

OHIO *ana* QUARTERLY

WINTER 2018 | VOL. 61 NO. 1



Collecting, Preserving, and Celebrating Ohio Literature

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OHIOana QUARTERLY

WINTER 2018

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From the Director

Dear Friends,



*Across the hills and down the narrow ways,
And up the valley where the free winds sweep,
The earth is folded in an ermined sleep
That mocks the melting mirth of myriad Mays.*

This is the opening stanza of the poem, “A Winter’s Day” by the immortal Ohio master of verse, Paul Laurence Dunbar. What better way to introduce this winter issue of the *Ohioana Quarterly*, which is dedicated to Ohio poets and poetry?

Dunbar’s historic home takes center stage as the fifth in our series of “Ohio Literary Landmarks.” Bryan Loar journeys to Dayton where, at the turn of the last century, the son of slaves and a childhood friend of the Wright Brothers went from being a \$4-per-week elevator operator to one of the most celebrated poets of his time. Our special thanks to the Ohio History Connection, which manages Dunbar House as a state memorial, the first to be dedicated to an African American when it was opened to the public in 1936.

Governor John Kasich has just announced the second Poet Laureate for the state of Ohio: Dave Lucas, who is included in our “Language of Poetry” feature story in this issue. We’re delighted to have sat down with the first Ohio Poet Laureate—Amit Majmudar—for a conversation about the people, places, and experiences he encountered during his two years in that singular role.

But why stop at one poet when you can have ten? In addition to our conversation with Amit, we present a “virtual” roundtable with nine other poets who live, work, and write in Ohio. Their lively discussion shows why Ohio is, and always has been, a great home for poets and poetry.

Of course, as with every issue of the *Quarterly*, you’ll also find reviews, a list of titles received, and a calendar of upcoming events. And, in keeping with our poetry theme, we thank poet and author Michael J. Rosen for sharing his personal thoughts in our Support Ohioana pages.

Speaking of upcoming events, mark your calendars now for Saturday, April 14, as we present the twelfth annual Ohioana Book Festival. Each year the event gets bigger and better—and it’s still free and open to the public. We look forward to seeing you there!

David E. Weaver
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David E. Weaver', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ON THE COVER

A photograph of the legendary poet Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906), courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.



The Dunbar House

By Bryan Loar

The Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial is an incredible literary landmark located just west of the Miami River and downtown Dayton. The memorial is an important testament to the power of poetry—a force that transcends race, class, and geography.

THE VITALITY OF DUNBAR

Before there was a Harlem Renaissance, Paul Laurence Dunbar provided the bridge from the oral traditions of an enslaved people to a broader audience and brought to light the pride, aspirations, anger, and joys of the black community. He was one of the first black writers to become nationally known, honored twice by President Theodore Roosevelt, and called the “most promising young colored man in America” by Frederick Douglass. Dunbar influenced innumerable writers and poets, including Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient Maya Angelou.

A child of former slaves, Paul was born in Dayton, Ohio, in 1872. He led a momentous and challenging life until his untimely death at the age of 33. From as early as

seven, Paul wrote verse. He was encouraged throughout his school years and found success during his time at Dayton’s Central High School. The only black student in his class, Dunbar was the class president, school paper editor, and president of the Philomathean Society, the school’s literary organization. Two years before graduating, he published work in the Dayton *Herald* and was the editor of the Dayton *Tattler*, a newspaper for the black community printed by fellow classmate Orville Wright and his brother Wilbur. The class song Dunbar composed was sung at commencement. However, Paul’s early success and acceptance were often impeded by living in an era of prejudice.

After his graduation in 1891, racist attitudes kept Dunbar out of journalism and law, forcing him into menial labor as an elevator operator. Trying to support himself and his widowed mother on \$4 a week was extremely challenging. However, Paul persisted. He used his free moments on the elevator to read and write, and, in 1892, he was invited to address the Western Association of Writers, an opportunity arranged by a former teacher.

After his address, Dunbar began to receive inquiries about speaking engagements. In 1893 with the help of financial backing, he self-published his first book of poems, *Oak and Ivy*. Selling them for \$1 to passengers riding his elevator, he repaid his debts and now had a tangible product of his creativity.

With Dunbar’s second book, *Majors and Minors*, his career skyrocketed with a favorable, albeit racist, review in *Harper’s Weekly*. Within six short years, he moved to New York, traveled to London, moved to Washington, D.C., worked for the Library of Congress, relocated to Colorado, gave numerous readings stateside and abroad, battled alcoholism and an abusive temper, and married and then separated from his wife, Alice Ruth Moore.

Paul Laurence Dunbar House, Dayton, Ohio



In 1899 Dunbar was diagnosed with tuberculosis, and by 1904 his health was such that he returned to Dayton to live with his mother. By 1906, Dunbar was dead. In just 13 years, Paul published his entire body of work, an incredible feat.

INTEGRITY IN WRITING

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Paul Dunbar was well known and regarded for his dialect poetry, even though it constituted only a portion of his total body of work. In all, Dunbar wrote more than 400 poems, four novels, four collections of short stories, numerous uncollected stories, lyrics performed on Broadway, libretti, and editorials that remain relevant.

Dunbar's oeuvre is multifaceted, even contradictory. Poems like "We Wear the Mask" and "Sympathy," as well as the short story "The Lynching of Jube Benson," specifically address brutality and injustice. When Paul writes "with torn and bleeding hearts we smile," his thoughts are clear on a society of repression. However, other works, like his novel, *The Fanatics*, have been criticized for fueling stereotypes and producing caricatures of the black community. In contemplating Dunbar's literary legacy and attempting to reconcile these contradictions, poet and American Book Award-winner Nikki Giovanni writes, "The message is clear and available to us if we invest in Dunbar the integrity we hope others will give us."

THE DUNBAR HOME

Stepping into the home of Matilda and Paul Dunbar, which features many of the original furnishings, is an incredible experience. Comfortable and far from austere, the Italianate house invites exploration and an understanding of the Dunbars' lives at a deeper level.

The home was an endearing gift from a grateful son to a loving mother. As the Dunbars moved constantly during Paul's youth, the gift of a permanent residence must have been especially touching. Matilda Jane Burton Murphy Dunbar primarily taught herself to read, and, when Dunbar was four, his mother passed along the gift of literacy. Matilda recognized her son's talent early on and ensured that, unlike Dunbar's half-brothers, who left school to support the family, Dunbar would rise through education. Toiling as a laundress, Matilda provided a life that allowed Dunbar to thrive.

Built in the late 1800s with such additions as a summer kitchen and upstairs bathroom, the Dunbars' two-story brick home is modest and welcoming. Walking in, one immediately feels at home—the sound of the wooden exterior door opening, the sight of Paul's portrait above a hearth, and the warm light cascading into the entryway envelope visitors. Downstairs, guests will find a common area with a fireplace, a formal room with Matilda's bible, dining room, kitchen, and summer kitchen. Much of the furniture is original, and the tasteful wallcoverings are original, reproductions from the original prints, or period reproductions. Upstairs, visitors are greeted with even more treasures.

On the second floor, rooms are flooded with gorgeous natural light. The furnishings and personal items give the sense that Paul or Matilda Dunbar might turn the corner at any moment and cordially greet their visitors. Walking towards the back of the house, hearing footsteps resound on century-old wood flooring, one finds what is rumored to be Paul's toothbrush in the upstairs bathroom. The bathroom with full bath, a luxury at the turn of the twentieth century, also houses original wallpaper tucked away in a small cubby. Leading to the bathroom are Matilda's room and an attached smaller

Matilda Dunbar. Courtesy of the Ohio History Connection..





Dunbar's room at his home in Dayton.

room staged as a sewing area. A period patchwork quilt drapes Matilda's bed. Continuing to the front of the house, visitors find Paul's room and his affectionately named "Loafingholt."

Simply decorated walls of Neapolitan yellow roses, a minimalist oriental floor covering, and modest furniture create a serene sense of economy in the room that supported the poet in his final years. Visitors are immediately struck by the room's stillness as soft light bathes Paul's wrought-iron bed. At the foot of this bed rests a steamer trunk that may have accompanied Dunbar on his world travels, and is topped by well-worn shoes and a hat box. Further into the room, a walking cane, a lamp, and a Remington typewriter sit at the ready. What must the room have sounded like when Paul typed "Bein' Back Home" and other poems from *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow*?

*Kind o' nice to set aroun'
On the old familiar groun',
Knowin' that when Death does come,
That he'll find you right at home.*

Paul's "sylvan, cool retreat" at the front of the house certainly has all the features needed to loaf about. The room's amply cushioned Morris chair with reclining back and inviting daybed combined with bookcases straddling both ends of the room make it a literary "man cave." The wooden desk with writing set and inkwell inhabit Loafingholt's remaining corner. Mementos from Paul's travels lay scattered throughout, including, somewhat surprisingly, a coconut from Paul's time in Jacksonville, Florida. The warm colors of the original orange and crimson rug as well as the wood furniture contrast nicely with the cool wallcovering. The room also holds a small hexagonal table and oriental tea set. One can easily imagine Paul entertaining such guests as his biographer, Lida Keck Wiggins, in this cozy den.

A FIRST FOR THE UNITED STATES

The importance of Paul Laurence Dunbar cannot be understated. During his brief life, Dunbar's artistic endeavors demonstrated to the world the strength of the black intellect. Further, his work lifted the spirits and aspirations of a national black community. It is only proper that the Ohio Legislature should recognize Dunbar's legacy, even at a time when the government condoned segregation.

In 1936, Ohio's 91st General Assembly made the Dunbar home the first state memorial dedicated to an African American. The memorial was placed in the care of what is now the Ohio History Connection.

Over the years, the memorial expanded to include two additional houses. In 2003, the Dunbar home was restored to include nearly exact replicas of wallcoverings and other improvements. A visitor center was also constructed. The additional space provides meeting rooms for community groups, a museum for a curated selection of Dunbar's personal artifacts, and a gallery for collaborative exhibits between the memorial and other institutions.

In 2015, the Dunbar memorial became part of the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, which includes five additional sites: the Wright Cycle Company and Visitor Centers, Wright Company Factory, Wright Brothers Aviation Center, Hawthorn Hill, and Huffman Prairie Flying Field and Interpretive Center.

A typewriter sits in Dunbar's room at his Dayton home.



A VIBRANT LEGACY

The impact of Paul Laurence Dunbar can still be felt today. Students from Dayton's Northmont Middle School recently analyzed the poem "We Wear the Mask" and expressed their interpretations through artistic works. Students' drawings and poems can be found proudly displayed in the visitor center's gallery.

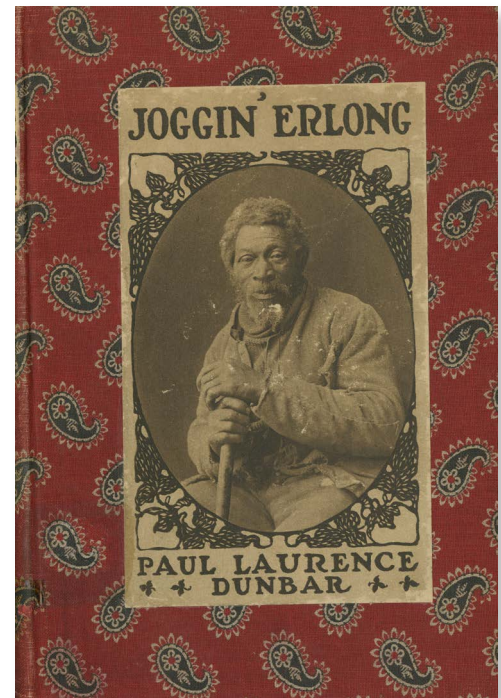
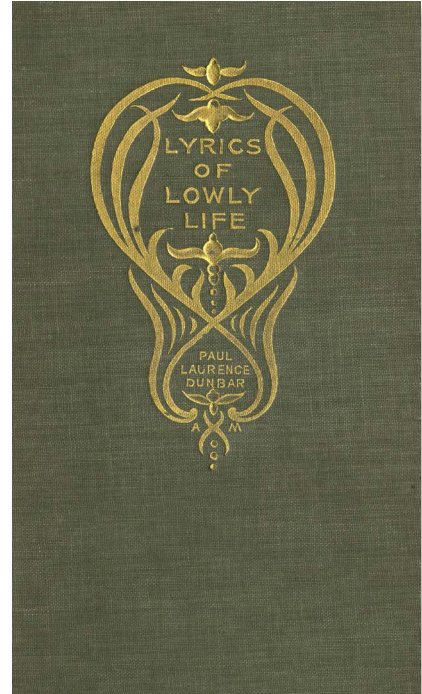
Dynamic and vivid art by teen artists from Montgomery County Juvenile Court Probation's Saturday Art Group (S.A.G.) enlivens the visitor center. Artwork designed by S.A.G. Director Shirley Tucker and created by at-risk youth celebrates the artistic and intellectual excellence of black culture.

The Dunbar Literary Circle, a collaboration of the National Park Service Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), meets regularly at the center. Created by seasoned arts-in-education advocate Omope Carter Daboiku, the literary circle has hosted several guest writers on a variety of topics.

Yet, Dunbar's influence goes beyond the local. More than forty schools across the United States are named after Dunbar. Numerous colleges and universities study and contextualize his works. And contemporary black pride movements have taken root from the seeds that Paul Dunbar planted.

Complicated and nuanced, Paul Laurence Dunbar is nonetheless a literary and cultural trailblazer, a shining example of artistic excellence who continues to inspire current and future generations.

The Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial, located at 219 Paul Laurence Dunbar St., Dayton, Ohio, is owned by the Ohio History Connection and managed by Dayton History, with tours operated by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior. For hours of operation and special events, visit www.ohiohistory.org. Special thanks to Park Ranger Gregg Smith of the Paul Laurence Dunbar House Historic Site, and to Bill Eichenberger, editor-in-chief of the Ohio History Connection's TIMELINE magazine. Further, the biographical sketches in The Life and Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar by Lida Keck Wiggins are a delight. Find the full text online through Smithsonian Libraries.



Two of Dunbar's poetry collections, *Lyrics of Lowly Life* and *Joggin' Erlong* (published the year of his death).

The Language of Poetry

By David Weaver

Paul Laurence Dunbar, whose historic home in Dayton is the subject of our winter cover story, is one of America's most celebrated poets. But he is not alone among Ohioans whose verses have brought them acclaim—Ohio has been and is rich in gifted poets. Poetry has long been one of the special strengths of the Ohioana Library's collection. Each fall we present an Ohioana Award for the most outstanding book of poetry of the past year.

It's not only Ohioana that celebrates poetry. From the creation of the Ohio Poet Laureateship in 2016 to poets reading new works in places ranging from coffee shops to book stores; from the state's Poetry Out Loud recitation competition for high school students to nationally recognized programs like the Wick Poetry Center at Kent State, it is clear: just about everyone loves poetry.

The *Ohioana Quarterly* recently talked to nine contemporary poets who live and work in Ohio. Several are well-known and well-established; others are relatively new to the scene. We asked each of them to share their inspiration and insights. Bios of each poet can be found at the end of the article.

Q: Where do you find your inspiration for writing poetry?

Ruth Awad: I hate to give such a broad answer, but it's the truth: anywhere. On a walk, remembering strange moments from childhood, reading a great book, gazing wistfully into my dogs' eyes. Pretty much anything that moves me deeply can end up fueling poems once it goes through the brain centrifuge.

David Baker: Sometimes I just take a breath and there it is. An idea, a musical phrase, a tone, a few words of enchantment. But that's what inspiration means. In + spirare = to breathe into, or to be breathed into. To be inspired means to receive breath: the breath of the gods, or of nature, or of the muses, or one's own spirit. This is where we get "spirit," in fact: spiro means "I breathe." I like how physical that is, how bodily, rather than the woo-woo mysticism we sometimes suggest by inspiration.

It's like this. Sometimes I feel some other thing has sat down beside me. That thing may be another poet's words, or it may come from loneliness and the desire for otherness, or it may be a voice among voices. It is in me and it is beyond me. I find it everywhere and nowhere.

I don't go looking for inspiration. Rather I try to stay open to the visitation, that little breath—whether I'm at a museum or bookstore, in the middle of the deep woods or the big city, alone or among others. It's funny, though: inspiration most often comes when I'm already at work. That's what I tell my students. Don't wait for inspiration to come find you. Do your work, and sometimes what we call inspiration will be there.

George Bilgere: I carry around a little spiral notebook, small enough to fit into my back pocket. As I'm going through the day if I happen to notice anything that seems like it might turn into a poem I jot a phrase or two down in the notebook. The next morning when I sit down to work I have few possibilities awaiting me in the notebook. Here's an example of how it works. One afternoon I was feeling like I was coming down with the flu. I strolled over to the local CVS to get some Theraflu. And there, in front of the automatic sliding door at the entrance, was a little dead sparrow. Maybe he'd flown into the glass, as birds sometimes do. People were stepping delicately over his little body as they came and went. It struck me as odd that people go to CVS (does anyone know what those letters stand for?) usually to buy medicine, and here they are being greeted by death. I picked the bird up by the tail, dropped him as ceremoniously as possible into the trash can, then went in and bought my Theraflu. And I jotted in my little notebook: "Theraflu, CVS, dead sparrow." The next morning I wrote a poem called "Birds" which went on to appear in a good journal and finally ended up in one of my books. If I don't jot these things down I tend to forget them, so the notebook is a great help to me.

Dionne Custer Edwards: I am surprised how much interestingness I find underneath stuff, around corners, and in the unlikeliest of places and spaces, how much there is to write about in the sparks, cracks, and crevices

of the everyday. I also read voraciously. I read lots of poetry every day, but I also love prose including creative nonfiction, journalism, and fiction. There is so much out there to read! There is also so much out there to experience. I find a lot of inspiration from other art forms including visual arts, performing arts, and film.

Kathy Fagan: I wish I were “inspired,” but I find that writing poems is mostly about a daily way of being in the world, fully immersed in sensory experience and open to even the most mundane and/or painful observation. What that gives me, then, isn’t the completed poem, but words, phrases, and lines with which to begin and continue to build poems. I also find these days that seeking out something just a little bit new—in nature, an art museum, a concert, travel—will crack me open just enough to be ready to write.

Dave Lucas: I write (and read) poems because the figurative language of poetry is the best way I know to get a glimpse of what it might be like to be someone else. And I write because I find language itself mysterious, intoxicating, maddening. For me, a poem usually begins in a phrase or image that sticks in the ear or mind like a stone in the shoe. Something nags at me and won’t go away until I address it. I can’t always make a poem out of it, but I rarely write a poem any other way.

Michael J. Rosen: If I were my ten-year-old self, it would be under flat rocks in a creek bed. It’s that same wonder in “turning things over”—and over and over in my mind—that begets poetry. So it’s less “inspiration” that I need and then more phenomena. Evidence. Some material thing that invites the play of questions and curiosity.

Maggie Smith: Poems for me usually begin with an image—something I’ve seen while walking, driving, looking out the window—or a line that comes to me and won’t let go. I recently flipped through my books and was interested to see how many poems began with a walk or a drive: “Singular” and “First Spring” in my first book, *Lamp of the Body*, were inspired by driving along 315 between Columbus and Delaware, Ohio; “Xenia, 1974” and “Last Night on Earth” in *The Well Speaks of Its Own Poison* were inspired by drives in Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. Many of the poems in *Good Bones* began this way, too, such as “Cloud Study” and “The Story of the Mountain.”

Myrna Stone: It pays to be observant, as any working poet will tell you. Inspiration is everywhere — in history, art, nature, the news, and now, for me, in the particularly oddball pleasures and absurdities life offers as I grow older. I also find great inspiration in the challenge of channeling the lives of historical people who intrigue me, people such as Chang and Eng Bunker, John James Audubon, and Maria Poe. Most of all, I think it’s essential to be intrigued, or better yet, obsessed, with one’s material, whatever it is, because if I as a poet am not, then why on earth should my readers be?

Q: When did you start writing? Was there a particular poet or poem that lit a spark, that made you say, “That’s what I want to do?”

Awad: I didn’t start writing what I consider passable poetry until college, but I first truly attempted poems when I was twelve. My mom gave me Sylvia Plath’s *Ariel* for my birthday, and it resonated to my core. I think I’ll always carry that spark with me, and I’m lucky that I had wonderful English teachers throughout my youth and splendor who saw this poetic inclination and encouraged me to keep writing.

Baker: I started writing poetry in college. Before I was a poet, I was a musician, a guitarist. In junior high and high school, I played lots of music in many kinds of bands. jazz, rock, country, big-band. I played solo guitar, I played with one or two others, in combos, in large bands, in Elks Club halls and proms and seedy bars and Italian restaurants. During this time I also taught guitar and bass and, sometimes, the baritone horn. But by college I also knew I didn’t want to be a professional musician. It was too hard on me, too wearing, too many bad hours. And so, in a few months I still don’t understand, I started to write with seriousness. I had never paid much attention to poetry before college, but I sensed suddenly that poetry was the most musical of the written arts—the most complex, with language most interested in phrasing, counterpoint, harmony, rhythm, and sound, as well as in story and information. I think I just put down my guitar and picked up a pen, trading one instrument for another. I still play my guitar, often, but not with such sustained rigor. What I mean is, it wasn’t a particular poet or poem that started me writing. It was a sound, an engagement with making sounds, sounds that also carried lexical meaning. Poems tell stories, but the good ones also make you want to dance.

Bilgere: I was a pre-med student at the University of Riverside in California. All was going well until I bumped into chemistry. What a disaster. My advisor said, “Look, just drop out of the class and try again next term. And take only one other class, a no-brainer course like creative writing.” Which is exactly what I did. And on the first day of that “no-brainer course” the instructor gave us a poem called “Autumn Comes to Martins Ferry, Ohio,” by the great James Wright. I looked upon it with wonder, like the astronomer in the Keats poem. Until that moment I had no idea that poems could be about the world I actually lived in. The fact that a poet could write about high school football, about dismal little steel mill towns, about broken men hiding out in bars from their wives — wow! I read that poem over and over, never dreaming I’d end up living not too far from Martins Ferry, and being a poet and a teacher of poetry. So thank you, James Wright. Your poem saved many lives that would have been needlessly lost had I become a doctor.

Edwards: As far back as I can remember I knew I loved to write. I do not remember a time not writing. As a child and young adult, I wrote poems, short stories, essays, and even co-wrote a few plays. However, if we are talking professionally, maybe that point when people started paying attention to my writing, I would say that was some time in college. I was a musician and a poet, developing work, a voice, and a stream of consistent (paid) gigs. I wrote songs with a band I was performing with regularly and wrote lots of poetry with a poetry troupe (Hybrid Tongues) I was performing with just after college. Also during that time, I got a gig writing for a local arts gallery, and shortly after that I started teaching writing in arts spaces and covering the arts as a contributing writer for *Alive*. I learned to make a living, piece together freelance income making things with my words. Back then I could not imagine that I could generate an income, albeit modest, from creative writing, but I did. As far as who “lit the spark,” I do not have a particular poet or poem in mind, but over the last twenty-five years, I’ve met so many writers who have pushed me, inspired me to write and teach. Those writers and teacher-mentors include Terry Hermsen, Mimi Chenfeld, Trish Houston, and the late Terrell Dunbar. They were wise mentors, teachers, and supporters in my early years just after college, and they are all still dear friends and mentors today. A few years ago, I took a summer workshop with John Drury, and around the same time, I took a creative writing class with

Andrew Hudgins. Working with both of them in a similar time and space in my life and writing, turned me inside out, pushed and pulled me to do things with words that I did not know I could do, should do, or wanted to do. I am so grateful for all the writers I’ve read and been able to study with over the years.

Fagan: I was a child when I began writing, but it wasn’t until I met Philip Levine, my college poetry teacher, that I understood that writing poems could be a vocation instead of a hobby. Levine came to poetry, like me, from the working class, and he believed, like me, that art and literature are for everyone, not just those with money, education, or privilege. I adored Sylvia Plath and Rilke when I was a kid, still do.

Lucas: I dabbled with poetry in high school (these efforts have thankfully been destroyed), but I began to believe I might be able to make a life in poetry after taking George Bilgere’s poetry workshop my sophomore year at John Carroll University. Before that, I’d imagined myself a novelist, but I soon discovered that I can’t write plot, and in fiction (as I learned) things actually need to happen. What a relief, then, that in poems the language itself can be “happening” enough.

Rosen: Likely, junior-high school provided the spark you mention... that burned, indeed, and made me see writing as a salve. A refuge. Nowadays we have different words for it, but I was The Sensitive Type, I suppose. An observer, often because I chose to be sidelined, not on the team, not doing what my peers were doing. Poetry was a matter of finding a way to hear myself think. A way to articulate, if only for myself, what wasn’t part of the familiar conversation and expected banter of the moment.

Smith: I started writing as a teenager, as many of us do, in part out of the emotional and intellectual growing pains of adolescence. It’s such a strange time. And while I was certainly influenced by the poets I read then—Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, Marge Piercy—I think my love of lyricism and metaphor came not from poetry but from popular music. I was a huge Beatles fan, and I remember listening to songs over and over and writing the lyrics down.

Stone: I fell in love with poetry when I was twelve years old and first read Alfred Noyes’s “The Highwayman.”

I took to reading it aloud, because as much as I loved the drama and romance of the story, I loved more the feeling of those words as they came off my tongue. They were musical and addictive. They were little shots of adrenaline straight into my sheltered Catholic schoolgirl heart. One day I said to myself, “You can write words that do that.” That’s when I knew I was going to be a poet.

Q: Who is your favorite poet of all time? Is there a contemporary poet you particularly admire?

Awad: That’s hard to say. I have a favorite for every mood and season. So let me just say that lately I keep reaching for work by Hanif Abdurraqib, Kaveh Akbar, Anne Carson, Zeina Hashem Beck, and Allison Titus.

Baker: Walt Whitman is my favorite poet of all time, if I have to name a favorite. Of course that’s unrealistic, too, since one poet is so connected to another. There’s no Whitman without Emerson, no Emerson without Wordsworth, no Wordsworth without Milton, and so on.

I admire so many contemporary poets. I admire them all, actually, for the work they do, the faith they express in this art form that isn’t particularly popular or lucrative. I admire poets for sitting down and doing the work, period.

Who in particular among our contemporaries? I admire W. S. Merwin, who in my opinion is the greatest poet currently working in English. I admire him for his poetry, his translations, his restless need for growth and change in his art, and also for his devotion to the environment. I admire so many more poets, for so many reasons. I admire some kid I don’t even know, who sits down with his or her laptop to write some rhymes when his or her buddies are playing ball or goofing off or whatever.

Bilgere: James Wright is right up there. I’d have to mention Thomas Hardy. The great Wisława Szymborska. Some contemporaries like Mark Halliday, Tony Hoagland, Dorianne Laux, and Billy Collins. OK, Thomas Lux. Don’t get me started. These are all poets who delight me, surprise me, and inspire me. And also scare me, but they’re so damn good I’m frightened into trying to be better, trying at some level to keep up with them, which is of course impossible.

Edwards: That is an impossible question. Yikes! There is no way I can narrow down to one, or even a few. We are living in a time of so much good work! I appreciate how contemporary writers and lovers of contemporary poetry are reading and sharing across social media, at literary readings, and in everyday conversations. I am especially drawn to writers that delve into the interior space (love, life, relationships, family, the domestic space). I also enjoy poets who explore identity, society, and socio-political topics. Some of my long time loves include Rita Dove, Gwendolyn Brooks, Lucille Clifton, Naomi Shihab Nye, Mary Oliver, Sylvia Plath, Carl Phillips, Yusef Komunyakaa, and so many others. I have a wide eye and ear for literary work. There is not enough space and time to list and list the myriad beautiful and important works of poets from the twentieth and twenty-first century.

Fagan: I honestly do not have a favorite of all time; I have many favorites throughout time. I crush pretty regularly on younger poets like Brenda Shaughnessy, Lo Kwa Mei-en, and Natalie Shapero, and re-read poets like John Keats, Audre Lorde, and Franz Wright. And I learn every day from my generation of poets and the generations above and below mine. I’m finding so much good poetry online these days that every week can bring a new favorite. After Ashbery died, I spent a couple of weeks re-reading his startlingly strong sentences.

Lucas: It depends when you ask me, but I consistently return to Walt Whitman with awe and gratitude and joy. “Song of Myself” remains maybe the most profound reading experience of my life. As for contemporaries, there are far too many to name, and the list, thankfully, grows all the time. So I’ll mention some poets I’ve been honored to call my teachers as well: George Bilgere, Rita Dove, Linda Gregerson, Alan Shapiro, Charles Wright.

Rosen: Am I alone in not having favorites? In feeling reluctant to name that one poet...or those ten books to take to the desert island...or that one famous person I’d want to meet? Gosh. I find that I’m persuaded and swayed and engaged by so many creators in so many genres. I often feel that reading science, art history, philosophy, animal history—all these subjects provide inroads to my work as a poet even more than other poets. That said, I devoured and continue to sustain myself on the works of Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Frost, William Meredith, Randall Jarrell, W. H. Auden, Richard Howard, Rilke, Neruda, Basho....

Smith: I couldn't choose just one, but here are some of my favorites: Marie Howe, Charles Simic, Gwendolyn Brooks, Mark Strand, James Wright, Beckian Fritz Goldberg, C. D. Wright, Amy Gerstler, Natasha Trethewey, Donald Revell, Terrance Hayes, Matthew Zapruder, Bob Hicok, Natalie Diaz, Wislawa Szymborska.

Stone: My favorite poet of all time is John Keats, the great nineteenth-century English Romantic poet. In my opinion, his breathtakingly beautiful poems, "To Autumn" and "Ode to a Nightingale," are two of the most nearly perfect poems in the English language. If they aren't already, they should be required reading wherever poetry is discussed or taught. Today there exists many skillful contemporary poets, but the one I admire most is Stanley Plumly. He is generally considered the finest poet at work today in the great lyric tradition of Keats. His eleventh and latest book of poems is entitled "Against Sunset," and in it Plumly is at the height of his considerable powers. The poems are linguistically demanding, and achingly beautiful.

Q: Ohio has been and is home to many wonderful poets. How do you feel about Ohio as a place for poetry and poets?

Awad: I moved around a lot growing up, and Ohio (Columbus specifically) is the first place that ever felt like home to me. And that has been really good for my writing, to have that stability and sense of belonging.

Baker: I like Ohio very much. I've lived here since 1983. It's got a rich, diverse history of poetry and poets. But this is important. It is no better and no worse than any other place for art to be born. I don't want to sentimentalize this place, or any place, as "better than" another place. Poets come from everywhere and poetry is possible everywhere.

But look at these names: James Wright, Rose Smith, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Mary Oliver, Philip Metres, Jill Bialosky, Kenneth Koch, Marilyn Nelson, William Matthews, Russell Atkins, Vijay Seshradi . . . the list goes on for acres. These are Ohio poets. Their work is as diverse, as strange, as homey, as musical, as inclusive, as disturbing, as startling as can be. The complexity of the poetry of Ohio is, of course, a picture of the complexity of the place itself and its people. About Ohio, and about

a sewer pouring into the Ohio River, James Wright once wrote, "And sometimes, even today, I call it beauty."

Bilgere: I was born in St. Louis, a gritty, somewhat busted up old place that in many ways resembles Cleveland, my home here in Ohio. I'm drawn to the ruins and wreckage of America's industrial past. I spent my college years in California, where any building over two months old is immediately torn down and turned into a smoothie stand. So coming to a city so full of the poetry of ruin was great. And now, of course, Cleveland is on the rebound, which is great, I guess, but how long before the smoothie stands and boutique spas arrive to replace the rusting industrial hulks of the Flats? America has a curious desire to erase its past, and I hope Cleveland holds on as much as it can to its rusty old character. Poets like broken things, they like damage. Get rid of the detritus of the past and the poets will fly away like disappointed crows over a stubble field.

Edwards: Ohio has such a robust landscape for poetry. I am originally from Cleveland, but I've lived in Columbus for the past two decades, have traveled widely to experience art, and I am always so grateful to return to a place that is committed to poetry, committed to the arts. From arts councils and foundations, to our libraries and cultural institutions, to our schools, small businesses, coffee shops, galleries, and the generous offerings of local and regional readings throughout Ohio—we do not take our creatives for granted. We nourish and support our arts infrastructure. I see that support as an artist and as a person working in and around the arts. Ohio is a great place for poetry and for poets!

Fagan: Ohio is poetry-rich. Look at the Ohio sky, how it changes!—that alone would produce poetry. But thanks to Ohio's colleges, supportive arts organizations, and diverse communities, poets thrive here. I'm from New York and lived for many years in California, and I can honestly say that I'm always very proud that I live and work in Ohio, land of poets, presidents, and astronauts.

Lucas: As far as subjects for poetry go, the idea of home is one of the more complicated and, to me, more compelling. Ohio is my home.

Rosen: I've often expressed my gratitude to the state's art councils for support and recognition for my art... at various stages of my career that was essential.

Likewise, the support for libraries, education, literacy, and the arts in general is unparalleled, which has been acknowledged nationwide. Bravo! One other aspect I particularly cherish—and what has grounded all of the work I’ve done—is that this state offers both the urban and the rural. A genuine mix of tradition and progress, creativity and practicality. I’ve spent half of my adult life in each realm. And much of my work is spun on how accommodation, friction, and difference exist between the two.

Smith: Ohio is very dear to me, as the state I’ve called home all my life. Many of my poems are set in Ohio, and place plays an important role in my writing. It’s important for me to demonstrate through my work that you don’t need be someone or somewhere else to be a writer. Ohio has a rich literary history—one that is being made every day, and one that we may someday be a part of ourselves.

Stone: Who said one has to live on the East or West Coast to have vibrant local and regional pluralities of poets? Ohio is chock full of poets, and I think most of us know, or at least know of, one another. Still, it’s always a thrill for me to come across a fine poem by a poet based in Ohio whom I’ve never heard of before. Ohio itself—with its generous Ohio Arts Council grants, its Ohioana Library’s spotlights on poetry, and its many universities’ poetry centers and reading series—helps support, encourage, and give press to poets of worth throughout the state.

Q: What is your latest work, and what’s coming next?

Awad: I’m working toward a second book, though I’m not sure what form it will take just yet. But I’m writing a lot about animals and the way both human and animal relationships shape us. That’s kind of an obsession of mine, so we’ll see where it goes.

Baker: I work all the time, on poems, essays, books, and on my students’ work, and on the *Kenyon Review*, the magazine where I work as poetry editor. You mean, though, my published work, I think.

My last book of poems was *Scavenger Loop*, published by W. W. Norton in 2015. I have a new book forthcoming—my life’s work, so far—called *Swift: New and Selected Poems*, which Norton will release in late 2018 or early

2019. This gathers my “best” and most representative poems from my previous books, and adds a group of new poems. A new-and-selected volume is like a poet’s greatest hits, and I’m excited and grateful for this wonderful chance I’ve been granted by my editor, Jill Bialosky. I also have a book of essays coming out in spring of 2018, called *Seek After: Essays on Seven Modern Lyric Poets*, which I’ve edited and for which I’ve contributed seven of my own essays.

Beyond that, hmm.... I hope I write a poem this week, or revise one. I know I’ll read a bunch.

Bilgere: I have a brand new book of poems called *Blood Pages* coming out from the University of Pittsburgh Press in February 2018. It’s my seventh book and I fully expect it to change the world—or at least to provoke a few dozen pretty interesting conversations in the local bars and cafes!

Edwards: I am in my twelfth year of *Pages*, the writing and arts program I do at the Wexner Center for the Arts, and I just love working with high school students and teachers on incorporating the arts into the English language arts classroom. Every year we explore radical new ways to think about and teach writing differently in the schools.

I am also reading my work here and there, performing with live bands when I can, and collaborating on cool projects, like the public art piece visual artist Stephanie Rond and I did on the side of the old SBX bookstore at 14th and High St. I am writing all the time, and one day, even in the midst of raising three boys, I may finish a few of the creative writing projects I’ve been working on over the years. Stay tuned!

Fagan: My newest book, which was published this year, is *Sycamore* (Milkweed Editions, 2017). I’m working on my sixth book of poems now and hope to have it finished next year. I’m not yet certain of the title, but the poems appear to be about various forms of perception and predation.

Lucas: My first book of poems, *Weather*, appeared in 2011. I’ve finished the manuscript for a second book; the fates will decide if that appears between two covers. The next poem always feels like it might never happen. I suppose that’s a good lesson for the rest of life, too.

Rosen: The Ohio State University Press released my first book of poetry for adults in twenty years—I’ve created several books of poetry for younger readers in those decades—last November. *Every Species of Hope* is a collection of georgics, haiku, and other poems—as well as drawings from my journals—that chronicle this... this homeostasis of my life here in the country: how I’ve managed to strike a balance among and with the other creatures who share these 100 acres. My hope is to follow that book with more in this vein of poetry and natural history, even as my work life continues to include other works for younger readers, as well as two new books I’m editing of James Thurber’s fables and art work.

Smith: My third book, *Good Bones*, was released by Tupelo Press in October 2017. Right now I’m touring in support of the book—giving readings, visiting universities, and teaching workshops all over the country—while also continuing to write and publish poems that will be part of the next book.

Stone: My latest published work is my fifth book, *Luz Bones*, which came out this past spring from Etruscan Press. It’s basically a book of formal dramatic monologues, in the voices of the famous and not-so-famous, which span five centuries of history. As for what’s coming next, I’m not quite sure. I have enough new poems now to consider, perhaps, a “New-and-Selected” volume. At the moment, at the very least, I’m eighteen manuscript pages deep into a sixth book-length work, currently entitled *The Resurrectionist’s Diary*.

Meet the Poets

Special thanks to our nine interviewees:

Ruth Awad is a Lebanese-American poet living in Columbus, Ohio, and the author of *Set to Music a Wildfire* (Southern Indiana Review Press, 2017), which won the 2016 Michael Waters Poetry Prize. The winner of several other prizes and recipient of a 2016 Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award, she has an M.F.A. in poetry from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Awad’s work has appeared in many literary publications. Learn more about her at ruthawadpoetry.com.



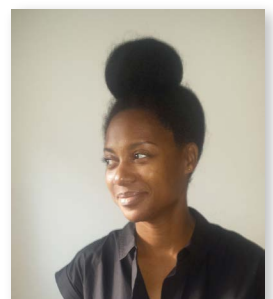
David Baker has taught at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, since 1984. Two new books are forthcoming: *Swift: New and Selected Poems* (W. W. Norton) and *Seek After: On Seven Modern Lyric Poets* (SFA University Press). He is poetry editor of the *Kenyon Review*.



George Bilgere lives in Cleveland, where he teaches creative writing at John Carroll University. His seventh collection of poetry, *Blood Pages*, will be released in January 2018. His work is familiar to National Public Radio audiences through his appearances on Garrison Keillor’s *The Writer’s Almanac* and *A Prairie Home Companion*. Bilgere has won numerous awards, including the Pushcart and the Ohioana Krout Poetry Prizes, and has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fulbright Commission, and the Ohio Arts Council.



Dionne Custer Edwards is a writer and educator working at the Wexner Center for the Arts. She created Pages, a writing-based program where she curates a year of learning experiences for 200 high school students in and around



the arts. Before her work with *Pages*, she freelanced as a writer, including five years as a contributing writer for *Alive*. In 2015, Dionne was featured on the Ohio Channel's "Book Notes," a series featuring writers from Ohio. Her work appears on several music compilations, most recently "The Tree of Life," a collaboration with renown jazz artist Pharez Whitted. Dionne lives in Columbus, Ohio, with her husband and three sons.

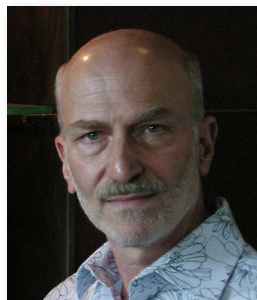
Kathy Fagan received an M.F.A. from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Utah. She is the author of five books of poetry, the most recent of which, *Sycamore*, was published in 2017. Fagan was named Ohio Poet of the Year for 2017, and is the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships. She is director of creative writing and the M.F.A. program at Ohio State University, where she is also a professor of English, poetry editor of the OSU Press, and advisor to *The Journal*.



Dave Lucas was named by Governor John Kasich in January 2018 as the second Poet Laureate of Ohio, succeeding Amit Majmudar. Lucas is the author of *Weather* (Georgia, 2011), which received the 2012 Ohioana Book Award for Poetry. Named by Rita Dove as one of thirteen "young poets to watch," he has also received a Discovery/*The Nation* Prize and a Cleveland Arts Prize. A co-founder of Brews + Prose at Market Garden Brewery and Cleveland Book Week, he teaches at Case Western Reserve University.

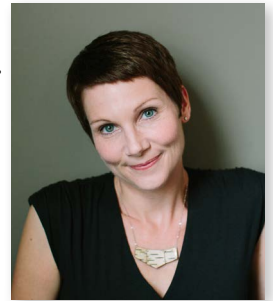


Michael J. Rosen is the author, editor, or illustrator of more than 150 books for adults and children that include humor, fiction, poetry, picture books, anthologies, cookbooks, and even a full-length play. His most recent collection of poetry is *Every Species of Hope: Haiku, Georgics, and Other Poems*. A four-time Ohioana Award winner, Michael has conducted creative programs over the last forty years at some 750 institutions across the country. For the last two decades, he has lived on a farm



in the foothills of Appalachia, just east of Columbus where he served for nearly twenty years as literary director of the Thurber House. He is currently creating an exhibition and monograph of Thurber's drawings for the Columbus Museum of Art.

Maggie Smith is the author of, most recently, *Good Bones* (Tupelo Press, 2017) and *The Well Speaks of Its Own Poison* (2015). Her poems appear in the *New York Times*, the *Paris Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Tin House*, *The Believer*, *AGNI*, *The Best American Poetry*, and elsewhere. In 2016 her poem "Good Bones" went viral internationally and was called the "Official Poem of 2016" by Public Radio International. Smith is the recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, and the Sustainable Arts Foundation.



Myrna Stone is the author of five full-length books of poetry and is a founding member of the Greenville Poets. She has received two Ohio Arts Council Fellowships, a Full Fellowship to Vermont Studio Center, is a two-time finalist for the Ohioana Book Award in Poetry, and the winner of the 2017 New Letters Poetry Prize. Her poems have been included in nine anthologies, and have appeared in more than fifty journals, including *Poetry*, *Boulevard*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Southwest Review*, *Ploughshares*, *River Styx*, *Nimrod*, and *Crab Orchard Review*.



Amit Majmudar: Ohio's First Poet Laureate

By David Weaver



December 17, 2015, was truly a momentous day when Governor John Kasich announced the appointment of Ohio's first poet laureate, recommended by a blue-ribbon panel under the auspices of the Ohio Arts Council.

The Governor's pick: Dr. Amit Majmudar, a medical doctor and a diagnostic and nuclear radiologist. Despite his unusual background, or perhaps in part because of it, Majmudar, an accomplished novelist, literary critic, and essayist, as well as poet, was an outstanding inaugural choice.

As Governor Kasich noted, Majmudar would "bring a unique perspective to this new role and is a powerful example to our young people that regardless of what career path they choose to pursue, they always can tap into their other passions." It was a perspective and example Majmudar was to share with Ohioans of all ages throughout the state during his two-year tenure.

Shortly before Majmudar turned the position over to his successor, he sat down with Ohioana to talk about his experience.

Q You have just completed two years as Ohio's inaugural poet laureate. As you look back, what were some of the memorable moments?

A I think I will most remember the many kind people I met at readings in different parts of the state. There was a lot of interest in poetry and interest in the post of poet laureate itself that I never expected. Under the category of "weird situations in which I have found myself," I will also remember the odd sequence of events that led to me asking a question, on national television, of both Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders at CNN's Columbus Town Hall debate. CNN discovered who I was because of the press surrounding the laureateship and invited me to submit questions. I asked a question—a very simple question about how each candidate would defeat Trump, if nominated—and it blew up on Twitter because the people running the debate had me ask it twice, once of each candidate, which was unusual as it was the only time they did that. Don Lemon had me on his show the next night, Time magazine interviewed me and wrote about me, and it all culminated in a death threat left at my workplace at three a.m. that got the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security involved. Things just got so weird there for a while! And it all started because I'd just been named poet laureate.

Q What poets have inspired you? What current poets do you admire?

A Every poet inspires me somehow, but Shakespeare and Dickinson the most. Among current poets I like Christian Wiman, A. E. Stallings, Kay Ryan, and Robert Pinsky a lot.

Q You have a busy career in medicine and a growing family. How do you manage to balance those activities with writing not only poetry, but also novels and short stories?

A I don't do a lot of things that other people do. I don't follow sports, or drink or smoke, or watch television series, or even watch very many movies. I don't go out with friends. My life is basically family, medicine, literature, work out, eat, sleep. If that is all you do with your life, you have more time for any one of those things. I guess I do these things by being a remarkably uninteresting person.

Q You have recently introduced a poem for the state, "All Things Possible," commissioned by the Ohio Arts Council. As you were creating the poem, what did you hope it would convey to readers and listeners?

A The poem includes—and incorporates—Ohio's Indian tribes, flora and fauna, state bird, state tree, the state's history with the Wright brothers as the birthplace of aviation, demographic changes over time, rivers, mountains, counties and cities (place names generally), tourist attractions, and history as part of the Underground Railroad. I wanted all that material to be incorporated into the poetry organically. Hopefully the reader or listener never thinks to himself or herself, "Oh, okay, now the poet is going to describe Ohio's flora and fauna...." It's structured to avoid that dragging effect. I also utilized complex, frequently dactylic metrical patterns within the rhymed framework of the couplet to make the poem of musical interest.

Q We are proud to claim you as an Ohio poet, and of course as our first poet laureate. What is your impression of Ohio as a place for literature and for writers?

A I think that any location on earth that maintains the basics of civil order and public health—that is, no wars and no plagues—is congenial to literary art. (Of course, if you survive either the war or the plague, you end up with interesting raw material for your novels.) So in that regard, Ohio's excellent. Ohio also has a system called OhioLINK that can get you any book your heart desires directly to your member library. Between that and Amazon.com, I have found that trekking miles to find a rare book, which used to be a real thing, is something book junkies no longer have to do. I also think Ohio's major cities have thriving arts organizations and groups of people interested in the arts both as audiences and practitioners, which is something I realized only after I became poet laureate.



Amit Majmudar recites poetry at the 2016 Ohioana Book Festival.
Photo by Mary Rathke.

Q Now that you've completed your term, what's next?

A More poems, more novels. But in the short term, my verse translation (with commentaries) of the ancient Hindu scripture, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, entitled *Godsong*, is forthcoming from Alfred A. Knopf in March 2018.

Thank you, Dr. Majmudar.

To learn more about the writings of Amit Majmudar, visit: amitmajmudar.com/

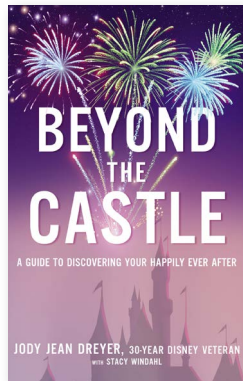
Book Reviews

NONFICTION

Dreyer, Judy. *Beyond the Castle: A Guide to Discovering Your Happily Ever After.*

Zondervan (Grand Rapids, MI) 2017 HB \$12.99.

For me, it was an easy decision to pick up *Beyond the Castle: A Guide to Discovering Your Happily Ever After*. I've been labeled a "Disney nut" by friends and family for most of my life — one of those people who listens to Disney music in her car, has a robust collection of Disney mugs, and knows all the shortcuts through the Magic Kingdom to get to the best rides at Disney World. (I'll even entertain — bore? — you while we wait in line for Space Mountain with random bits of Disney trivia!)



All joking aside, my love and respect for Disney goes beyond a cute mouse and cartoons. I have long admired the Walt Disney Company for its hallmarks of exceptional customer service, unwavering attention to detail, and ability to bring wonder and happiness to all ages in innovative ways. *Beyond the Castle* examines the lessons Jody Jean Dreyer learned in these subjects—and countless more—throughout her career with the Walt Disney Company. With thirty years of service and twenty-two positions under her belt, Dreyer is certainly an expert on Disney's corporate culture. She even spent a year in the coveted role as the Walt Disney World Ambassador in 1986. But this book is more than just a behind-the-scenes peek at Dreyer's time with the company; its true goal is to inspire readers to apply Disney practices and principles to their own lives—from personal matters to business and beyond.

The mix of personal anecdotes, company behaviors, and Disney fun is a winning combination. (A note: as part of the HarperCollins Publishing Christian division, faith references are also included, but the overall text is Disney-centric.) The different subjects and themes of each chapter give readers many opportunities for self-

reflection. I found myself pausing frequently to ponder questions like, "Am I the villain—aka 'challenge'—in someone else's story?" and, "Could I better control my own 'Queue Rage' and enjoy the journey instead of fixating on the destination?" The overall lessons apply well to both personal and workplace spheres, with plenty of wiggle-room in between. I think any readers seeking personal growth will discover something that resonates with them within these pages.

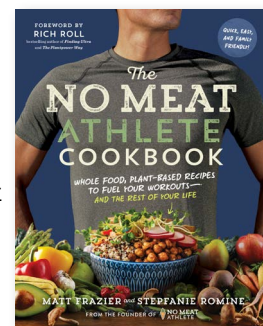
I very much enjoyed *Beyond the Castle*, finding it equal parts thought-provoking and entertaining. Whether you have a penchant for pixie dust or have never set foot in a Disney park, Dreyer's words offer magic for everyone. It's the type of book I will keep on my shelf and revisit for years to come—right next to a photo of my family in mouse ears.

REVIEWED BY KATHRYN POWERS, OFFICE MANAGER, OHIOANA LIBRARY, AND VOLUNTEER, SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOK WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS

Frazier, Matt, and Stephanie Romine. *The No Meat Athlete Cookbook: Whole Food, Plant-Based Recipes to Fuel Your Workouts — and the Rest of Your Life.*

(New York, NY) 2017 PB \$24.95.

Here in the Ohioana Kitchens, we pride ourselves on our dedication and open-mindedness (we are neither vegetarians nor athletes). We are even more proud of our ability to sniff out a good cookbook to share with our readers. *The No Meat Athlete Cookbook* fits the bill. Former Cincinnati resident and co-author and founder of TheFlexibleKitchen.com Stephanie Romine really knows her stuff.



You know that sometimes you prepare one or two things from a new cookbook and the result is "meh" at best. The dedicated professionals of the Ohioana Kitchens are pleased to report that we said "YUM" after every

single one of the half-dozen recipes we tried. Plus, we learned some things. For example, we had never used coconut oil for sautéing and were a bit worried. It turns out coconut oil imparts a lovely light flavor to the vegetables, a flavor quite a bit different from olive oil.

The recipes for soups, stews, salads, and dressings are all easy to prepare. And the quantities are humongous. After all, these were designed for athletes who are doing some serious work and need enough protein and good carbohydrates to keep up their strength. And as Romine points out, vegetables have fewer calories pound-per-pound than pretty much anything else.

Romine also provides a guide for many dietary options, including how to be oil-free. Each dish starts within an icon to identify a unique characteristic, FF — fast food, or a recipe that takes 30 minutes to prepare; GF/GFO — gluten-free or a gluten-free option.

Options are another strength of this book, as well as “blueprints” — recipes that are more like a framework that help you be creative and use what’s already on hand.

And despite this era when millennial folks are unfairly maligned for their addiction to budget-ruining avocado toast, Romine includes a recipe for that, as well.

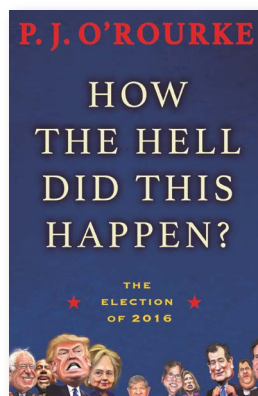
We here at the Ohioana Kitchens heartily endorses this fun and tasty book.

REVIEWED BY LESLIE SHORTLIDGE, EDITOR, OHIOANA QUARTERLY

O’Rourke, P. J. *How the Hell Did This Happen: The Election of 2016*.

Atlantic Monthly Press (New York, N.Y.) 2017 HC \$25.00.

Any fan of political satire will not be disappointed in P. J. O’Rourke’s latest book, *How the Hell Did This Happen: The Election of 2016*. O’Rourke slices and dices the candidates and events of the 2016 election with a good-natured attitude, all the while keeping his cynical wit front and center. His book is written in “real time,” as the events took place throughout the election. Some of the chapters



are re-published articles that appeared in magazines and on news websites during the campaign season. The reason there is no coherent narrative to the book, to paraphrase O’Rourke, is because there was no coherent narrative to the campaign.

Each chapter tries to make sense of the election while revealing mostly the nonsense of the events as they unfolded. He dissects these events in such wryly titled chapters as “The Last Damn Republican Presidential Candidate Debate I’ll Ever Watch” to “What They Stand For and Can We Stand It? Part I, Part II, and Part III”, followed by “Paying for What We Can’t Stand.” While dismayed by the absurdity of the events, he analyzes them with keen insight and wit.

He draws satirical, yet revealing portrayals of each of the many candidates and politicians involved in this election cycle. He skewers Rand Paul (for being “Libertarianish”) and Lindsey Graham (“The Nabisco graham cracker box has more Twitter followers than the Lindsey Graham cracker does”). His humor includes a chapter devoted to the imagined obituaries of every GOP Presidential hopeful. He also goes after the Democrats, excoriating Bernie Sanders, Joe Biden, and even Elizabeth Warren. Quite poignantly, he describes Warren as the politician who held the most accurate vision for a future America because she is an expert in bankruptcy law.

As expected, O’Rourke focuses most of his criticism on Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. He delves into the lighter side of campaigns by devoting a chapter to the fashion style of the campaigners. He describes Donald Trump as Rodney Dangerfield’s character, Al Czervik, in the movie *Caddyshack*. He refers to Hillary Clinton’s colorful selection of clothing as “stunning and unforgettable” and “visible only to bees; such as Bea Arthur, Susan B. Anthony or Bella Abzug.” He intimates that Americans appreciate bad taste or America wouldn’t look the way America does.

O’Rourke’s campaign analysis also includes references to history with more serious insight into how America has come to select our candidates. He discusses the *Federalist Papers*, quoting Hamilton, Madison, and Jefferson, who warned against the forming of political parties that could become too powerful and threaten a democracy. O’Rourke points out that each eventually did form their own political parties. He quoted

Washington's 1796 Farewell Address in which he warns that political parties could lead to despotism. O'Rourke wryly states, "In other words, Donald Trump. Or, for that matter, Hillary Clinton, supposing she won and carried the Senate and the House."

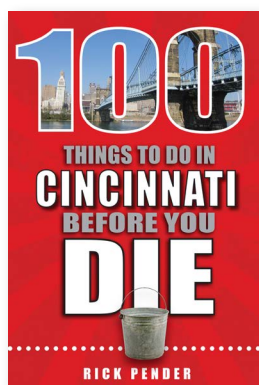
O'Rourke's book includes an overview of the 2016 election that touches on the debates, the primaries, the conventions, and analyses of the party platforms of what he considers to be one of the most absurd elections in American history. He quotes H. L. Mencken who said, "Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it — good and hard." For those who enjoy political satire with poignant overtones, P. J. O'Rourke's current book will make you laugh, make you grimace and leave you with much to ponder.

REVIEWED BY PEG BARGA, A RETIRED ART TEACHER WHO WORKED MORE THAN 35 YEARS WITH MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CINCINNATI AND COLUMBUS, OHIO. PEG ENJOYS TRAVEL, ART MUSEUMS, READING, AND MAKING ART.

Pender, Rick. *100 Things to Do in Cincinnati Before You Die*.

Reedy Press (St. Louis, MO) 2016 PB \$13.13.

Whether you are a first-time visitor to Cincinnati or a native of the city, Rick Pender's *100 Things to Do in Cincinnati Before You Die* is likely to have a few suggestions that might interest you. The book is divided into categories based on type of activity, making it very easy to find exactly what you're looking for, even if you're not sure what that is yet. Whether your goal is to scope out new restaurants and bars, find great hubs of music and entertainment, or discover local history, Pender includes some of everything. The brief descriptions of the activities and locations are useful for deciding if one of the suggestions in the book is something you want to spend your time on. Some of the highlights will be familiar to many who lived in or have visited Cincinnati before, such as tips to visit King's Island and other widely known attractions. However, with 100 different locations and activities to try out, there is very likely something new to be found, and Pender has certainly



highlighted some hidden gems as well. I definitely recommend picking this book up before your next trip to Cincinnati.

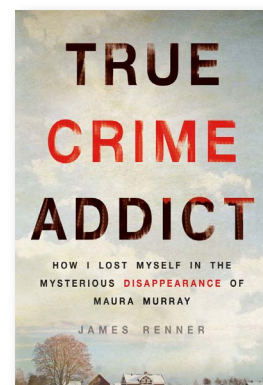
REVIEWED BY MORGAN PETERS, PROGRAM COORDINATOR, OHIOANA LIBRARY

Renner, James. *True Crime Addict: How I Lost Myself in the Mysterious Disappearance of Maura Murray*.

St. Martin's Press (New York, NY) 2016 PB \$9.99.

We should get something clear in the beginning. *True Crime Addict* is about James Renner. And to be fair to Renner, he tells us that in the book's extended title: *How I Lost Myself in the Mysterious Disappearance of Maura Murray*.

In this latest work, Renner traces the disappearance of the 21-year old University of Massachusetts nursing student, while also detailing his personal unraveling — premise being that a career chasing true crime stories causes Renner's personal life to tank.



The problem, however, is that it just doesn't work.

Renner never gives us reasons to care about him, or at least about the version of himself he details in the book. Instead, the callow narrator's personal tribulations become a distraction in the otherwise compelling story of Murray's disappearance.

From the book's opening, Renner's objectives are clear — draw himself as a highly intelligent dogged investigator with sordid character. He starts in a strip club, where he's gone after settling a lawsuit against a former employer. As he builds to the revealing, life-changing conversation he has with a stripper, Renner lets us know he's well aware of the machinations turning against him, dropping the vacuous line, "I am no longer surprised by the weird coincidences that occur in my life." The stripper tells Renner about her sister's murder, and Renner sees, as he puts it, that the universe wants him to write about true crime. From there, he goes looking for a story.

And he finds it in the disappearance of Maura Murray. On February 9, 2004, she sends emails saying she has to leave town because of a death in the family. Over the next several hours, she prepares to leave Amherst, packing personal belongings in her dorm room and car. She heads for New Hampshire, stopping to take cash from an ATM and buy liquor and a box of wine. Just outside Haverhill, New Hampshire, on Wild Ammonoosuc Road, her car spins on a curve and crashes. Butch Atwood, a local man ending a day's work, stops and asks Murray if she needs help. She declines, saying she has already called AAA. Seven minutes later, the police arrive, but Murray is gone.

Renner's strength lies in his investigative reporting. He spreads wide the story of Murray's disappearance, tracking down friends and relatives, and stopping to explore what could be mere coincidence or meaningful fact. He does it so well that Murray's story buries itself in the mind. It hangs around in there for several days, distracting like a nasty cold. The pages turn easy. But when Renner starts writing about himself, the pages don't turn fast enough.

After finishing his book about the abduction and murder of 10-year old Amy Mihaljevic, Renner began having panic attacks, which leads him to see a psychologist. She administers a personality profile test. As the psychologist puts it, he has results similar to Ted Bundy, the serial killer. Renner then delivers another of the insipid lines that pepper the book: "[T]hat's one of those statements you just can't unhear." He wants to be sure we know he's edgy, maybe a little dangerous. But wait, don't worry. He tells us he scored perfectly on the intelligence test and that, according to the psychologist, he has the intelligence necessary to temper his psychopathy.

As detailed and meticulous as Renner is in sorting through the events surrounding Murray's disappearance, he lacks rigor in other areas. At times, he even seems to belittle Murray for the purpose of further drawing the character—by this point caricature—he's drawn of himself. When exploring why Murray left West Point to attend UMass, he recounts how she was caught stealing makeup from the commissary at Ft. Knox, saying, "...she attempted to shoplift from the most secure military facility in the United States." If the security around the nation's gold bullion reserves is connected with the security of the post grocery store,

Renner has a point. If not — and it's not — then Renner is working much too hard to show us he's a clever guy.

Renner bottoms out in jail, spending a few nights in local lock-up for contempt of court. While incarcerated, he suffers mild drug withdrawal, admitting that he's probably been drinking too much and occasionally downing a few oxycodone. After being released, he regroups, telling his wife over dinner that he needs to continue to pursue the Murray mystery. Reasonably, his wife asks why, giving Renner a chance at some redemption, a moment to show some nobility. Instead, he explains, "Because I know I'm smarter than whoever it was who planned all this." So Renner continues knocking on the doors of Murray's friends and family, people who continue to grieve a loss and who often don't want to talk to him.

Throughout the book, Renner draws from his past to show us how closely we brush against being abducted or being the abductor, how near we are to menace at any time. It's hard to understand why he plots this nexus. Murray may not have been the victim of a crime. She could have wandered out into the New Hampshire night and died of exposure. She could have been abducted and murdered. Or it could be that her disappearance was all part of a plan to escape from her life, that she's living somewhere in Canada or northern New England. Renner explores all these possibilities, even to the point of seeing a psychic, who tells him to leave it behind, before the darkness follows him.

Sounds like good advice. Had Renner gotten it earlier, it may have saved him, his readers, and certainly the friends and family of Maura Murray, some torment.

REVIEWED BY MATT COOKE, A NATIVE OF IRONTON, OHIO, WHO LIVES IN ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Zurcher, Neil. *The Best of One Tank Trips: Great Getaway Ideas in and Around Ohio.*

Gray & Company (Cleveland, OH) 2016 PB \$15.95.

Road trip! We all respond to the call, for it means forsaking the everyday and seeking out the possibility of adventure, of fun, of memory-making.

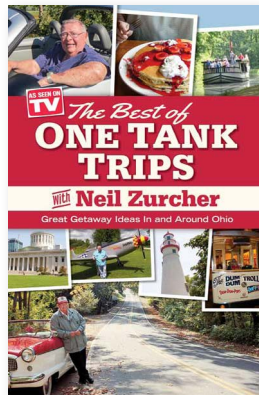
Neil Zurcher provides us with many irresistible-sounding getaway ideas in and around Ohio. To open this book is to get lost in possibilities.

Want ideas on where to take the family? Looking for a romantic getaway/hideaway? Love history and want to wallow in it? Like to visit the really weird, er, interesting? Look no further than Zurcher's very handy book.

He's been writing about travel within Ohio since 1980, and has several other books to his credit. He has been a contributor to AAA's *Ohio Motorist* magazine and to Cleveland's *Plain Dealer*, so he knows his way around the state. He calls this his "best of" book, listing his favorite destinations throughout the Buckeye State and several just beyond the line marking our boundaries.

The chapters are one-to-three pages long, and though they are information-packed, they are enjoyable reads. Zurcher's enthusiasm for these places is conveyed in each chapter. You'll turn to a new place that you think would hold no interest to you, and within a couple of paragraphs—Bam! He's got you.

Black-and-white photos illustrate each chapter, and when I saw the photo of the White Turkey Drive-In in Conneaut, I stopped and read his story of this open-air drive-in restaurant built in 1952 that is still run by the same family. Customers sit outside from early May to Labor Day in all kinds of weather. There's a roof, and shutters can be dropped, but mostly folks will shift from stools on one side to the other side away from the rain. The drive-in features Richardson Root Beer and turkey sandwiches made with their own spices. I'm a sucker for authentic mid-century local food-stops.



My family had a summer cottage in Conneaut when I was growing up in the late 1950s, but somehow missed out on an eatery that will now draw me from Columbus to Conneaut on a road trip inspired solely by *The Best of One Tank Trips*.

And along the way up and back, I'm sure I'll find other stops recommended by this book. It's organized very conveniently by regions of the state, and within those areas, the towns in which a Zurcher-pick is located are then listed alphabetically, to make it easy to find places wherever you are. Or you can just follow his end-of-the-chapter recommendations for other places to visit in that area.

Every autumn I take a short camping trip in the state. Next time, I won't leave home without *The Best of One Tank Trips*.

GEORGE COWMEADOW BAUMAN LOVES BOOKS AND TRAVELING. HE'S THE CO-OWNER OF THE ACORN BOOKSHOP IN THE GRANDVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD OF COLUMBUS

FICTION

Batiuk, Tom. *Lisa's Legacy Trilogy.*

Kent State University Press (Kent, OH) 2017 HB \$80.00.

Funky Winkerbean is a syndicated comic strip appearing in more than 400 newspapers worldwide. After writing and drawing the strip for twenty years, Batiuk changed the course of the strip, writing it more dramatically than comedically. No storyline better emphasizes that change than the cancer and death of one of the strip's main characters, Lisa.



Cancer has been dealt with, and dealt with well, in several comics/graphic novels. Three titles top my list in that respect. *Cancer Vixen: A True Story*, by Marisa Acocella Marchetto, is the most humorous of the bunch. *Mom's Cancer*, by Brian Fies, deals with the problems of the family of the afflicted one, from dealing with doctors and visits and treatments, to the endless barrage of

paperwork and insurance forms and money. *Our Cancer Year*, by Cleveland's own Harvey Pekar and Joyce Brabner, may be the most personal of the three, and is a heavy, if not happy, read in the end. Now I add to that list *Lisa's Legacy Trilogy* by Tom Batiuk.

In Book One, *Prelude*, the author puts together the strips that introduce Lisa to the series star, Les Moore. You follow their initial meeting, friendship, budding romance, and marriage. Book Two, *Lisa's Story*, details Lisa's struggles with breast cancer—acceptance, chemotherapy, remission, and recurrence. It is harrowing, frustrating, and heartbreaking. Book Three, *The Last Leaf*, takes place ten years after Lisa's death. Here, we find her widower husband trying to come to grips with the loss.

It is not easy subject matter, to be sure. But more and more of us are touched by cancer every day—whether it be ourselves, a spouse, a family member, a friend, or co-worker, cancer doesn't discriminate. In Batiuk's hands, we are given a long, epic view of the struggle one person has and how it affects all those around her for years afterwards. It is painful, it is frightening, it is solemn, and it is peaceful. It is a story that touches us all, and touches us in many different ways. And it is a story that needs to be read.

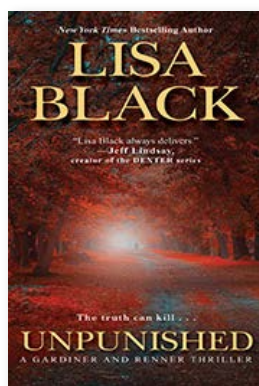
REVIEWED BY P. MICHAEL BRADSHAW, POET AND LIBRARIAN
AT THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO LAW LIBRARY

Black, Lisa. *Unpunished: A Gardiner and Renner Thriller #2*.

Kensington Books (New York, NY)
2017 HB \$25.00.

Newspapers make good backdrops for mysteries and murder as readers of *Unpunished* will discover. Robert Davis, a copy editor at the *Cleveland Herald* is found hanging in the pressroom.

Did Davis commit suicide? If so, why hang himself from the press? Maggie Gardiner, a forensic expert who studies the dead, and Jack Renner, a homicide cop who stalks the living, are called in to investigate. Having teamed up in the previous novel, *That Darkness*, they are wary of each other even though they make a good team.



Maggie follows the forensic clues, tracking down the strap, the fibers, and all those minute bits of evidence found on and around a body. Renner digs into the lives of Davis and all those at the newspaper. When the second murder occurs, the action heats up. Both Maggie and Jack question people's motives. Someone is hiding the truth about the newspaper and its employees.

There's a tension in this mystery that revolves around the survival of the newspaper, the printing presses, and the investigating duo. Secrets abound, making Maggie and Jack nervous. They question everything from motives of employees at the newspaper to the clues they are investigating. The truth is just within reach if only...

Set in downtown Cleveland, the story takes readers on a romp through city landmarks and provides an inside view of the mighty newspaper operation. For print lovers, there are many scenes set in the pressroom and a few that actually describe how modern printing presses work, particularly those that print newspapers.

Lisa Black's mystery is tight, and motives are well hidden from the casual reader. However, if you are a careful reader, you'll see the answers in black and white.

Lisa Black was a forensic scientist at the Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office with several books under her belt, all mysteries of one sort or another. Today she works as a latent print examiner and crime scene investigator for the Cape Coral Police Department in Florida, collecting trace evidence as needed.

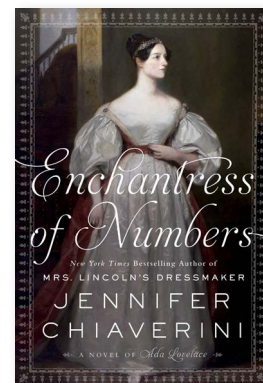
REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OHIO

Chiaverini, Jennifer. *Enchantress of Numbers: A Novel of Ada Lovelace*.

Dutton (New York, NY) 2016 HB \$27.00.

The Enchantress of Numbers, the most recent offering from prolific and popular novelist Jennifer Chiaverini, is written as a first-person memoir of an unsung heroine of the modern era: Ada Lovelace, the inventor of computer programming.

Born into wealth, privilege, and celebrity as the only legitimate child of nineteenth-century super-



star poet George Gordon, Lord Byron, Ada seemed to have it all. But despite the advantages, she was no more in control of her life than any other woman. And Ada, a mathematical prodigy, dearly wanted to contribute something important to the world. And indeed she did: Ada wrote an algorithm that gave instructions to the first computers: the realized Difference Engine and the unbuilt Analytical Engine, both invented by Charles Babbage in the 1830s.

The book follows the protagonist from her earliest memories of childhood to the always-looming shadow of the father, a man she never knew due to her parents' public and brutal estrangement and his early death. Ada was also firmly under the control of her mother, Lady Annabella Byron. Anabella, a wealthy woman with connections that extended to the royal family's inner circle, believed in equality for women and directed her daughter's rigorous education. However, Ada was never allowed the opportunity to exercise her imagination. It was believed that the "mad, bad, and dangerous to know" Byron had bequeathed to his daughter an equally dangerous tendency towards mental instability and against this specter, the young woman's mother was always on guard.

As we read, we are roused to sympathy for the brilliant Ada, who was apparently always held accountable—unfairly so—for her father's cruel treatment of her mother. It was up to Ada to be pure, focused, never overly emotional, never "manic"—an unrealistic paragon to make up for the shortcomings of her mother's life.

Always, Ada strives to find her way intellectually, to use her gifts to their fullest. But Ada lacks that which is most critical: the option to decide her own fate. Though her husband loves her, he controls the funds, and she must ask for her own money. Even upon finding a sympathetic tutor, Augustus De Morgan, after she was married and the mother of two children, she had to endure a cruel control on her temperament and abilities. As Ada paraphrases a warning Dr. De Morgan sent to her mother, "I should strive to master only what was already known. I must not under any circumstances attempt to discover something new."

Chiaverini revealed at a recent Ohio literary event that she spent a great deal of time with primary sources to research and write *Enchantress*. And Ada was the

original celebrity child—stalked and put upon as much as any child of a famous parent. If cameras had been invented, Ada would have been hounded by paparazzi.

Chiaverini explained that she has always been fascinated with women's stories—the women who were witnesses to history, but who seem to have been forgotten. It has taken some time, but now we know that Ada did indeed discover something new: the way to harness the power of a machine with a fierce energy that even in this modern era threatens to outstrip our understanding of it. How fitting that author Chiaverini wrote a novel of a woman consumed by a passion that few of her contemporaries understood, a passion that has outlasted the life of Ada, but shines even brighter than when she lived.

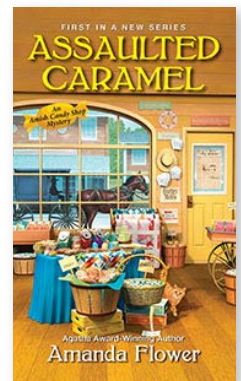
REVIEWED BY LESLIE SHORTLIDGE, EDITOR, OHIOANA QUARTERLY

Flower, Amanda. *Assaulted Caramel: An Amish Candy Shop Mystery #1.*

Kensington Mystery (New York, NY) 2017 PB \$ 7.99.

What's an Amish country town without a sweet shop? In the idealized town of Harvest, Ohio (think Berlin only smaller), there's trouble brewing downtown, where most of the buildings are being bought up by *Englisch* developer Tyson Colton, including Swissmen Sweets owned by Jebediah King. Bailey King, Jebediah's granddaughter and assistant chocolatier at world-famous JP Chocolates in New York City, runs straight into the argument on the first day of her visit. It wouldn't be a cozy without a murder and a romance, and Flower provides both.

On her first night at her grandparents', Bailey wanders into the kitchen only to find Colton dead on the floor with her grandfather's chocolate knife sticking out of his chest. Deputy Aiden Brody and his partner, Deputy Gordon Carpenter, come to investigate. It won't surprise readers that dreamy-eyed Deputy Aiden Brody untwists the clues while Bailey questions the Amish business owners. Leaving sticky prints and tempers in her wake, both Bailey and Aiden uncover more clues and motives.



The Amish characters are colorful, and their occupations and insularity add to the charm of the story. Each character has a secret to hide in this case, a motive to want Colton out of town and their businesses. It takes lots of questions and a few wrong turns until Aiden and Bailey figure out who killed the ruthless *Englisch* developer.

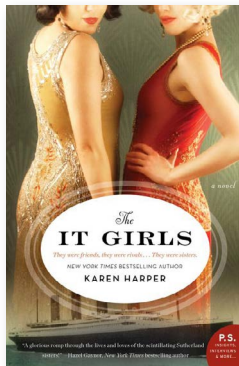
This is the perfect example of a cozy mystery to delight fans. In this case, a chocolatier sticks her nose into the investigation while the deputy does all the dogged legal footwork. Of course they butt heads and sparks fly! It's the perfect recipe for this new series.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OHIO

Harper, Karen. *The It Girls*.

HarperCollins (New York, NY) 2017 HB \$24.95.

Karen Harper's latest historical novel begins with two mischievous sisters hiding under a table in the Isle of Jersey in 1875, sneaking a glimpse of their idol, the elegant actress Lillie Langtry. In this deft opening scene, readers are introduced not only to Lucy and Nellie's distinct personalities and ambitions, but also to the novel's overall theme. When Lillie Langtry discovers the girls, she commends their bravery and pluck: "Success to you both, which I have no doubt will come to you for your aplomb and determination. It is as important as a woman's wiles and smiles."



Throughout the course of the novel, Lucy and Nellie, with equal measures of aplomb and determination, blossom into Lucille and Elinor — complicated, successful women at the turn of the century, using their wit and talents to arrive finally at success and fulfillment. Lucy is a gifted seamstress and entrepreneur, Nellie, a skilled writer and dreamer. Their separate journeys are characterized by tumult, setbacks, and mistakes, not a few concerning romantic love. But as separate as their stories are, they are ultimately entwined, and this is one of the most admirable qualities of Harper's work. Her narrative moves between the two sisters seamlessly, and just as each plot line develops

uniquely and fully, so does the sisters' relationship with each other.

Harper's plot moves at quite a clip, her story spans four decades and two continents, and her dialogue is consistently snappy and fun. In short, there is never a dull moment.

Harper's sisters are two real individuals who lived the lives Harper portrays. Her book is based on thorough historical research, and one of its greatest joys is in the veracity of the details she employs—the clothing, the nuances of speech, the appearance of actual historical figures and events, both large and small. (Without giving too much away, the sinking of the *Titanic* plays a role!) Harper's interest in and knowledge of the Victorian era adds another dimension of entertainment for readers.

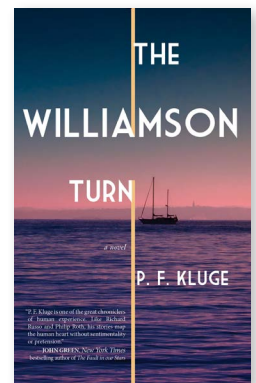
More important even than enjoyment are the questions that the historical element inspires. Without a heavy hand, Harper's *The It Girls* asks readers to consider the various obstacles in a woman's life 100 years ago—obstacles that may not have disappeared entirely but are much less oppressive today. How does a woman balance her own independence and personal fulfillment with true love and companionship? This question is fraught with complications for Lucille and Elinor in a way that it isn't for women today; and yet the question persists, and Harper's latest work joyfully explores the answer.

REVIEWED BY JORDAN O'BRIEN, PREVIOUS WALTER RUMSEY MARVIN GRANT WINNER

Kluge, P.F. *The Williamson Turn: A Novel*.

A Vireo Book/Rare Bird Books (Los Angeles, CA) 2017
PB \$15.95.

What would you write about if you traveled on a ship around the world? Will Post, columnist and professor, travels the high seas teaching about travel writing for months at a time. Various ports in exotic and mundane places, along with the ship, serve as the backdrop in this novel. In a narrative style that shifts from first to third person in the past tense, Post recounts his impressions of the ports and describes his relationships with the students.



As a whole, *The Williamson Turn* is a travelogue about relationships of people who get to know one another a little too well. The narrative is peppered with periods of introspection and descriptions of coping with life.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OHIO

Strawser, Jessica. *Almost Missed You*.

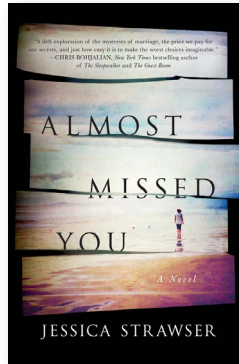
St. Martin's Press (New York, NY) 2017
HB \$25.99.

In her debut novel, Jessica Strawser delves into love, longing, and loss of star-crossed lovers from Cincinnati. Meet Finn and Violet, who meet in 2010 on a Florida beach and are intrigued with each other as only those experiencing a brief flirtation can achieve. Alas, they neglect to trade names. The fact that they both live in Cincinnati means there's a chance they might meet again. But that's Chapter 2. In Chapter 1, which sets the stage for angst, love, and doubt, Violet, her husband Finn, and their son Bear are vacationing in 2016. When Finn goes to the hotel to put their son down for a nap, Violet snoozes on the beach. When she returns to the hotel, all traces of husband and son are gone. They've vanished! Police, friends, and family gather to figure out what's happened and why. Thus begins this tale.

The chapters alternate between 2010 (the beginning of this mysterious tale) and 2016 (the present). Strawser sets up the action in the past to explain the backstory and Finn's motivation for disappearing. In the present, we see the action unfolding as Violet weeps for her lost family and Finn struggles with demons from his past. Bear plays a minor role in all this family drama.

With the alternating timelines, readers understand the tension and get a glimpse of Finn's motives for leaving his wife. There's a sadness that runs through the book, a sadness of lost love, of lost opportunity, and worst of all, of not talking about one's past. There's a lot of "if only" going on in the story. Strawser crafts a tale that suits a broad audience of romance readers, chick-lit aficionados, and mystery lovers. The plot is believable, yet the sadness overwhelms the joy of love and friendship.

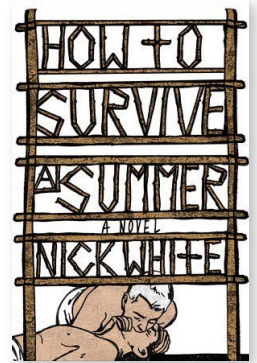
REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OHIO



White, Nick. *How to Survive a Summer in Mississippi*.

Blue Rider Press (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$26.00.

Will Dillard is a typical Midwestern graduate student. He is worried about his film studies dissertation and contemplating his burgeoning relationship with the enigmatic Zeus. The careful wall he has built up around himself and his emotions begins to crumble one day, when a colleague rushes into their closet-sized office to ask if Will has seen the newly released trailer for a hyped horror film.



To Will's revulsion, the film is an exploitative slasher story about a camp where he spent one terrifying summer of his childhood. The true story of the camp is much worse than that of the trashy movie — it was a "rehabilitation" camp for gay youth, a place to "scare them straight."

Will begins a downward spiral as he investigates who created the film and realizes it was made by one of his fellow campers. He travels back to the Neck, the Mississippi region where he grew up, to try and make sense of what happened to him, and to deal with the suppressed guilt he has over one of the boys who died at the camp.

The story of the camp itself almost descends into outright horror—the abuse Will and the other campers suffer from Mother Maude and Father Drake, Will's aunt and uncle who are a pair of religious zealots devoted to "curing" the boys, is stomach-turning. Will's downward spiral is hard to read, as well; this successful young man with a bright future has held this secret inside him for many years, building up walls of resentment and fear, pushing away friends, family, and romantic partners for reasons he just begins to recognize.

Will's friend Bevy cares deeply about him, however, and with Zeus's help she tries to bring Will back to his life. A possible reconciliation with the father who sent him to the camp develops, and Will must make a series of choices and evaluate the direction and purpose of his own existence.

How to Survive a Summer in Mississippi is a hard read, but an important one. The anger and resentment Will feels is justified, and Nick White excels at placing us inside the head of his main character. Will is disaffected at times, detached from his own emotions, but as his awareness grows, the numb hopelessness evolves into something much greater. This is a story many people can relate to, regardless of age, beliefs, or sexual orientation. This is a story that emphasizes the complex relationships between people, especially family. It also asks us to consider what a “family” is—Bevy and Zeus are Will’s family, even more so than his father. The nuances of the relationship between Will and his father are imminently relatable, perhaps distressingly so, as we see both Will and his father try hard, over the course of the story, to both relate and distance themselves from each other. The people who come in and out of Will’s life all shape it in different ways, whether they are the boys who spent that fateful summer with him, a couple he meets in the woods surrounding the Neck, or his beloved mother, whose premature death affects Will throughout his life.

This is a complex book. Its themes cannot be entirely touched upon in a single review, or even in a single read. Readers will find themselves drawn into the story and will likely find something new with each read. It is a mix of several genres as it progresses. Each of them alone would have made a good book, but together they form a great one.

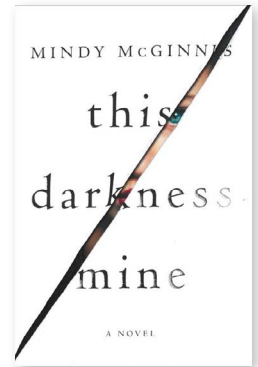
REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, LIBRARY SPECIALIST,
OHIOANA LIBRARY

YOUNG ADULT

McGinnis, Mindy. *This Darkness Mine*.

Katherine Tegen Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$17.99.

Fans of McGinnis’s previous novels may agree that they have become progressively, albeit gradually, darker since the release of her first novel, *Not a Drop to Drink*, in 2014. With that in mind, the title of her latest novel, *This Darkness Mine*, seems fitting. A nod to a line in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, the title implies that this novel may have something to offer the reader who enjoys YA lit but seeks a respite from the more ubiquitous summer plots that blithely traipse through the Land of Cute Boys and Summer Jobs and Mani-Pedi Parties (a truly horrid place for some readers to find themselves trapped, four chapters in, with nothing more offensive in sight than a dead carp washed up on the beach outside the family’s adorable lakeside cottage).



This Darkness Mine tells the story of high school senior and only child Sasha Stone. Sasha’s day-to-day concerns have thus far consisted primarily of choosing which college to attend, retaining her coveted spot as first chair clarinet, and spending time with her innocuous boyfriend Heath or her besties Brooke and Lilly. Things start to change rather drastically for Sasha when she receives a text from an unknown number that leads to a conversation with a distasteful young man Sasha would otherwise have never spoken to. This is not to be their last conversation.

Circumstances become considerably more complicated when Sasha, digging in a cupboard to find a baby picture to submit to the yearbook, discovers an ultrasound photo taken when her mother was expecting her. What she sees is difficult for her to process---in the image, Sasha is not alone in the womb.

Following this shocking discovery shortly after the start of the novel, Sasha immediately sets out to determine the truth behind the image. But trouble finds her before she has the chance to go looking for it. The rest of the book sets a decent pace while Sasha struggles to come to terms with the truth she’s uncovered about the

ultrasound photo. She also grapples with problems that arise from the relationship that's developing between her and the troubled young man she's still texting, who exudes the classic "bad boy" persona and is about as far from her boyfriend Heath as day is from night. Things come to a head when a horrible accident (or rather, "accident") keeps Sasha in the hospital for a considerable length of time and introduces her to an inexperienced young therapist whose favorite phrase is, "and how does that make you feel?"

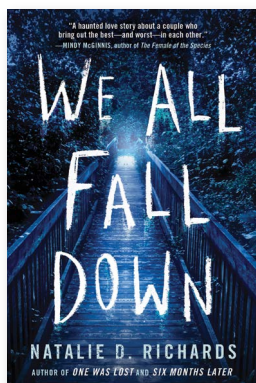
Gritty, gutsy, and at times gruesome, *Darkness* will not disappoint McGinnis's loyal fans, especially those who enjoy a dark twist at the end.

REVIEWED BY EDDIE BLACK, HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER AND LANCASTER RESIDENT, WHERE SHE LIVES WITH HER TEENAGED SON AND THREE CATS, TWO OF WHOM ARE NAMED AFTER LITERARY CHARACTERS

Richards, Natalie D. *We All Fall Down*.

SourceBooks Fire (Naperville, IL) 2017 PB \$10.99.

Theo and Paige are long-time best friends. Paige has had a crush on Theo almost since the moment they met, but she thinks it is one-sided. Theo, though, is obsessing over telling Paige that he does have feelings for her. They plan to attend a party near the old walking bridge in their town, which has seen a lot of tales of love and death. A moment of violence at the party threatens to undo not only their feelings but their entire friendship.



Natalie D. Richards excels at telling stories from a teen's point of view. The uncertainty both Paige and Theo feel is completely familiar. She also superbly represents anxiety and panic attacks (Paige) as well as ADHD (Theo). This is a story of two people who have repeatedly hurt each other, but whose love for each other is like a living thing — it's real, it's raw, and it hurts. These two people on the cusp of adulthood must deal with Paige's overbearing (though loving and well-meaning) parents, the pressures of looming college and a suffocating small town, and the social and physical implications of how one mistake can derail a person's entire life. Like a lot of Richards' other books, this story plays out much like a film; it is easy to picture what happens and the dialogue

is realistic. It is a fast read and a compelling one, told in a first-person present tense that brings a sense of immediacy to the events that feels very appropriate. Richards makes a reader care about her characters, even when they commit acts of violence or otherwise harm each other. Her characters always feel like real people in real situations, and she never condescends or speaks down to her audience like some YA authors do.

A somewhat supernatural element is introduced (to specify would spoil the story), and Richards handles it superbly. This reader honestly had no idea where the story was going to ultimately go, and the ride was well worth experiencing.

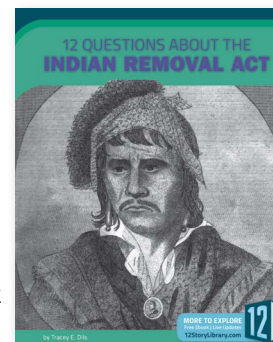
REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, LIBRARY SPECIALIST, OHIOANA LIBRARY

MIDDLE GRADE

Dils, Tracy E. *12 Questions about the Indian Removal Act*.

12-Story Library (Mankato, MN) 2017 PB \$9.95.

12 Questions about the Indian Removal Act is a book that answers questions about what happened after the American Revolution, whose idea it was to start the Indian Removal Act, and what the Indian Removal Act was. If you enjoy learning about history, then this is the book for you.



This book offers lots of fast facts. Each page has a question with the answer and more detailed information.

We would recommend this book for second and third graders. If you enjoyed our little summary and want to learn more about American history, then the next time you go to the library make sure you look for *12 Questions about the Indian Removal Act*.

REVIEWED BY CLARA CARNEY AND ELISE BARBER, COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Pilkey, Dav. *Dog Man*.

Scholastic (New York, NY) 2016
HB \$4.45.

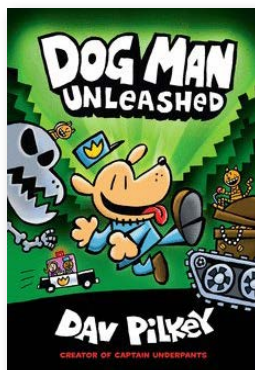
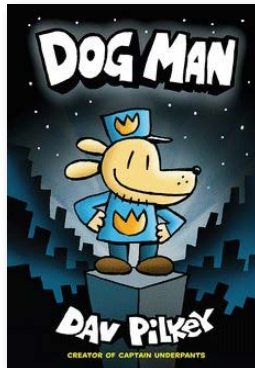
Pilkey, Dav. *Dog Man Unleashed*.

Scholastic (New York, NY) 2016
HB \$8.48.

Dog Man is a new series of graphic novels by author and illustrator Dav Pilkey. The series is in the same vein as Pilkey's *Captain Underpants*, offering a new but familiar dose of laughs and adventure. Just like Captain Underpants, *Dog Man* is an unconventional hero. As his name implies, he is part man, part dog — the body of a policeman and the head of his canine partner, to be exact, surgically combined after the two are caught injured in an explosion. This strange mashup gives *Dog Man* the best of both worlds, with enhanced canine senses and the strength of a man, and makes him a crime-fighting powerhouse and star of the police force in his town.

The rest of the characters and scenarios in the first two books of the *Dog Man* series—*Dog Man* and *Dog Man Unleashed*—are just as quirky as their titular hero. The main villain is a nefarious tabby cat named Petey, who executes a new evil plot whenever he manages to escape from prison, which is about once a chapter. Other characters include the grumpy but lovable chief of police, the corrupt town mayor, an evil pet fish, and a lot of officers who should probably be better at their jobs.

Dog Man includes a few familiar faces as well. The *Dog Man* stories are presented in the form of graphic novels created by Harold and George, the same elementary school masterminds who dreamed up and brought Captain Underpants to life. Unlike Captain Underpants, *Dog Man* remains firmly in the imagination of Harold and George, but they sometimes chime in to the stories to add notes. For example, they inform the reader in a letter at the beginning of the first book that *Dog Man* was



one of their earliest comic book endeavors, created while they were in detention in kindergarten.

Dav Pilkey has a reliably unique sense of humor, blending the tried and true superhero genre with a style that is recognizably his own. He is particularly skilled at creating something that young elementary school children will be able to relate to. Each volume of *Dog Man* contains multiple individual stories that have a lot to love, from evil masterminds and invincible robots to hilariously bad jokes and humorously convenient plot devices. The appeal of *Captain Underpants* is recreated and refreshed in *Dog Man*, and will be enjoyed by new fans as well as old.

REVIEWED BY MORGAN PETERS, PROGRAM COORDINATOR,
OHIOANA LIBRARY

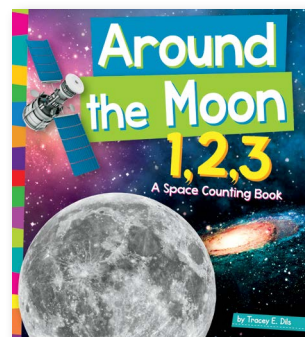
CHILDREN'S

Dils, Tracey E. *Around the Moon 1, 2, 3: A Space Counting Book*.

Amicus Ink (Mankato, MN) 2016 PB \$8.99.

Around the Moon 1, 2, 3: A Space Counting Book by Tracey E.

Dils is a book that counts from one to ten. It will teach children about space, while helping them learn how to count! It talks about astronauts, rockets, stars, and the four moons of Jupiter! If you have a child who is learning how to read, you should have them read this.



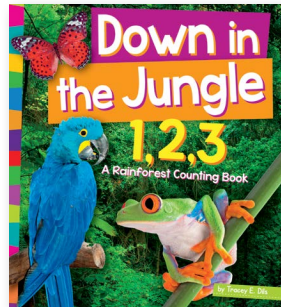
Around the Moon 1, 2, 3 is a book that two- and three-year-old children will enjoy. It has a very small number of easy-to-understand words on each page and full-page pictures about the topic of space. The pictures are cute, colorful, and large. Space is a big part of learning, and this book is a good way to start. The book not only teaches your child about space; it also teaches a little bit about astronauts and is a good informational book that is fun to read.

REVIEWED BY OPHELIA LONZO AND GILLIAN SPANGLER,
COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Dils, Tracey E. *Down in the Jungle 1, 2, 3: A Rain Forest Counting Book.*

Amicus Ink (Mankato, MN) 2016 PB \$8.99.

Down in the Jungle 1, 2, 3: A Rain Forest Counting Book is about learning to count while learning about jungle animals, fruits, and plants. The colorful pictures and the age-appropriate language make this an inviting read for children from ages three to six.



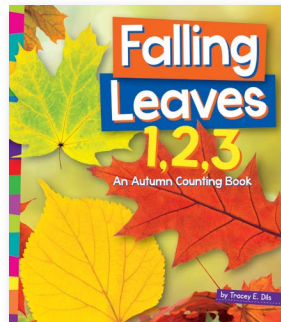
Down in the Jungle 1, 2, 3: A Rain Forest Counting Book helps with learning because it counts to ten with an exciting animal, fruit, or plant on every page. We recommend this book for children who have a love for both learning and adventure. We also recommend this book for parents to read to their children.

REVIEWED BY LYDIA BAKER, JAYNE MCDONALD, AND GWYN SMITH, COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Dils, Tracey E. *Falling Leaves 1, 2, 3: An Autumn Counting Book.*

Amicus Ink (Mankato, MN) 2016 PB \$8.99.

Falling Leaves 1, 2, 3: An Autumn Counting Book will help your kids learn to count to ten using a fun autumn theme! Some people think counting is boring, but when it has beautiful photos to help, counting is fun! These photos really show a good understanding of what the number is. The pictures remind us of the fall because the photos are of caramel apples or leaves falling from the trees. There are sentences that tell about the pictures. It will help your child to start reading picture books and counting!



We recommend this book for any child who wants to start reading, counting and learning about one of the four seasons. We plan to read this book to younger kids and use it to explain what the pictures and numbers mean.

REVIEWED BY MADDIE JENKS AND ALEXANDRA FLAMM, COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Gross, Sandra. *I See, You See: Day.*

Blue Manatee Press (Cincinnati, OH) 2016 HB \$7.99.

I See, You See: Day is a simple hidden picture book for babies and young children that goes from breakfast to bedtime. It is a good book to read throughout the day. You could read the first page in the morning, while you are eating breakfast. Then you could go up to your daughter or son's room and read the second page. Then if you have a pet, you could go to your pet and read the third page. In the afternoon you could go to the park and read the fourth page. When you get home from the park you could give your daughter or son a bath and read the fifth page. Then you could tuck your daughter or son in and read the last page of the book.



As you read the book you will not be reading words, but you will sight read with silhouette pictures. Everything is done in black and white. The book is also very strong because it is a board book. So if you have a toddler or baby who likes to rip up papers, this would be a good book for him or her.

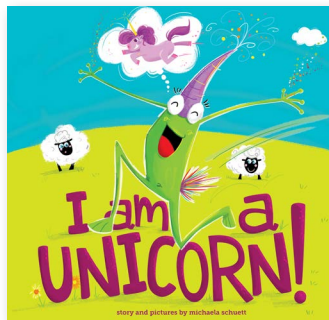
We would recommend this book for babies and young children because it is a great way for children who have not yet learned to read to get the idea of what a book is. With its bold, hand-cut pictures, this book is amazing for young children who want to learn how to read and become aware of how to use a book.

REVIEWED BY VICTORIA TRAN AND SEELEY MAZUR, COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Schuett, Michaela. *I Am a Unicorn!*

Sky Pony Press (New York, NY) 2017 HB \$16.97.

Frog believes that he is a unicorn, with a proper horn, a fairy best friend, and a jar of magical unicorn sprinkles. He even toots rainbows! Goat disagrees, arguing that Frog's horn is just a party hat; his fairy friend is only a cow; and there is no such thing as magical unicorn sprinkles.



No matter what Frog does or says to prove his unicorn-ness, Goat will not be swayed.

When Goat gets so annoyed that he yells at Frog, Frog stops believing in himself. He even throws away his jar of magical unicorn sprinkles! But with a bit of compassion—and a sprinkling of magic—Frog surprises everyone in the end.

I Am a Unicorn! is an adorable picture book written and illustrated by Michaela Schuett. Frog is a lovable dreamer—cheerful and optimistic despite Goat's naysaying ways. It's easy for both kids and adults to relate to these two characters; who hasn't been told that his or her dreams are silly or impossible to achieve? On the opposite side, who hasn't been in a situation where he or she should have given a friend more support or words of encouragement in a time of need? Through the charming illustrations and humorous text, this book shows readers that dreamers and pessimists can still be friends and be there for each other despite their differences. It's also a great reminder to never give up on your dreams, no matter how fantastic or crazy they seem.

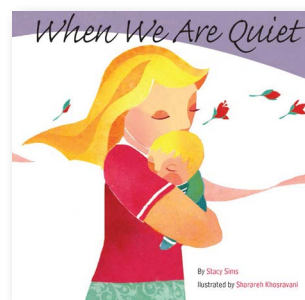
Whether you're a dreamer like Frog or a realist like Goat, this book will make you believe in magic and the power of positive thinking.

REVIEWED BY KATHRYN POWERS, OFFICE MANAGER, OHIOANA LIBRARY, AND VOLUNTEER, SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOK WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS

Sims, Stacy, illustrated by Sharareh Khosravani. *When We Are Quiet.*

Blue Manatee Press (Cincinnati, OH) 2016 HB \$7.56.

When We Are Quiet is a gentle book, perfect for reading aloud to a baby or young child at bedtime. A sense of quiet and calmness is created through such descriptive words as hush, whisper, hum, and blow, and through single thoughts or questions on each page.



As a board book, it is made to be handled by young hands. Like the text, the illustrations are soft and peaceful. They connect with the text, and they depict different ethnic family backgrounds with a loving adult or parent caring for the baby. This is a book that you will want to have next to your baby's bed, so you can read to your infant as he or she drifts off to sleep.

REVIEWED BY CHARLOTTE L. STIVERSON, EDUCATOR, COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Book List

The following books were added to Ohioana's collection between September and November, 2017. Look for them at your local library or bookstore!

NONFICTION

Adams, Ian, and Randall Lee Schieber. ***Ohio in Photographs: A Portrait of the Buckeye State***. Ohio University Press (Athens, OH) 2017 HC \$32.95.

Showcasing the work of two of the state's leading landscape photographers, *Ohio in Photographs* presents a rich array of places and people, from serene hiking trails and Dayton's Huffman Prairie to shining downtown riverscapes and the riotous colors and figures of an unconventional Fourth of July parade.

Adelman, Charlotte, and Bernard L. Schwartz. ***Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees: Gardening Alternatives to Nonnative Species: An Illustrated Guide***. Ohio University Press (Athens, OH) 2017 PB \$39.95.

In this companion volume to the bestselling *The Midwestern Native Garden: Native Alternatives to Nonnative Flowers and Plants*, Adelman and Schwartz offer another indispensable guide to replacing nonnative plants with native alternatives.

Armon, Rick. ***50 Must-Try Craft Beers of Ohio***. Ohio University Press (Athens, OH) 2017 PB \$19.95. Every craft beer has a story, and part of the fun is learning where the liquid gold in your glass comes

from. In *50 Must-Try Craft Beers of Ohio*, veteran beer writer Rick Armon picks the can't-miss brews in a roundup that will handily guide everyone from the newest beer aficionado to those with the most seasoned palates.

Bialosky, Jill. ***Poetry Will Save Your Life: A Memoir***. Atria Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$24.00.

An unconventional and inventive coming-of-age memoir organized around fifty-one remarkable poems by poets such as Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, Wallace Stevens, and Sylvia Plath, from a critically acclaimed New York Times bestselling author and poet. In *Poetry Will Save Your Life*, Bialosky recalls when she encountered each formative poem and how its importance and meaning evolved over time, allowing new insights and perceptions to emerge.

Blunk, Jonathan. ***James Wright: A Life in Poetry***. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$40.00.

In the extraordinary generation of American poets who came of age in the middle of the twentieth century, James Wright (1927–1980) was frequently placed at the top of the list. With a fierce, single-minded devotion to his work, Wright escaped the steel town of his Depression-era childhood in the Ohio valley to become a revered professor of English literature and a Pulitzer Prize winner.

Cawood, Shuly Xochitl. ***The Going and Goodbye: A Memoir***. Platypus Press (London, UK) 2017 PB \$10.00. *The Going and Goodbye* is an

examination of loss and leaving and the search for meaning in the memories that remain. Tracing a path through rural Ohio, the American south, and small towns of Mexico, these stories breathe life into a marriage and its dissolution; find a voice that fears mortality then faces it; explore faith in the face of these losses; and ultimately reveal the power of love and letting go.

Chernow, Ron. ***Grant***. Penguin Press (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$40.00.

Ulysses S. Grant's life has typically been misunderstood. All too often he is caricatured as a chronic loser and an inept businessman, or as the triumphant but brutal Union general of the Civil War. But these stereotypes don't come close to capturing him, as Chernow shows in his masterful biography, the first to provide a complete understanding of the general and president whose fortunes rose and fell with dizzying speed and frequency.

Cox, Dorothy Davis. ***Karl Anderson: An Artist and His World***. Clyde Heritage League (Clyde, OH) 2017 HC \$35.00.

The book is about artist Karl Anderson, brother of Sherwood Anderson, famed author of *Winesburg, Ohio*, and many other books. The book covers Karl's early life, his time at art school, his travels in Europe, his teaching career, and his lifetime calling of artist. It is a book about a man's passion for art that started when he was a child.

DeMarco, Laura. ***Lost Cleveland***. Pavilion Books (London, UK) 2017 HC \$19.95.

Organized chronologically, starting with the earliest losses and ending with the latest, this book features much-loved Cleveland institutions that have been consigned to history.

Disabato-Aust, Tracy. ***The Well-Tended Perennial Garden: The Essential Guide to Planting and Pruning Techniques (Revised and Expanded)***. Timber Press (Portland, OR) 2017 HC \$34.95.

Since its original publication nearly thirty years ago, *The Well-Tended Perennial Garden* has helped home gardeners successfully plan, plant, and tend their gardens. Now Tracy DiSabato-Aust's trusty advice and reassuring tone are back and better than ever in this completely revised new edition.

Finney, Gladys Turner. ***Joseph Carter Corbin: Educator Extraordinaire and Founder of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff***. Butler Center Books at the University of Arkansas Press (Little Rock, AK) 2017 PB \$19.95. Having operated now for more than 140 years, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB) was founded in 1875 as Branch Normal College by Joseph Carter Corbin, a native of Ohio and the son of former slaves. His story, told by a former UAPB student, is monumental for the scope of what one man was able to accomplish.

Friebert, Stuart. ***First and Last Words: Memoir & Stories***. Pinyon Publishing (Montrose, CO) 2017 PB \$18.

Stuart Friebert's *First and Last Words* entwines memoir and stories, shifting seamlessly between first and third person, as memoir in 1949 of an American exchange student shipping to Allied-occupied Germany. A year

abroad in Europe changes his life. His memoir becomes back stories in third person, as he remembers his ancestors and the Prague Spring of 1968, when Russian tanks invaded Czechoslovakia in a show of force against anyone who wanted to democratize.

Gasser, Erika. ***Vexed with Devils: Manhood and Witchcraft in Old and New England***. New York University Press (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$35.00.

Vexed with Devils is a cultural history of witchcraft-possession phenomena that centers on the role of men and patriarchal power. Erika Gasser reveals that witchcraft trials had as much to do with who had power to impose judgement or to subvert order in the community as they did with religious belief.

Gearino, Dan. ***Comic Shop: The Retail Mavericks Who Gave Us a New Geek Culture***. Swallow Press (Athens, OH) 2017 HC \$26.95. The early 1970s saw the birth of the modern comic book shop. Its rise was due in large part to a dynamic entrepreneur, Phil Seuling. His direct market model allowed shops to get comics straight from the publishers, bypassing middlemen. Dan Gearino brings us from their origins to the present day, when the rise of digital platforms has the industry at a crossroads even as sales are robust. He spends a year with stores around the country, with a spotlight on The Laughing Ogre in Columbus, Ohio.

Gordon, Ian. ***Superman: The Persistence of An American Icon***. Rutgers University Press (New Brunswick, NJ) 2017 PB \$28.95. After debuting in 1938, Superman soon became an American icon.

But why has he maintained his iconic status for nearly eighty years? And how can he still be an American icon when the country itself has undergone so much change? *Superman: Persistence of an American Icon* examines the many iterations of the character in comic books, comic strips, radio series, movie serials, feature films, television shows, animation, toys, and collectibles over the past eight decades.

Grunenwald, Jill. ***Running with a Police Escort: Tales from the Back of the Pack***. Skyhorse Publishing (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$22.99. In the fall of 2012, quirky and cat-loving Cleveland librarian Jill Grunenwald got an alarming email from her younger sister: her sister was very concerned with Jill's weight and her overall mental and physical health. Having always struggled with her weight, Jill was currently hitting the scales at more than 300 pounds. Right then, Jill looked in the mirror and decided that she needed to make a life-style change, pronto. She enrolled in Weight Watchers and did something else that she — the girl who avoided gym class like the plague in high school — never thought she'd do; Jill started running. And believe it or not, it wasn't that bad. Actually, it was kind of fun.

Lee, Joseph W. ***Scrolls from the Soul Presents: Scrolling Through the Bible***. Christian Faith Publishing (Meadville, PA) 2017 PB \$23.95. A compilation of scrolls written by Joseph W. Lee, with photographs by his wife, Belinda, taken from their website biblescrolling.com.

Meszaros, Gary, and Guy L. Denny. ***The Prairie Peninsula***. The Kent State University Press (Kent, OH) 2017 PB \$24.95.

The prairie grassland biome covers the heartland of North America with an eastward extension called the Prairie Peninsula. Primarily composed of tallgrass prairie, this biome lies between the shortgrass prairies of the west and the eastern deciduous forest region and includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, southeastern Wisconsin, and Ohio. With text by coauthors Gary Meszaros and Guy L. Denny and striking photographs by Meszaros, *The Prairie Peninsula* examines the many prairie types, floristic composition, and animals that are part of this ecosystem.

Moore, Dan Mendez. ***Six Days in Cincinnati: A Graphic Account of the Riots That Shook the Nation a Decade before Black Lives Matter***. Microcosm Publishing (Portland, OR) 2017 PB \$11.95.

The graphic narrative history of the 2001 Cincinnati riots is told for the first time from the perspective of the participants. When Timothy Thomas, a nineteen-year-old black man, was fatally shot by police, the city broke out into nonviolent civil disobedience that was met with further police violence. This was the first major uprising of the twenty-first century, matched only by the L.A. riots a decade before and the protests in Ferguson more than a decade later.

Morrison, Toni. ***The Origin of Others: The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures, 2016***. Harvard Univ. Press (Cambridge, MA) 2017 HC \$22.95. America's foremost novelist reflects on the themes that preoccupy her

work and increasingly dominate national and world politics: race, fear, borders, the mass movement of peoples, the desire for belonging. What is race and why does it matter? What motivates the human tendency to construct Others? Why does the presence of Others make us so afraid? Drawing on her Norton Lectures, Toni Morrison takes up these and other vital questions bearing on identity in *The Origin of Others*.

Nobles, Gregory. ***John James Audubon: The Nature of the American Woodsman***. University of Pennsylvania Press (Philadelphia, PA) 2017 HC \$34.95.

John James Audubon's *The Birds of America* stands as an unparalleled achievement in American art, a huge book that puts nature dramatically on the page. With that work, Audubon became one of the most adulated artists of his time, and America's first celebrity scientist. In this fresh approach to Audubon's art and science, Gregory Nobles shows us that Audubon's greatest creation was himself.

Obermiller, Phillip J., and Thomas E. Wagner. ***The Cincinnati Human Relations Commission: A History, 1943-2013***. Ohio University Press (Athens, OH) 2017 HC \$29.95.

In the summer of 1943, as World War II raged overseas, the United States also faced internal strife. Earlier that year, Detroit had erupted in a series of race riots that killed dozens and destroyed entire neighborhoods. Across the country, mayors and city councils sought to defuse racial tensions and promote nonviolent solutions to social and economic injustices. In Cincinnati, the result of those

efforts was the Mayor's Friendly Relations Committee, later renamed the Cincinnati Human Relations Commission (CHRC).

Olszewski, Edward J. ***Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, Cleveland's Free Stamp***. Ohio University Press (Athens, OH) 2017 HC \$69.95.

In 1985, the Sohio oil company commissioned Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen to design and construct a large outdoor sculpture for its new corporate headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio. The result was Free Stamp, a bold and distinctive installation that captured both a Pop Art sensibility and a connection to the city's industrial past. Sohio executives approved the design, and work was already under way when British Petroleum acquired the company. The new owners quickly decided that the sculpture was "inappropriate" for their building and attempted to rid themselves of Free Stamp by donating it to the city of Cleveland—a gift that the city initially had no desire to accept.

Pottery: Native American Ancient Utilitarian Vessels, Function and Design. The Mercantile Library (Cincinnati, OH) 2017 PB \$10.00. A catalog of the recent pottery exhibit at the Mercantile Library in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Underwood, Richard H. ***Gaslight Lawyers: Criminal Trials & Exploits in Gilded Age New York***. Shadelandhouse Modern Press (Lexington, KY) 2017 HC \$28.00. From the 1870s to the early 1900s, post-Civil War New York City was becoming a wonder city of commerce and invention, art and architecture, and emerging global

prominence. It was also a city of crime, corruption, poverty, slums, and tenements teeming with newcomers and standing in sharp contrast to the city mansions and the extravagant lifestyle of the rising American aristocracy. The New York City of those days is not just the venue of the intriguing true stories told in this book—it is also a supporting actor in them.

Voinovich, George V. ***Empowering the Public-Private Partnership: The Future of America's Local Government***. Ohio University Press (Athens, OH) 2017 PB \$19.95. America's cities are increasingly acknowledged as sites of renewal and economic opportunity—but how can city leaders facing physical and financial constraints harness this positive energy to create sustainable development? The story of Cleveland in the early 1980s provides the necessary roadmap.

FICTION

Batiuk, Tom. ***The Last Leaf: Lisa's Story Concludes***. Black Squirrel Books (Kent, OH) 2017 HC \$28.95. To be published simultaneously with *Prelude*, *The Last Leaf* is the sequel after Lisa's death from breast cancer in *Lisa's Story: The Other Shoe*. *The Last Leaf* recounts how Les and family cope with Lisa's death and continue their lives. Creator Tom Batiuk brings Lisa back in Les's imagination, and she helps him work out difficulties and decisions in his life and in the life of their daughter Summer. Fans will recognize Batiuk's gentle mix of humor and more serious real-life themes that heighten the reader's interest.

Batiuk, Tom. ***Lisa's Legacy Trilogy***. Black Squirrel Books (Kent, OH) 2017 HC \$80.00. Slip-cased *Lisa's Legacy Trilogy* containing all three cloth editions of *Prelude*, *Lisa's Story: The Other Shoe*, and *The Last Leaf*.

Batiuk, Tom. ***Lisa's Story: The Other Shoe***. Black Squirrel Books (Kent, OH) 2017 HC \$28.95. *Lisa's Story: The Other Shoe* is a collection of both the 1999 comic strips about Lisa's initial battle with cancer and the current series examining her struggle with the disease and its outcome. Additionally, it contains resource material on breast cancer, including early detection, information sources, support systems, and health care.

Batiuk, Tom. ***Prelude: Lisa's Story Begins***. Black Squirrel Books (Kent, OH) 2017 HC \$28.95. *Prelude* is a collection of the early comic strips that bring Lisa and Les together.

Biederman, Lucy. ***The Walmart Book of the Dead***. Vine Leaves Press (Melbourne, Australia) 2017 PB \$9.99. *The Walmart Book of the Dead* was inspired by the ancient *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, funerary texts with accompanying illustrations containing spells to preserve the spirit of the deceased in the afterlife. In Lucy Biederman's version, shoplifters, grifters, drifters, and hustlers, desirous children, greeters, would-be Marxists, wolves, and circuit court judges wander Walmart, unknowingly consigned to their afterlives.

Borton, D. B. ***Second Coming***. Boomerang Books (Delaware, OH) 2017 PB \$12.99. Hank Jones isn't your typical alien abductee. There were no tractor beams, probes, or government conspiracies involved — no, Hank met his kidnappers at a bar. They weren't exactly hard to miss — Elvis, a seven-foot tall clone of the King, and Lawrence, a grounded European gent, were the only UCLA supporters in a bar full of Hoosiers. Still, Hank has nothing better to do. It's spring break, there's a pile of freshman essays on his desk, and his thesis is going nowhere.

Castillo, Linda. ***Among the Wicked: A Kate Burkholder Novel***. Minotaur Books (New York, NY) 2016 HC \$26.99. Chief of Police Kate Burkholder is called upon by local law enforcement in rural, upstate New York to assist with a developing situation that involves a reclusive Amish settlement and the death of a young girl. Unable to penetrate the wall of silence between the Amish and "English" communities, the sheriff asks Kate to travel to New York, pose as an Amish woman, and infiltrate the community.

Castillo, Linda. ***Down a Dark Road: A Kate Burkholder Novel***. Minotaur Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$26.99. Two years ago, Joseph King was convicted of murdering his wife and sentenced to life in prison. He was a "fallen" Amish man and, according to local law enforcement, a known drug user with a violent temper. Now, King has escaped, and he's headed to Painters Mill. News of a murderer on the loose travels like wildfire, putting Chief of Police Kate

Burkholder and her team of officers on edge.

Chaon, Dan. *Ill Will*. Ballantine Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$28.00.

A psychologist in suburban Cleveland, Dustin is drifting through his forties when he hears the news: his adopted brother, Rusty, is being released from prison. Thirty years ago, Rusty received a life sentence for the massacre of Dustin's parents, aunt, and uncle. The trial came to epitomize the 1980s hysteria over Satanic cults; despite the lack of physical evidence, the jury believed the outlandish accusations Dustin and his cousin made against Rusty. Now, after DNA analysis has overturned the conviction, Dustin braces for a reckoning.

Flower, Amanda. *Assaulted Caramel*. Kensington Publishing Group (New York, NY) 2017 PB \$7.99.

Sometimes you need a sweet tooth to take a bite out of crime. Bailey King is living the sweet life as assistant chocolatier at world-famous JP Chocolates in New York City. But just when Bailey's up for a life-changing promotion, her grandmother calls with news that her grandfather's heart condition has worsened. Bailey rushes to Harvest, Ohio, where her grandparents still run Swissmen Sweets, the Amish candy shop where she was first introduced to delicious fudge, truffles, and other assorted delights.

Goble, Steve. *The Bloody Black Flag: A Spider John Mystery*. Seventh Street Books (Amherst, NY) 2017 PB \$15.95.

It is 1722, aboard a pirate ship off the American Colonial Coast. Spider

John Rush never wanted to be a pirate, but it had happened and he'd learned to survive in the world of cut and thrust, fight or die. He and his friend Ezra knew that death could come at any moment, from grapeshot or storm winds or the end of a noose. But when Ezra is murdered in cold blood by a shipmate, Spider vows revenge.

Hogsett, Annie. *Too Lucky to Live: A Somebody's Bound to Wind Up Dead Mystery*. Poisoned Pen Press (Scottsdale, AZ) 2017 PB \$15.95. Lonely and broke, Cleveland divorce-survivor Allie Harper believes all her problems would be solved if she could find a nice, smart, hot guy and enough money to get her car fixed. The hot guy arrives first: he's in a crosswalk clutching a bag of groceries while a blonde in a Hummer is learning hard on her horn, sending the man's groceries and white cane flying. From the curb, an outraged Allie jumps to his rescue, rebagging the groceries as well. The money is in the bag. Literally. Thomas Bennington III, for that's who the handsome guy proves to be, has bought a MondoMegaJackpot ticket along with canned tomatoes. Yes, once the Mondo ball drops, it's game on with killers and kidnappers as players.

Hutchinson, L.E. *Footprints in the Dust*. Monday Creek Publishing (Buchtel, OH) 2017 PB \$15.00. The peace and beauty of the Ohio countryside became still when the real presence of the war came knocking. Thousands of young Ohio men eagerly enlisted and abandoned their families and everyday lives. There would be no contentment for a long time to come. Discover how one family struggled through hard

times, love, and despair during the Civil War. Let not the passage of time erase their memories, and may their footprints in the dust not fade away.

Jaffe, Susanne. *Her Mother's Daughter*. WG Press (Columbus, OH) 2017 PB \$10.99.

Vivienne Bastain's life is an emotional roller-coaster ride, taking her from San Francisco to Paris to New York, with one constant: her mother Denise who is psychopathically needy for a love that will not leave her. This need escalates to dangerous duplicity, destroying her daughter's sense of self, making her easy prey for manipulation and betrayal by others.

Jaffe, Susanne. *La Patrona*. WG Press (Columbus, OH) 2017 PB \$8.00.

New York City. Homicide. The Mob. Usually the territory of a man, except not now, not today, and not for Selena del Varone. A decorated New York City homicide cop, she is also the daughter of the most powerful Mafia family on the east coast, a connection she has spent a lifetime ignoring. But when this ethical, moral, law-abiding woman learns her beloved younger brother, Nicky, has been brutally murdered, she finds herself churning with a need to avenge his death, a need that suddenly makes her question herself, her conscience, and her loyalty to family or to the law.

Kluge, P.F. *The Williamson Turn*. Vireo/Rare Bird Books (Los Angeles, CA) 2017 PB \$15.95.

Will Post, a celebrated and sometimes controversial columnist, is a professor on the MV Explorer's Semester at Sea program, sailing around the world teaching the

ups and downs of travel writing, while navigating the discomfort of six months at sea, as well as the uncomfortable truths that many of their stops bring up—poverty, colonialism, and violence.

Kuhlmann, Jillian. *The Dread Goddess: Book of Icons, Volume Two*. Diversion Books (New York, NY) 2017 PB \$14.99.

In the rival kingdoms of Ambar and Aleyn, gods walk among mortals in the form of human icons, carrying out their whims and waging untold chaos. Having decimated the city of Jhosch, Aleynian icon Eiren flees to the wilderness of the Ambarian north. She finds solace in a distant sanctuary, trying to make peace with the knowledge that she embodies Theba, the goddess of destruction.

Resnick, Mike. *The Castle in Cassiopeia: Dead Enders Book Three*. PYR (Amherst, NY) 2017 PB \$17.00.

A crisis has arisen. On their first mission as a team, Pretorius and his Dead Enders kidnapped the real General Michkag and substituted a clone that had been raised and trained in the Democracy. But now they find that the clone likes being the most powerful man in the hundred-world Transkei Coalition -- and having been trained among humans, he knows how they think and react, and is familiar with the Democracy's political and military strategies. This becomes a many-layered problem for Pretorius and what is left of his Dead Enders.

Richardson, Lisa Karon. *The Counterfeit Clue: A Nosy Parkers Mystery*. Journey Fiction (Las Vegas, NV) 2017 PB \$9.99.
Inspired by the famous Girl

Detective, the members of the Olentangy Heights Girls' Detective Society, affectionately known as the Nosy Parkers, spent their formative years studying criminology, codes, and capers. Unfortunately, opportunities to put their unique skills to work were thin on the ground in the post-war boom of their little corner of suburbia, and they eventually grew up to pursue more sensible careers. Until...Gemma Gaines gave up mystery solving years ago, but when a friend is killed in a hit-and-run, all the instincts honed by years in the Olentangy Heights Girls' Detective Society tell her this may not have been an accident.

Satyral, Rakesh. *No One Can Pronounce My Name*. Picador (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$26.00.

In a suburb outside Cleveland, a community of Indian Americans has settled into lives that straddle the divide between Eastern and Western cultures. For some, America is a bewildering and alienating place where coworkers can't pronounce your name but will eagerly repeat the Sanskrit phrases from their yoga class. Harit, a lonely Indian immigrant in his mid forties, lives with his mother, who can no longer function after the death of Harit's sister, Swati.

Scalzi, John. *The Collapsing Empire*. TOR (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$25.99.

Our universe is ruled by physics. Faster-than-light travel is impossible—until the discovery of The Flow, an extradimensional field available at certain points in space-time, which can take us to other planets around other stars. Riding The Flow, humanity spreads to innumerable other worlds. Earth

is forgotten. A new empire arises, the Interdependency, based on the doctrine that no one human outpost can survive without the others. It's a hedge against interstellar war—and, for the empire's rulers, a system of control.

Shonkwiler, Eric. *8th Street Power & Light*. Midwest Gothic Press (Des Plaines, IL) 2016 PB \$15.00.

In an abandoned Midwestern city, there's one last vestige of order and days gone by: 8th Street Power & Light. Part government, gang, and power company, 8th Street tasks Samuel Parrish with keeping the city clear of meth and bootleg liquor. Most nights, Samuel tracks down criminals, while others find him navigating hazier avenues: in between drinking and fighting, he's falling for his best friend's girl. But when Samuel rousts a well-connected dealer, he uncovers a secret that threatens to put the city back in the dark.

Sibbet, Susan Herron, and Lady Borton. *The Constant Listener: Henry James and Theodora Bosanquet—An Imagined Memoir*. Swallow Press (Athens, OH) 2017 HC \$26.95.

In 1907, in a quiet English village, Theodora Bosanquet answered Henry James's call for someone to transcribe his edits and additions to his formidable body of work. The aging James had agreed to revise his novels and tales into the twenty-four-volume New York edition. Enter Bosanquet, a budding writer who would record the dictated revisions and the prefaces that would be a linchpin of his legacy.

Strawser, Jessica. ***Not That I Could Tell***. St. Martin's Press (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$26.99.

When a group of neighborhood women gathers, wine in hand, around a fire pit where their backyards meet one Saturday night, most of them are just ecstatic to have discovered that their baby monitors reach that far. It's a rare kid-free night, and they're giddy with it. They drink too much, and the conversation turns personal. By Monday morning, one of them is gone.

Tassone, Don. ***Drive***. Golden Antelope Press (Kirksville, MO) 2017 PB \$17.95.

Nick Reynolds is a highly successful food company executive. He's also a bully, feared by his employees and estranged from his wife and children. After his latest blow-up at work, Nick's boss orders him to take the summer off and sort himself out. Angry and despondent, Nick sets off, alone, from his home in Chicago for Bar Harbor, Maine. This is the story of what Nick experiences, learns and chooses along the way.

Welsh-Huggins, Andrew. ***The Hunt: An Andy Hayes Mystery***. Swallow Press (Athens, OH) 2017 HC \$26.95. As a serial killer stalks prostitutes in Columbus, Ohio, a distraught brother asks private investigator Andy Hayes to find his sister before it's too late. In a deadly race against time, Andy soon learns he's not the only person hunting Jessica Byrnes, but he may be the only one who wants her alive.

White, Randy Wayne. ***Cuba Straits***. G. P. Putnam's Sons (New York, NY) 2015 HC \$26.95.

Doc Ford's old friend General Juan Rivera has gone into the business of

high-profile collectibles, but when he manages to obtain a collection of letters written by Fidel Castro between 1960 and 1962 to a secret girlfriend, it's not a matter of money anymore. Rivera has stumbled way out of his depth.

Yocum, Robin. ***A Welcome Murder***. Seventh Street Books (Amherst, NY) 2017 PB \$15.95.

Johnny Earl, a professional baseball player, ends his career unceremoniously, with a knee injury. He gets busted for selling cocaine and serves seven years in prison. He heads back to his hometown of Steubenville, Ohio, to retrieve a cache of drug money he stashed before he went to jail, but before he can leave town, he is picked up for questioning by the FBI for the murder of Rayce Daubner, the informant who helped send him to prison.

POETRY

Awad, Ruth. ***Set to Music: A Wildfire***. University of Southern Indiana Press (Evansville, IN) 2017 HC \$14.95.

Winner of the 2016 Michael Waters Poetry Prize. In Lebanon during the civil war, a teenage boy and his family witness leveled cities, displaced civilians, the aftermath of massacres. What does it mean to survive? To leave behind a home torn apart by war? To carry the burden of what you've seen across an ocean? These poems follow a man in search of security as he leaves his country, falls in love, and becomes a single father to three daughters.

Giovanni, Nikki. ***A Good Cry: What We Learn from Tears and Laughter***. William Morrow (New York, NY) 2017 PB \$19.99.

One of America's most celebrated poets looks inward in this powerful collection, a rumination on her life and the people who have shaped her. The poetry of Nikki Giovanni has spurred movements, turned hearts, and informed generations. She's been hailed as a firebrand, a radical, a healer, and a sage; a wise and courageous voice who has spoken out on the sensitive issues, including race and gender, that touch our national consciousness. As energetic and relevant as ever, Nikki now offers us an intimate, affecting, and illuminating look at her personal history and the mysteries of her own heart.

Smith, Maggie. ***Good Bones***. Tupelo Press (North Adams, MA) 2017 PB \$16.95.

Featuring "Good Bones," which has made a difference to so many people around the globe — called the "Official Poem of 2016" by Public Radio International. These poems stare down darkness while cultivating and sustaining possibility and addressing a larger world.

White, MJ Werthman. ***How the Universe Says "Yes" to Me***. Main Street Rag (Charlotte, NC) 2017 PB \$14.00.

A collection of poetry reflecting on life and the universe, with varied subjects ranging from Facebook to phobias to guardian angels.

CHILDREN'S

Carson, Mary Kay. *Mission to Pluto: The First Visit to an Ice Dwarf and the Kuiper Belt*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (Boston, MA) 2017 HC \$18.99.

In July 2015 a robotic spacecraft reached Pluto after a nine-and-a-half-year journey. *New Horizons* is the first spacecraft mission to Pluto and revealed its five moons as never before seen. Follow along with the team of scientists as they build *New Horizons*, fly it across the solar system, and make new discoveries about a world billions of miles away.

Churnin, Nancy. Illus. by Jez Tuya. *The William Hoy Story*. Albert Whitman & Company (Park Ridge, IL) 2016 HC \$16.99.

All William Ellsworth Hoy wanted to do was play baseball. After losing out on a spot on the local deaf team, William practiced even harder — eventually earning a position on a professional team. But his struggle was far from over. In addition to the prejudice Hoy faced, he could not hear the umpires' calls. One day he asked the umpire to use hand signals: strike, ball, out. That day he not only got on base but also changed the way the game was played forever. William "Dummy" Hoy became one of the greatest and most beloved players of his time!

Daemicke, Songju Ma. Illus. by Christina Wald. *Cao Chong Weighs an Elephant*. Arbordale Publishing (Mt. Pleasant, SC) 2017 HC \$17.95. How much does an elephant weigh? How do you know? How WOULD you know if you didn't have a modern scale? Six-year-old Cao Chong, the most famous child prodigy in Chinese history, faced just this

problem. Chong watches as the prime minister's most trusted and learned advisors debate different methods. The principal of buoyancy and a little creative thinking help this boy come up with a solution.

Leopold-Strauss, Linda. Illus. by Jeremy Tugeau. *A Different Kind of Passover*. Kar-Ben Publishing (Minneapolis, MN) 2017 PB \$7.99. Jessica loves spending Passover with her grandparents. But this year, Grandpa is sick and can't lead the seder like he always does. Jessica knows Passover won't be the same. But maybe she can find a way to include Grandpa in the seder and make the holiday as joyful as ever.

Marks, Allison, and Wayne Marks. *The Art Lesson: A Shavuot Story*. Kar-Ben Publishing (Minneapolis, MN) 2017 PB \$7.99. Shoshana loves spending time at Grandma Jacobs' art studio and Grandma has a very special art project in mind for Shavuot! Can Shoshana create works of art as beautiful as Grandma's?

Martin, Melissa. Illus. by Charles Lehman. *Tessie Tames Her Tongue: A Book about Learning When to Talk and When to Listen*. Free Spirit Publishing (Minneapolis, MN) 2017 HC \$14.99.

Tessie is bright and eager to share all the stories about her life. She talks to her parents, her little brother, the bus driver, her teacher, and her classmates. But when she gets chatty, she's loud and doesn't give anyone else a chance to say what's on their minds. After her little brother complains and her classmates ignore her, Tessie knows it's time to tame her talkative tongue. With help from her school counselor, Tessie learns to talk less and listen more.

Nevin, Judy Carey. *What Daddies Like*. Little Bee Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$16.99.

Find out what daddies like best in this story about a daddy bear and his cub's special day together. Daddies like smooches. Daddies like hugs. Daddies like "Good morning to you!" As the bears spend the day together, readers find out all about daddies' favorite things to do, like having adventures in the park, splashes in the bath, playing peek-a-boo, and night-lights, it's true. But most of all, daddies like hearing and saying "I love you!"

Snider, Brandon T. *Unicorn Handbook*. Cartoon Network Books (New York, NY) 2017 PB \$6.99. Girl Power meets Unicorn Powfactor! From the critically acclaimed Cartoon Network animated television series *Powerpuff Girls* comes a unique handbook for every little superhero who wants to know what it's like to have a unicorn best friend! Donny the Unicorn, Blossom, and Buttercup teach Bubbles (and the reader) just what needs to be done to be a true friend and a real unicorn!

Stanek, Linda. Illus. by Shennen Bersani. *Night Creepers*. Arbordale Publishing (Mt. Pleasant, SC) 2017 HC \$17.95.

What creeps while you sleep? Short, lyrical text presents a perfect bedtime story that introduces young readers to nocturnal animals and their behaviors.

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Bobulski, Chelsea. ***The Wood***. Feiwel and Friends (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$17.99.

Winter didn't ask to be the guardian of the wood, but when her dad inexplicably vanishes, she's the one who must protect travelers who accidentally slip through the wood's time portals. The wood is poisoned, changing into something more sinister. Once brightly colored leaves are now bubbling inky black. Vicious creatures that live in the shadows are becoming bolder, torturing lost travelers. Winter must now put her trust in Henry — a young man from eighteenth-century England who knows more than he should about the wood — in order to find the truth and those they've lost.

Bundy, Tamara. ***Walking with Miss Millie***. Nancy Paulsen Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$16.99.

Alice is angry at having to move to Rainbow, Georgia — a too small, too hot, dried-up place she's sure will never feel like home. Then she gets put in charge of walking her elderly neighbor's dog. But Clarence won't budge without Miss Millie, so Alice and Miss Millie walk him together. Strolling with Clarence and Miss Millie quickly becomes the highlight of Alice's day and opens her eyes to all sorts of new things to marvel over.

Richards, Natalie D. ***We All Fall Down***. SourceBooks Fire (Napierville, IL) 2017 PB \$10.99. Theo's always been impulsive. But telling Paige how he feels? He's obsessed over that decision. And it's time. Tonight. At the party on the riverbank, under the old walking bridge, site of so many tales of love

and death. Paige has had a crush on Theo since they first met, but she knows her feelings are one-sided. She's trying to move on, to flirt. A party at the river is just what she needs. Except a fight breaks out, and when Paige tries to intervene — Theo's fist lands in her face. All Theo and Paige want to do is forget that fateful night. But strange events keep drawing them back to the bridge. Someone, something is determined to make them remember...and pay for what they each did.

Valente, Catherynne M. ***The Glass Town Game***. Margaret K. McElderry Books (New York, NY) 2017 HC \$17.99.

Inside a small Yorkshire parsonage, Charlotte, Branwell, Emily, and Anne Brontë have invented a game called Glass Town, where their toy soldiers fight Napoleon and no one dies. This make-believe land helps the four escape from a harsh reality: Charlotte and Emily are being sent away to a dangerous boarding school, a school they might not return from. But on this Beastliest Day, the day Anne and Branwell walk their sisters to the train station, something incredible happens: the train whisks them all away to a real Glass Town, and the children trade the moors for a wonderland all their own.

Vogel, D.W. ***Horizon Alpha: Transport Seventeen***. Future House Publishing (Provo, UT) 2017 PB \$13.95.

After three perilous years on a planet full of dinosaurs, Caleb and his colony have finally found safety. The 'saurs are kept at bay, the crops are growing, and for the first time in centuries humanity might have a future. But a single voice changes everything. The colony receives a call for help from a girl they haven't

seen since the crash and realize that they are not the only humans alive.

Wiechman, Kathy Cannon. ***Not on Fifth Street***. Calkins Creek (Honesdale, PA) 2017 HC \$17.95. It's 1937, and a storm is brewing over the town of Ironton, Ohio, and in the home of Pete and Gus Brinkmeyer. The two teenage brothers, once close, struggle with the growing differences in their relationship. Celebrated historical novelist Kathy Wiechman looks into her own family's history to create unforgettable characters caught up in a catastrophic, life-changing event. Includes an extensive author's note outlining the history behind the story.

Winfrey, Kerry. ***Love and Other Alien Experiences***. Feiwel and Friends (New York, NY) 2017 PB \$10.99.

Mallory hasn't left the house in sixty-seven days — since the day her dad left. She attends her classes via webcam, rarely leaves her room (much to her brother's chagrin), and spends most of her time watching The X-Files or chatting with the always obnoxious BeamMeUp on New Mexico's premier alien message board. But when she's shockingly nominated for homecoming queen, her life takes a surprising turn. She slowly begins to open up to the world outside. And maybe if she can get her popular jock neighbor Brad Kirkpatrick to be her homecoming date, her classmates will stop calling her a freak.

Coming Soon

Poetry Night: Steven Abbott

January 30, 2018, 7:00 p.m., Gramercy Books, Bexley, Ohio

Abbott, a founding member of the long-running Poetry Forum series, reads from his latest collection, *A Green Line Between Green Fields*. Visit www.gramercybooksbexley.com for more information.

Ohioana Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant

application deadline is January 31, 2018

This annual competition awards \$1,000 to an Ohio writer, age 30 or younger, who has not yet published a book. Visit <http://www.ohioana.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Marvin-application-2018.pdf> for more information and an application.

Hear & Now Author Series: Mindy McGinnis

February 1, 2018, 7:00 p.m., McConnell Arts Center, Worthington, Ohio

An evening with the Edgar Award-winning writer of young adult fiction, including her latest, *This Darkness Mine*. Visit <http://www.mcconnellarts.org/mindy-mcginnis/> for more information.

Ohioana Book Club

February 14, 2018, 10:00 a.m. – noon
Ohioana Library, Columbus, Ohio

The book for February is *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance, the 2017 Ohioana Award winner for Book About Ohio or an Ohioan. The club meets in the Ohioana reading room at 10 a.m. If you would like to attend, please e-mail us at ohioana@ohioana.org.

Ohioana Book Festival

April 14, 2018, at the Sheraton Columbus Capitol Square

Join us for the 12th Ohioana Book Festival, returning once again to the Sheraton in Downtown Columbus for a day-long event that includes panel discussions, activities for kids, and an opportunity to meet your favorite writers. Authors will be announced in February. Please visit our web page at Ohioana.org for updates.

Do you have a literary event you'd like to list in the next edition of the *Ohioana Quarterly*? Contact us at ohioana@ohioana.org.

Thank You!

The Ohioana Library wouldn't be the unique organization it is without our many generous supporters. Listed below are those who have given from September 1 through November 30, 2017. Special thanks to Governor John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly for the state's ongoing support.

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"A culture's moral insurance"

If you're like me—and I know I am!—you can't keep up with the speed of life. Each dawn brings unfathomable headlines from out of nowhere...news of shootings, disasters, greed, scandals. Concomitantly, it feels as if there's no time to condone, condemn, justify, or even understand what's overwhelming our consciousness. So there's this lump, yes? A sinking feeling, a stone lodged somewhere...in the gut, heart, head?

How can we sustain or refuel optimism, empathy, *or* even outrage if our responses are knee-jerk, cocksure, and hasty? How can we find the energy to speak more openly, listen more urgently, read more closely? How can we train ourselves to widen that interval between each new action and our reaction?

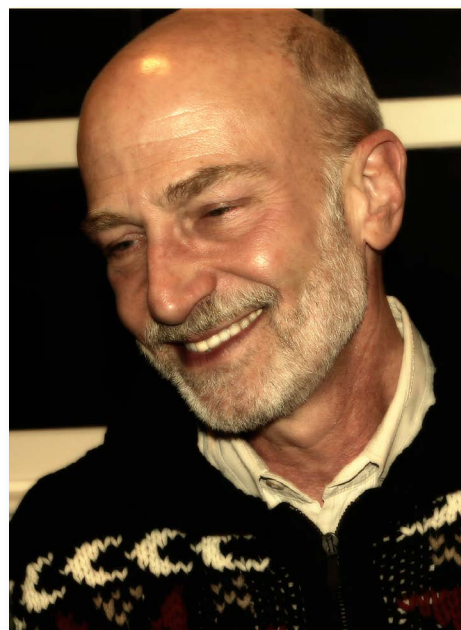
With books. Diverse books.

We often speak of "losing ourselves" in a book. We don't speak as often of *finding* oneself there but, in fact, therein lies our humanity. An active library like Ohioana is a culture's moral insurance. Ohioana champions writers whose careful and deliberate works show what "news" means once its ashes have settled upon us. In books, we can hear our own inchoate, fumbling, intimidated, or even wrong-headed feelings exposed and echoed...right there on the page...uttered by a complete stranger. Someone from another time or a different country. Someone speaking a foreign language. Or simply someone from elsewhere in Ohio, trying to write as clearly as humanly possible about the mixed feelings that are impossible to escape.

If you *are*, indeed, like me, you'll find that reading literature—not simply news and news analysis—provides windows for *slowing down*, for reflection, clarity, perspective, compassion.

If you *are*, like me, you'll support the Ohioana Library. Attend events. Visit the collection. Advocate for the arts. Share your passion for reading. Find yourself again and again in books.

Michael J. Rosen



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Save the
Date!
April 14, 2018

We hope you'll join us for the 12th annual Ohioana Book Festival, taking place Saturday, April 14, 2018, from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Sheraton Columbus on Capitol Square.

The festival will feature a book fair and book signings, panel discussions with your favorite Ohio authors, children's and teen activities, food trucks, and more. We hope to see you there!