appalachian Ohio. Betty Carpenter has a white mother, Alka, and a Cherokee father, Landon. The relationship between Landon and Betty is a wonderful story of kindness, enduring love, and pride in their Native American heritage, bonding over stories and learning about living off the land while at the same time suffering

racism and abuse, not only from the people in the town of Breathed, but also at the hands of their own, more white-passing children and siblings, respectively.

Unlike *The Summer That Melted Everything*, *Betty* does not contain any threads of magical realism or fantasy. Betty wants to be a writer, and she often regales her father with tales she has made up—tales that are frequently whimsical or involve aliens, but nothing that seems odd coming from a child growing up in the 1950s and 1960s. The family moves back to Breathed and into a house where the previous residents disappeared into thin air, leaving behind nothing but emptiness and bullet holes, but nothing occurs in this novel that could not really happen in 1960s Ohio, or indeed, sadly, even now.

Betty is not for the faint of heart. McDaniel does not blink or shy away from graphic depictions of brutality, including physical abuse, rape, incest, and animal death/abuse, as well as heinous racism. But there is a truth to her words and a lived-in quality to the language that feels very real. Anyone who has ever lived in particular areas of the Appalachian part of Ohio can recognize parts of themselves in Betty's family: in their crushing poverty, in their father's bond with the land and his legacy, and in their mother's love, even as it comes mixed with regret and despair.

Betty's older sister, Fraya, tells her, "Boys are like that. Always tryin' to pretend they're savin' girls from somethin'. They never seem to realize, we can save ourselves." This thread of hope and feminist light permeates throughout, even among the bad things that continually happen to Betty and all of her family members. Betty is the soul of hope for her family; she's stubborn and angry, proud and loving, scared and strong. She's a survivor. If Tiffany McDaniel's mother Betty was really like the Betty of this novel, she was a formidable woman, indeed.

REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, OHIOANA LIBRARY SPECIALIST

Snyder, Lucy A. *Halloween Season*.

Raw Dog Screaming Press (Bowie, MD) 2020. PB \$14.95.

For those of us who prefer a nip in the air and a chill down the spine to the heat of summer or the festive, over-saturated cheer of Christmas, Bram Stoker Award-winning Columbus author Lucy A. Snyder's new short story collection is a perfect blast of pumpkin spice autumn greatness.



From the trippy journey that results in getting closure over premature death in "Hazelnuts and Yummy Mummies" to the nostalgic greatness of the opening poem "Beggars' Night" (you can almost smell candy corn on the page), every one of these stories delivers. Whether you're the type of person who sits at home watching scary movies on Halloween, one who dresses up to attend every party you can, or one who takes your kids trick-or-treating, there is something in here for you.

These fifteen stories showcase Snyder's talent for scaring the bejesus out of her readers as well as her ability to make us laugh. One of the best of these is "The Tingling Madness," which is a delightful, adjective-injected Lovecraft parody/truly unique and loving homage to internet sensation Chuck Tingle, that still manages to freak you out even as it makes you giggle, starting with the opening sentences: "*As the Indescribable Horror dragged me down into the black waters of the fathomless quarry, I wondered two things. Had I left the coffee maker plugged in, and would our Siberian kitten Chewie bite through the cord again, resulting in a fire that tragically yet ironically caused my husband to die of smoke inhalation as I drowned?*"

Fans of Snyder's *Jessie Shimmer* series will be delighted to see the shotgun sorceress and her ferret familiar, Pal, show up here in the Columbus-set "What Dwells Within." "In the Family" is a Ray Bradbury-esque little gut-punch that might make you legitimately scream out loud at the end. There are witches, zombies, and monsters galore, and plenty of H.P. Lovecraft-inspired abominations that can't quite be classified. My favorite story was "Cosmic Cola," which involves frog monsters, a monster-worshipping cult, gross soda, and a very brave little girl. It's an excellent, horrible story that stands

great as it is, but also left me dying for an expanded version—I really want to know what happens next.

Much of Snyder’s talent lies in plot and description to invoke terror, but her characters are also incredible. I felt like Victoria, Millie, “Porcupine Boy” Eddie, Jessie and Pal, even the unnamed narrator of “The Tingling Madness,” were all my friends, and I hope to spend many more Halloweens reading their stories.

REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, OHIOANA LIBRARY SPECIALIST AND GIGANTIC FAN OF HALLOWEEN

Stine, Alison. *Road Out of Winter*.

Mira (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) 2020. PB \$17.99.

“*Appalachian, Ohio, the heart of nothing at all.*”

Award-winning author Alison Stine’s debut novel is almost disturbingly prescient in 2020.

Wylodine lives in a cycle of paranoia and poverty. Her family lives on a farm in Southeastern Ohio, where they grow illegal marijuana. Wil has always wanted to get out, but four years after she graduated from high school, she’s still there, even though her mother fled for California with her boyfriend Lobo months ago, leaving Wil to fend completely for herself.

Wil gets by from day to day, living in a tiny house on the edge of the family property, digging up cans full of money and guns deposited in the earth by Lobo, and selling the last of his crop. Then spring never comes. It literally *never* comes—an extreme winter grips the entire world, and her town is gripped in ice and despair. Still scraping by, a chance encounter brings Wil into contact with Grayson, a young man who has been left behind by his parents, who left with the local Church, as did Wil’s best friend Lisbeth. The two team up, but when a terrifying encounter leaves them both shaken and terrified, they decide to strike out for the warmer climate of California to find Wil’s mom.

They are eventually joined by a young man named Dance, who helps get them out of town. By the time they leave, things have deteriorated to the point that there is no food or water, and simply being outside can get someone

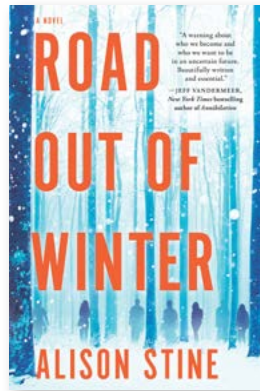
killed. Hauling Wil’s tiny house behind them, their truck crawls through the Appalachians, until a vicious meeting with some exiles in West Virginia changes everything.

Stine’s story is violent and scary, but it is also gripping. Wil is a fantastic protagonist; her tenacity and hopefulness in the face of adversity makes the reader root for her even when things seem so bleak you can’t imagine how she will escape a terrible situation. You will still feel chilled, even while reading this book on an 87-degree day while surrounded by air conditioning, plenty of food, and supplies. The setting and characters are realistic. Stine’s native Appalachian Ohio feels real in every way, especially in Wil’s spirit and grit.

The story also feels incredibly 2020 in some disturbing ways. Though climate change is, of course, a problem, I could not help but think of COVID-19 while reading this book. When everything is first beginning to go bad, Wil mentions that by August, people “had finally stopped saying, *What a ridiculous year. What an unusual year. This is one for the record books.* By August, it wasn’t funny anymore.” Then, a letter circulates suspending school until October—before it is suspended forever. Just reading those sentences in the midst of working from home and having been isolated since March of this year gives a chill that has little to do with the climate in the book.

This book will remind readers of road-trip end-of-the-world books like Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* or Emily St. John Mandel’s *Station Eleven*, but the distinctly Appalachian setting and characters, as well as the focus on the endless winter, are entirely unique. Readers who enjoy Stine’s poetry will love her lyrical prose. Though Stine has been the Poet Laureate of Athens and has received many awards for her poetry, she is also very well-known as a journalist. After reading this book, you may want to seek out her articles and essays about COVID-19 and its effects on Appalachia, poverty, marijuana, and several other related topics in *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Elle*, *100 Days in Appalachia*, and many more.

REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, OHIOANA’S LIBRARY SPECIALIST



YOUNG ADULT & MIDDLE GRADE

Gabriel, Kimberly. *Every Stolen Breath*.

Blink (New York, NY) 2019.

HC \$17.99.

Every Stolen Breath is the debut novel from Canton native Kimberly Gabriel. This edge-of-your-seat story grabs you from the first page and doesn't let go until the pulse-pounding conclusion. The title itself is perfect, as sixteen-year-old Lia Finch has suffered from chronic asthma her entire life. She also has PTSD due to the violent death of her prosecutor father at the hands of a teenage mob. Every moment for Lia is a struggle, every breath is truly "stolen," as she recruits her best friends, Katie and Adam, to help her find the leaders of the Swarm and solve her father's murder before she, too, is killed.



The premise with the Swarm is based on flash mob attacks that took place in 2011 in Chicago, where Gabriel now lives and where this novel is set. While flash mobs usually consist of people getting together to sing or dance for viral views, violent groups of teens utilized the popularity of the flash mob craze to synchronize a time and place to attack citizens of Chicago, mugging and beating them. In *Every Stolen Breath*, Gabriel has the teens use Twitter, with specific coordinates and hashtags and nearly untraceable equipment, to unleash their violence upon very specific targets.

Things intensify as Lia figures out where the Swarm's next attack is coming and is present when they beat a man nearly to death. The press, who has been hounding Lia and her mother for years, escalate their harassment because of this, resulting in Lia's unlikely team-up with Cullen, the son of the seedy mayor of Chicago, who has ties to the Swarm. She also meets Ryan, a mysterious, attractive boy who knew her father and helped him uncover the Swarm's true nature—and led to her dad's death—but who also has secrets of his own.

This novel has many twists and turns and goes to gripping, unexpected places. Readers can hardly turn the pages fast enough as Lia's friends and foes shift alliances

and the stakes keep rising higher and higher. But the world is also familiar—there are iPads and cell phones, plus mentions of Twitter, Instagram, and other existing social media. It feels like a story that could really happen, mixed with a conspiracy that doesn't seem all that far-fetched in these crazy, chaotic times. Kimberly Gabriel is a talented and exciting new voice in YA fiction. I hope to see more books from her very soon!

REVIEWED BY KATHRYN POWERS, OHIOANA LIBRARY OFFICE MANAGER AND SCBWI REGIONAL ADVISOR

JUVENILE

Tupta, Frank. Illus. by Kyle Beckett. *How to Build a Haunted House*.

Two Lions (Seattle, WA) 2020. HC \$17.99.

"Past the graveyard, hear the howl of werewolf loggers on the prowl."

This spooky, adorable tale, perfect for Halloween, is the story of what happens when creatures of all types work together to build a home for a vampire family who has lost their house to "wild zombie garlic." Cute, kid-friendly rhymes combine with puns and humor that adults will enjoy—there are ads for "Dr. Acula's Blood Drive"—creating a story of friendship and community coming together in a time of need. The supernatural creatures must race against the clock to complete their project before the sun comes up. Will they accomplish their goals or will the vampires be stuck out in the sun?



Kyle Beckett's illustrations bring the monsters to life in full moonlight, accompanied by the fun rhymes written by Cleveland native Frank Tupta, who says he grew up in a haunted house, too. This is Tupta's debut picture book and the start of a promising career. He is married to writer/illustrator Lindsay Ward (*This Book is Gray*) and they have already begun collaborating on book projects including *I Am Not Sick: A Book About Feeling Better* and *My Cat Drank My Coffee: A Relaxing Adult Coloring Book for People Who Love Cats and Coffee*.

REVIEWED BY ELLIE BROWN, WHO REALLY LIKES MONSTERS AND KITTY-CATS

Book List

The following books were added to Ohioana's collection between April and August, 2020. Look for them at your local library or bookstore!

NONFICTION

Armstrong, Beth. *Voices from the Ape House*. Trillium/OSU Press (Columbus, OH) 2020. PB \$19.95. In this memoir, former zookeeper Beth Armstrong takes readers behind the scenes at Columbus, Ohio's famed zoo to experience the complicated social lives of western lowland gorillas and the profound privilege of working with them. Bongo, Toni, Jumoke, and, of course, Colo—the world's first gorilla born in captivity—were just some of the individuals who inspired and shaped Armstrong's commitment to improving gorilla husbandry and to encouraging her zoo's involvement in protecting gorillas in the wild. Her recollections give readers a glimpse into the fascinating world of gorillas—the familiar gentleness of parents toward infants, power plays and social climbing, teenagers' exuberance, the capacity for humor, and the gorillas' grief as they mourn the death of one of their own. In the end, Armstrong's conflicted feelings around captivity and her lifelong fondness for these animals helped shape a zoo program known for its dedication to gorilla conservation.

Clark, John M. *Columbus Uncovered: Fascinating, Real-Life Stories About Unusual People, Places, & Things in Ohio's Capital City*. Gatekeeper Press (Columbus, Ohio) 2019. PB \$18.

A long-lost, world-class amusement park, huge replicas of the world's biggest wonders, a 1903 stage play with eight galloping horses. Columbus has had its share of odd attractions over the years. And scandals, too—the fake drug that led to the formation of the Food and Drug Administration, the 19th century pharmacist who loved to sunbathe nude atop his castle, the early visit of an airship that led to a riot. And many curiosities are still with us today—a neighborhood with 50 Frank Lloyd Wright-style homes, a blind high school marching band, a company that makes burglar-proof burial vaults. *Columbus Uncovered* reveals dozens of the most-unusual chapters in our city's history. You'll find them all fascinating.

Fleischer, S. Victor. *The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company: A Photographic History, 1898-1951*. The University of Akron Press (Akron, OH) 2020. HC \$49.95. *The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company: A Photographic History, 1898-1951* visually chronicles the rich and fascinating history of Goodyear, highlighting the products that helped make Goodyear a household name and Akron the "Rubber Capital of the World:" tires that shod winning race cars in first Indy 500s; blimps that advertised the Goodyear brand; figure balloons that graced the Macy's parades; conveyors used to build the Shasta and Grand Coulee dams; and balloons and airplane components that were critical assets in both world wars. This volume features over two hundred rare and visually stunning historic photographs

from the collection, many of which have never been published before. Head archivist S. Victor Fleischer meticulously reviewed, selected, and researched each image to provide descriptive captions and a readable, authoritative narrative to tell the fascinating stories behind the products.

Jolie, Raechel Anne. *Rust Belt Femme*. Belt Publishing (Cleveland, OH) 2020. HC \$26.

Raechel Anne Jolie's early life in a working-class Cleveland exurb was full of race cars, Budweiser-drinking men covered in car grease, and the women who loved them. After her father came home from his third-shift job, took the garbage out to the curb and was hit by a drunk driver, suffering a debilitating brain injury, her life changed. Raechel and her mother struggled for money: they were evicted, went days without utilities, and took their trauma out on one another. Raechel escaped to the progressive suburbs of Cleveland Heights, leaving the tractors and ranch-style homes in favor of a city with vintage marquees, music clubs, and people who talked about big ideas. It was the early 90s, full of Nirvana songs and chokers, flannel shirts and cut-off jean shorts, lesbian witches and local coffee shops.

Kirk, Robert F. *The Building of an Airport: Port Columbus, "America's Greatest Air Harbor" 1929*. AuthorHouse (Bloomington, IN) 2019. HC \$32.99.

The building of an airport in 1929 was not just developing a design and bringing together concrete and steel. It needed a radical design idea

of how to safely bring heavier than air flying machines together with people as passengers. The questions involved defied answers. Such as how far can an aircraft safely fly? How many people can make up a safe flight? What should the design of an airport look like and how can man and machine fit together in a way that moved both forward? There were a thousand questions with few known answers. It took brave, intelligent, far sighted individuals to push the limits of imagination, machines, human stamina and vision to bring all of the needed elements together. These elements would build a great airport with a successful design for people and machines of flight. The thinkers realized that air was much like water and as such the skies could be like rivers or oceans that served major cities with commerce. The building of a great airport could become a “Giant Air Harbor” that could serve as a mighty air center of commerce. Such was the beginning of Port Columbus, the “Nation’s Greatest Air Harbor.”

Marino, Jacqueline, ed. *Car Bombs to Cookie Tables: The Youngstown Anthology, 2nd Edition*. Belt Publishing (Cleveland, OH) 2020. PB \$20.

When *Car Bombs to Cookie Tables: The Youngstown Anthology* was published in 2015, it sold out its first two printings within months. The essays, poems, and photos in the anthology touched a nerve with Youngstown residents and expats, as well as a national audience fascinated with this paradigmatic Rust Belt city. Five years later—and during a presidential election year—Belt is proud to publish an updated edition of this book, with

new essays by Jen Vanderpool, Sherry Lee Linkon, Henry Gomez, and others. The Youngstown story often is told as beginning in iron and steel and ending in decay, with a subplot driven by violent mobsters and corrupt politicians. Aiming to provide a more well-rounded examination of Youngstown, this collection of essays provides an authentic look at the city. A diverse set of experiences from the perspectives of those who have lived there, the book offers readers a true sense of the past, present, and future of this remarkable city.

McCoy, David B. *Dolley Madison, Gilbert Stuart, and George Washington’s Portrait, 2nd Ed.* Spare Change Press (Massillon, OH) 2020. PB \$7.99.

This story is about a single event: Dolley Madison saving the Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington from certain destruction by the British. But as happens so often in history, one event clouds our view of the past.

McCoy, David B. *Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement, 2nd Ed.* Spare Change Press (Massillon, OH) 2020. PB \$7.99.

A short biography of Margaret Sanger, American birth control activist, sex educator, writer, and nurse. Sanger popularized the term “birth control,” opened the first birth control clinic in the United States, and established organizations that evolved into the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Meyers, David. *A Glance of Heaven: The Design and Operation of the Separatist Society of Zoar*. Exploding Stove Media (Columbus, OH) 2015. PB \$12.

The Separatists of Zoar in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, chose their own metaphor in the magnificent garden which was the focal point of the community. Designed in the shape of a wheel, it represented the New Jerusalem mentioned in the Book of Revelation. A tall Norway spruce in the center stood for Christ and life everlasting. It was encircled by a hedge of arbor vitae, around which ran a green path which symbolized the Kingdom of God. Twelve Irish juniper trees, one for each apostle, stood just outside the path, and twelve paths radiated out from the center path to the edges of the garden like spokes. These represented the many different walks of life leading to Heaven. But there was more to Zoar than met the eye. It was a many faceted organization whose separate paths had to intermesh in an orderly manner if it were to perform the job for which it was created. The society was a machine—a machine in a garden. Just beyond the hedge rows, surrounded by the flower beds, shaded by the apple trees, almost hidden from view, it sat and quietly ran for nearly eighty years.

Page, Amanda, ed. *The Columbus Anthology*. Trillium/OSU Press (Columbus, OH) 2020. PB \$18.95. Columbus, Ohio, is a place whose identity centers on its supposed lack of identity—an American “every place” that has launched countless chain dining concepts. Enter the contributors to this wide-ranging volume, who are all too happy to fight back against that reputation, even as they recognize it as an inevitable facet of the ever-growing city they call home. “Maybe we’re not having trouble designing a definitive identity,” writes Amanda Page in her

introduction. “Maybe we are a city that is constantly considering what it will become.” Race, sports, the endless squeeze of gentrification, the city’s booming literary and comics scenes, its reputation as a haven for queer life, the sometimes devastating differences in perspective among black and white, native and transplant residents—and more than one tribute to Buckeye Donuts—make this anthology a challenging and an energizing read. From Hanif Abdurraqib’s sparkling and urgent portrait of Columbus’s vital immigrant culture as experienced through Crew games to Nick Dekker’s insights into breakfast as a vehicle for getting to know a city to the poetry of Maggie Smith and Ruth Awad, the pieces gathered here show us a Columbus far more textured than any test marketer could dream up.

Trubek, Anne. *So You Want to Publish a Book?* Belt Publishing (Cleveland, OH) 2020. PB \$16.95. In *So You Want to Publish a Book?*, Anne Trubek, founder of Belt Publishing, demystifies the publishing process. This insightful guide offers concrete, witty advice and information to authors, prospective authors, and those curious about the inner workings of the industry. Learn the differences between “Big Five” and independent presses, and how advances and royalties really work. Discover the surprising methods that actually move books off the shelves. Develop the lingo to make editors swoon and challenge yourself to find the errors intentionally embedded in the text! Armed with a more transparent understanding of how books are made and sold, readers will be better prepared to publish, promote,

and purchase them wisely and successfully.

FICTION

Averbach, Patricia. *Resurrecting Rain*. Golden Antelope Press (Kirksville, MO) 2019. PB \$21.95. *Resurrecting Rain* explores the unanticipated consequences of the choices that we make, the bonds and boundaries of love, and the cost of our infatuation with materialism. At its heart the novel is a tale of loss and redemption, a reevaluation of our material culture, and an appreciation for the blessing of friends and family. It demonstrates that sometimes you have to lose everything before you find yourself.

Betts, Matt. *Carson of Venus: The Edge of All Worlds*. Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. (Tarzana, CA) 2020. PB \$19.95.

Stranded on the planet Venus, known as Amtor to its inhabitants, Earthman Carson Napier has faced countless perils to win the hand of the courageous Duare, his beloved princess, and to be bestowed with high honors and the title of prince in the powerful nation of Korva. But when a new threat strikes from out of the skies, Carson discovers his own arrival on the planet years ago may have unknowingly led the mysterious enemy to attack. Following a trail of destruction and death, Carson, Duare, and their friends set off across wild Amtor to track down the lethal adversary. Their journey leads them headlong into battle with the Linneaus, an ancient, seemingly indestructible race dating to the dawn of the planet. But that is not Carson’s only challenge. For even as he takes on

these daunting foes, an uncanny phenomenon has entangled him with two strange individuals from beyond spacetime and threatens to drive him mad. Will Carson be able to solve the mysteries of his past and the enigmatic visitors, and then defeat the terrifying menace—or will the nations of Amtor be crushed beneath the Linneaus’ heel?

Coan, Peter Morton. *The Last Baby Boomer*. Amazon.com (Seattle, WA) 2019. PB \$14.99.

The Last Baby Boomer is Peter Morton Coan’s tribute to his generation; a modern-day *Bright Lights, Big City* driven by the schizophrenic misadventures and underbellies of New York’s publishing and culinary worlds, as the protagonist, in his search for meaning, accidentally reconnects with the great love of his childhood from Long Island—the Land of Baby Boom—where they once vowed to marry, raise children and be happy—but life had other ideas.

Geddes, Luke. *Heart of Junk*. Simon & Schuster (New York, NY) 2020. HC \$26.

The city of Wichita, Kansas, is wracked with panic over the abduction of toddler pageant princess Lindy Bobo. However, the dealers at The Heart of America Antique Mall are too preoccupied by their own neurotic compulsions to take much notice. Postcards, perfume bottles, Barbies, vinyl records, kitschy neon beer signs—they collect and sell it all. Rather than focus on Lindy, this colorful cast of characters is consumed by another drama: the impending arrival of Mark and Grant from the famed antiques television show *Pickin’ Fortunes*, who are

planning to film an episode at The Heart of America and secretly may be the last best hope of saving the mall from bankruptcy. Yet the mall and the missing beauty queen have more to do with each other than these vendors might think, and before long, the group sets in motion a series of events that lead to surprising revelations about Lindy's whereabouts. As the mall becomes implicated in her disappearance, will Mark and Grant be scared away from all of the drama or will they arrive in time to save The Heart of America from going under?

Kass, Linda. *A Ritchie Boy*. She Writes Press (Berkeley, CA) 2020. PB \$16.95.

An extraordinary narrative inspired by true events. 1938. Eli Stoff and his parents, Austrian Jews, escape to America just after the Nazis take over their homeland. Within five years, Eli joins the U.S. Army and, thanks to his understanding of the German language and culture, joins thousands of others like him who became known as Ritchie Boys, young men who work undercover in Intelligence on the European front to help the Allies win World War II. In *A Ritchie Boy*, different characters tell interrelated stories that, together, form a cohesive narrative about the circumstances and people Eli encounters from Vienna to New York, from Ohio to Maryland, and then to war-torn Europe before he returns to the heartland of his new country to set down his roots.

Meyers, David. Music by Scott Michal. *The Last Oz Story*. Dramatic Publishing (Woodstock, IL) 2011. PB \$9.95.

Forget the happy ending. There's a new witch in town—Peloros, the witchiest witch of them all—and

since she arrived, things have gone completely haywire in Oz. Oz folk are running around the Emerald City like they've totally lost their reason. And the Scarecrow with his great brain, the Tin Woodman with his big heart and the Lion with his enormous courage are powerless to stop it. In fact, they're part of the problem. What's to be done? There's only one person whom even the wickedest witches fear and that's Dorothy Gale. But no one, not even Glinda, knows where she is. She just hopes that Dorothy hasn't forgotten that Oz needs her, too. Meanwhile, on the wrong side of the rainbow, a young woman has been admitted to a Kansas hospital for observation. Having just survived a tornado, she is trying to convince anyone who will listen that she is Dorothy Gale, just like in the fairytale. But no one believes her. With time running out, Dorothy must find a way to help her friends before it's too late. This original sequel to the L. Frank Baum novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is a tale of friendship and redemption told through lovable characters and unforgettable songs. And in the end, you will know the answer to the age-old question: What a girl won't do... for a pair of shoes!

Meyers, David. Illus. by Jason Pauff. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow Condominium Association, Inc.* Exploding Stove Media (Columbus, OH) 2009. PB \$9.99.

With his marriage and his business on the rocks, Tom Walker moves from Boston to Tarrytown, New York, to take up residence in a condominium left to him by a relative he never knew. A Victorian era eyesore that "went condo" in the 80s, the house, it seems, has a storied past. Blissfully unaware that his unit is already occupied, Tom

carries his stuff into the condo. In fact, he just keeps missing the other occupant, who wakes, eats, shaves, and cuts his hair before setting out with a jacket and his bowling ball. Oh, and his name is Rip (it's stitched over the pocket of his bowling shirt). Tom is greeted by his new neighbor, an incorrigibly nosey young woman named Katrina "Kat" Van Tassel. She lives across the hall with her musically challenged boyfriend, Brom Bones. Kat quickly fills Tom in on the other residents, including the crotchety Marie Heyliger-Vander Heyden, her socially awkward 19-year old "niece," Judith, and the shadowy Nick Scratch ("I think he's a serial killer"). Summoning her boyfriend from his studio in the cellar, Kat introduces Tom to Brom ("Hey, that rhymes!"). At Kat's urging, Brom makes up a song on the spot about Tom's shirt. When Tom says it sort of reminds him of "Little Brown Jug," the aspiring songwriter is deeply offended, insisting he'd never even heard of the song. Before she leaves, Kat persuades Tom to allow her to throw a "Welcome-Tommy-To-Sleepy-Hollow-Condos" Party. At his place, of course. And that's when all hell breaks loose. Literally.

Petkash, Brian. *Mistakes by the Lake*. Madville Publishing (Lake Dallas, TX) 2020. PB \$19.95. Set in Cleveland, Ohio, from its earliest beginnings as a forested frontier to the urban blight of modern times, *Mistakes by the Lake* is a collection of ten thematically-linked stories spanning the many faces of the city's history: A motorman navigates his 1920s back-and-forth trolley until he snaps; a stockyards knocker encounters the Virgin Mary during the 1954 World Series; a wannabe wrestles his

unruly mind along the flammable 1960s Cuyahoga River; and a reinvention of Henry IV, a young man must either stick with his bumbling criminal crew or uncover legit ways to support his mother and transgender Gramps.

Roth, Jerry. *Bottom Feeders*. Hellbender Press (Mechanicsburg, PA) 2020. PB \$19.95.

Would you recognize the Devil if you met him? A decaying prison hides a dark secret. Robert Deville, the youngest prison warden in the history of the state, never expected to feel a supernatural connection in a prison. After discovering a diary, Robert learns a prisoner, rumored to be the Devil, was hidden away under his feet. Was this prisoner responsible for a fire that killed hundreds of prisoners? Did he play a part in the murder of a local family years earlier? Robert must learn the prisoner's true identity and unravel why he hasn't aged in decades.

Russell, Mary Doria. *The Women of the Copper Country*. Atria Books (New York, NY) 2019. HC \$27.

In July 1913, twenty-five-year-old Annie Clements has seen enough of the world to know that it's unfair. She's spent her whole life in the mining town of Calumet, Michigan, where men risk their lives for meager salaries—and have barely enough to put food on the table for their families. The women labor in the houses of the elite, and send their husbands and sons deep underground each day, dreading the fateful call of the company man telling them their loved ones aren't coming home. So, when Annie decides to stand up for the entire town of Calumet, nearly everyone believes she may have taken on more

than she is prepared to handle. Yet as Annie struggles to improve the future of her town, her husband becomes increasingly frustrated with her growing independence. She faces the threat of prison while also discovering a forbidden love. On her fierce quest for justice, Annie will see just how much she is willing to sacrifice for the families of Calumet.

Schultz, Connie. *The Daughters of Erietown*. Random House (New York, NY) 2020. HC \$28.

1957, Clayton Valley, Ohio. Ellie has the best grades in her class. Her dream is to go to nursing school and marry Brick McGinty. A basketball star, Brick has the chance to escape his abusive father and become the first person in his blue-collar family to attend college. But when Ellie learns that she is pregnant, everything changes. Just as Brick and Ellie revise their plans and build a family, a knock on the front door threatens to destroy their lives. The evolution of women's lives spanning the second half of the twentieth century is at the center of this novel that portrays how much people know—and pretend not to know—about the secrets at the heart of a town, and a family.

Sittenfeld, Curtis. *Rodham*. Random House (New York, NY) 2020. HC \$28.

In 1971, Hillary Rodham is a young woman full of promise: *Life* magazine has covered her Wellesley commencement speech, she's attending Yale Law School, and she's on the forefront of student activism and the women's rights movement. And then she meets Bill Clinton. A handsome, charismatic southerner and fellow law student, Bill is already planning his political

career. In each other, the two find a profound intellectual, emotional, and physical connection that neither has previously experienced. In the real world, Hillary followed Bill back to Arkansas, and he proposed several times; although she said no more than once, as we all know, she eventually accepted and became Hillary Clinton. But in Curtis Sittenfeld's powerfully imagined fiction, Hillary takes a different road. Feeling doubt about the prospective marriage, she endures their devastating breakup and leaves Arkansas. Over the next four decades, she blazes her own trail—one that unfolds in public as well as in private, that involves crossing paths again (and again) with Bill Clinton, that raises questions about the tradeoffs all of us must make in building a life.

Snyder, Lucy A. *Halloween Season*. Raw Dog Screaming Press (Bowie, MD) 2020. PB \$14.95.

Halloween is the most wonderful part of the year for many of us. For dedicated fans, the season begins when the leaves start turning autumn colors and doesn't finish until Hallowtide ends in November. With it comes a whole lot of fun: scary movies and stories, haunted houses, seasonal sweets, spooky decorations, costume parties, and of course trick or treat. But Halloween is also a deeply spiritual time for some; it's an opportunity to remember and honor loved ones who have passed on. Master storyteller Lucy A. Snyder has filled her cauldron with everything that Halloween means to her and distilled it into a spell-binding volume of stories. Within these pages you'll find thrills and chills, hilarity and horrors, the sweet and

the naughty. One of the best things about Halloween is you don't have to be yourself. So go ahead and try on a new mask or two...you may discover hidden talents as a witch, a pirate, a space voyager, a zombie fighter, or even an elf. This is the perfect collection to celebrate the season of the dead or to summon those heady autumn vibes whenever you like. You may even find a couple of tales that evoke a certain winter holiday that keeps trying to crowd in on the fun. In the worlds within this book, every day is Halloween!

Stine, Alison. *Road Out of Winter*. Mira (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) 2020. PB \$17.99.

Wylodine comes from a world of paranoia and poverty—her family grows marijuana illegally, and life has always been a battle. Now she's been left behind to tend the crop alone. Then spring doesn't return for the second year in a row, bringing unprecedented extreme winter. With grow lights stashed in her truck and a pouch of precious seeds, she begins a journey, determined to start over away from Appalachian Ohio. But the icy roads and strangers hidden in the hills are treacherous. After a harrowing encounter with a violent cult, Wylodine and her small group of exiles become a target for its volatile leader. Because she has the most valuable skill in the climate chaos: she can make things grow.

POETRY

Bosley, Cindy. *Quilt Life*. Bottom Dog Press (Huron, OH) 2020. PB \$16.

In *Quilt Life*, Cindy Bosley's images have great depth because she refuses to shy away from hard truths. A seer

of the natural world, she knows the heart's small ship must be rebuilt and not boxed for display. Her poems are "not the easy kind of talk."

Caine, Danny. Photographs by Tara Wray. *El Dorado Freddy's: Chain Restaurants in Poems & Photographs*. Belt Publishing (Cleveland, OH) 2020. PB \$20.

El Dorado Freddy's may be the first book of fast food poetry. In "Olive Garden," "Culver's," "Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen," "Cracker Barrel," "Applebee's (after James Wright)" and other poems, Caine "reviews" chain restaurants, taking on topics such as parenting, the Midwest, politics, and chicken fingers along the way. Caine's funny, deceptively accomplished poems are paired with Tara Wray's color-drenched photos. The result is a literary yet goofy book about American food and identity, set in a Midwestern landscape where people eat at chain restaurants, even when they know better.

Carpathios, Neil. *The Door on Every Tear: Poems*. Resource Publications (Eugene, OR) 2020. PB \$10.

To get at the mysterious inner essence of human experience requires an almost savage preoccupation with attentiveness. By keenly looking outward, then corkscrewing deeply inward, Neil Carpathios attempts to locate and "understand / the origin of all tears." What is the function of sadness? How can one know delight in a world of conflict, pain, and loneliness? How do birth and death overlap in this miraculous place? Clues are uncovered to these and other questions in surprising moments, such as when the poet eavesdrops on two angels hovering in the corner of

his dying mother's hospital room, or when a homeless friend describes the art of homelessness. Ghosts are everywhere, as are the flesh and blood people that make life worth living. In poems of rare and raw honesty and directness, Carpathios invites the reader into the beautiful, and awful, silences of his heart.

Gage, Joshua, ed. *The Ohio Haiku Anthology*. Cuttlefish Books (Pepper Pike, OH) 2020. PB \$10. Haiku is experiencing a resurgence in popularity and success in Ohio. For the first time in twenty years, haiku poets from across Ohio are gathered in one anthology to showcase their talent. This collection serves as a celebration of haiku in Ohio, both past and present, and exists as a testament to the lasting success of haiku in Ohio as well as its future potential.

Jewell, Jessica. *Dust Runner: Poems*. Finishing Line Press (Georgetown, KY) 2020. PB \$19.99. Jessica Jewell's powerful collection *Dust Runner* immerses us in a landscape of harsh beauty, faith, and endurance. Jewell situates the audience as confidante, using spare lyric meditations, evocative narratives, and glimpses of the epistolary to offer a deep recounting of life during the Dust Bowl.

Renae, Kiya. *Through Her Own Eyes: This is Only the Beginning*. CreateSpace/Kiya Renae (Cincinnati, OH) 2016. PB \$9.95. From author Kiya Renae: It has been my experience that most days will be spent searching for your better self; seeking identity, placement, fulfillment, and satisfaction. People spend so much time planning, then waiting for the right time; how

much time has passed tends to go unnoticed until one day, you look in the mirror and have to introduce yourself to yourself for the first time. Life will teach you that there is no “right time.” Life is a journey of trial and error; and true growth and an earnest living is more than often accompanied by ups and downs. There is no cheat code to life. My goal for women everywhere is to find themselves. By “finding yourself,” get in touch with your inner soul and emotional being and allow even your deepest pains to be a source of strength. We all get stuck in moments, question the uncertain, and get scared when we have no option but to make a change within. Through these words and experiences, I hope that we can build each other in our similarities and not focus so much on our differences. It is time to make a conscious effort to be our better selves. Remember, *This Is Only the Beginning*.

Sabol, Barbara. *Imagine a Town*. Sheila-Na-Gig Editions (Russell, KY) 2020. PB \$20.

The poems in *Imagine A Town* reveal how a confederacy of places—a hometown, adopted city, a neighborhood—conspires to shape identity, especially when one’s sense of self butts up against the values and expectations embraced by that place. These narratives convey how a girl’s long view is foreshortened by smokestacks, slim resources, and the rough Alleghenies circling her blue-collar existence. Self-discovery also manifests through a reckoning of events outside the kitchen window, and in the wider world. Conversely, distance from the speaker’s origins gently tightens the grasp of that place as she reconciles inevitable regrets exacted by her departure.

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Alt, Jeff. Illus. by Hannah Tuohy. *The Adventures of Bubba Jones 4: Time Traveling Through Grand Canyon National Park*. Beaufort Books (New York, NY) 2020. PB \$9.99. In the fourth book of this award-winning national park series, Tommy “Bubba Jones” and his sister, Jenny “Hug-a-Bug,” uncover amazing facts about the Grand Canyon while on a mission to solve a park mystery. This is no ordinary brother and sister duo; they are part of a legendary time travel family with a mission to preserve and protect our national parks and have developed a reputation for solving mysteries. As they time travel back hundreds, thousands, and millions of years, they not only learn about the past, but also experience it. They encounter all sorts of wild creatures and plants, meet the people involved in the establishment of the national park, learn about the Native Americans that call this land home, and unravel some of the park’s secrets.

JUVENILE

Muth, Jon J. *Addy’s Cup of Sugar: Based on a Buddhist Story of Healing*. Scholastic (New York, NY) 2020. HC \$17.99.

Addy has moved to a new neighborhood with her beloved kitten, Trumpet. They are best friends, and inseparable. But when Trumpet is hit by a car, Addy seeks her wise friend, Stillwater. She is sure he will know how to bring Trumpet back to life. Stillwater tells Addy she will need to find a special medicine. To do this, she must go to

everyone in the neighborhood and collect a cup of sugar. But there is one condition: it can only come from the home of someone who has never been touched by loss. Addy goes from house to house. And when she returns home, Stillwater asks for her cup of sugar. But, of course, she has none. For there isn’t a person who has not felt the pain of loss. How Addy comes to understand how this special medicine works makes for a reassuring story of consolation and healing.

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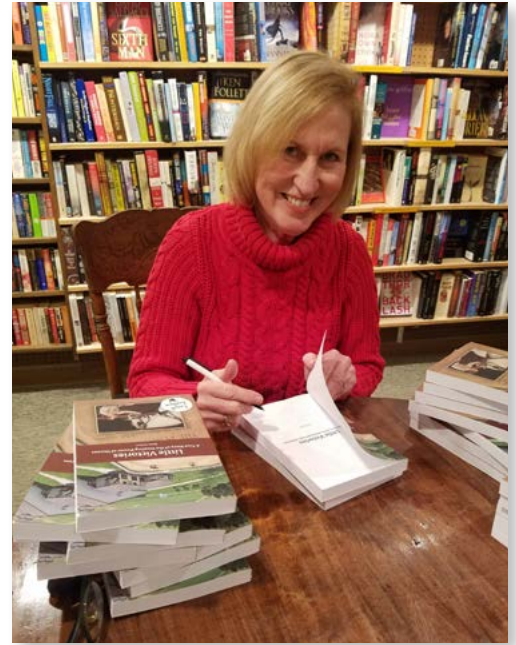
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Why I Support Ohioana

I confess, before I attended my first Ohioana Book Festival as an author in 2015, I thought the Ohioana Library Association was a joint effort between Ohio and Indiana! Now I know that Ohioana refers to all things Ohio and I am so happy to be a part of the organization as a new Board member and volunteer. This small but mighty nonprofit does everything to enhance Ohio literature by connecting readers and Ohio writers, past and present. In addition to the impressive annual book festival that showcases new and seasoned authors and illustrators who are proud of their Ohio roots, Ohioana organizes and hosts the prestigious book awards that honor and recognize the accomplishments of a broad range of talent.

Now, Ohioana is reaching even further to connect the literary sites around the state to increase awareness of Ohio's rich heritage through the introduction of the Ohio Literary Trail. The map, hosted on the website ohioana.org and promoted statewide, invites travelers to discover literary treasures in their own backyard and beyond. For many travelers/visitors, it may be their first exposure to Ohio's role in shaping literary culture.

Ohioana's impressive library collection preserves books, sheet music, scrapbooks, and works by Ohioans and about Ohio. This is a worthy organization that spends every penny wisely to support literature and help it flourish, giving back to Ohio in everything it does. If you are able to do so, I encourage you to support Ohioana through your involvement and financial support—the benefits to Ohio are immeasurable.



An award-winning marketing professional with more than two decades as a Northeast Ohio public relations agency owner, Betty Weibel is also a former newspaper journalist and the author of two nonfiction books, most recently *Little Victories*. She serves on the boards of both the Ohioana Library Association and Ohio History Connection.

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