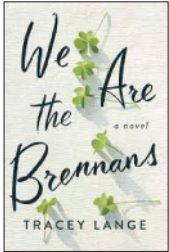


Fall Reading Challenge!

Read any two of the eight books on this page by October 31st, 2021 and Bookshop will donate \$5 on your behalf to our Keep Kids Reading Fundraiser, benefiting Santa Cruz Pride and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

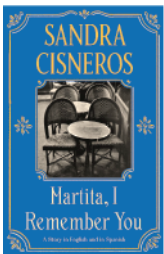


We Are the Brennans

by Tracey Lange · CELADON BOOKS

There is almost nothing quite as potent for storytelling as a big, Irish multigenerational family drama. Although by sight, the Brennans are a close knit New York family, the novel explores the fissures that are created through a lifetime of secrets in love, money and family and the forgiveness that is required in a messy, complex life. For those who love deep, character-driven books, this debut

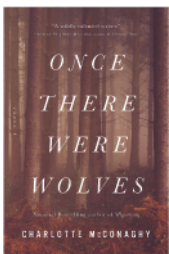
brings a new voice to the likes of Ann Patchett, Celeste Ng, and Brit Bennett. —Casey



Martita, I Remember You / Martita, te recuerdo by Sandra Cisneros · VINTAGE

In her latest work—a perfectly distilled elixir of maturity, fondness, and truth—Sandra Cisneros somehow knows my soul, pinpointing exactly how it feels to grow up. This is a novella of sorts, but it defies categorization, except to say it is essential. In it, middle aged Corina reminisces over a series of letters, looking back on her youth when she lived in Paris with two girlfriends, waiting for her life to

begin. In her iconic lyrical style, Cisneros immerses us in this past and present, and we will live lifetimes before coming up for air. It is magical. —Melinda



Once There Were Wolves

by Charlotte McConaghy · FLATIRON BOOKS

Inti Flynn, an accomplished wolf biologist, is the head of a team attempting to release wolves back into the wild in the Scottish Highlands, thereby restoring ancient forests and stabilizing the ecosystem. Inti also has mirror-touch synesthesia, a condition that forces her to feel everything she sees. Inti's condition has led to a deep compassion for animals and an intense

weariness of other people and as she struggles to simultaneously win the hearts of the local farmers, nurture her wolves, and care for her ailing twin sister, she begins to lose grip on her bearings. Another beautiful, poignant novel from McConaghy, *Once There Were Wolves* is at once a murder mystery, an homage to the bond between sisters, and an urgent call to assuage climate change. —Jade

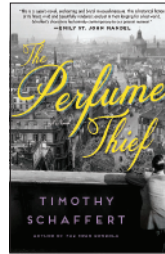


Gordo

by Jaime Cortez · GROVE PRESS, BLACK CAT PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

Jaime Cortez's lively debut collection is set in the farm camps and communities of Watsonville and San Juan Bautista in the 1970s, and is explored largely through the singular, earnest, and endearing voice of Gordo, a young boy discovering his own identity amidst the pressure and antics of his peers and the love and

expectations of his community. Cortez grew up in Watsonville and speaks lighthearted, unerring truth to the area in these often funny, always heartfelt interconnected short stories. —Melinda



The Perfume Thief

by Timothy Schaffert

DOUBLEDAY

Enticing scents and exotic perfumes permeate this evocative book. Timothy Schaffert transports you to the cabarets and brothels of WWII Nazi-occupied Paris. Clementine is a 72-year-old queer American ex-pat, a reformed thief. Her perfumery caters to the city's marginalized LGBTQ+ community. She runs a

dangerous con game to protect her dearest friends. Espionage, deception, love, and betrayal are all a part of the story. This is a well-written, unique tale of historical fiction. —Trey



The Inheritance of Orquídea Divina

by Zoraida Córdova

ATRIA BOOKS

Upon receiving a letter in the mail, all descendants of Orquídea Montoya return to the magic-infused home in the illusive town of Four Rivers for what feels like the last time. With a diverse cast of characters, alternating perspectives, and vivid imagery, it's easy to get lost between the pages. Zoraida Córdova artfully ties

together family, legacy and the human desire to make a lasting mark on the world. —Andrea



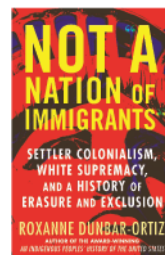
Beautiful Country: A Memoir

by Qian Julie Wang

DOUBLEDAY

Qian Julie Wang's memoir is transportive, immersive, her childhood rendered with such a natural hand that each particular pain and joy feels as intimate as one's own memory. This acuity is strangely healing—Wang pulls no punches when recalling moments of shame—even as the remoteness of her position as an undocumented

immigrant, isolated further from her peers by poverty, is a devastating revelation. Powerful, nuanced, and tender, *Beautiful Country* is essential reading. —Chorel



Not "A Nation of Immigrants": Settler

Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion

by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

BEACON PRESS

Most of us have heard America referred to as a "melting pot" or a "nation of immigrants." While these self-congratulatory phrases paint a rosy picture of our past and present, they obscure or downright ignore

some of the core tenets of this nation: white supremacy, settler colonialism, and capitalist exploitation of land and bodies. True to form, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's latest work combines incisive criticism with unmatched clarity to provide a comprehensive history of both immigrants and xenophobia in America. —Travis

www.bookshopsantacruz.com/fall-reading-challenge

More Great Fall Reading

NEW & RECOMMENDED FICTION



Afterparties: Stories
by Anthony Veasna So
ECCO

A debut short story collection people will be reading for decades to come, *Afterparties* is the work of a wry, playful, brilliant writer at the start of a knockout career. Veasna So passed away suddenly, but by the age of 28 he had already written stories that plumb the depths of what it means to be raised by

immigrants, to be queer, to be Cambodian-American, and above all, to grow up as an other in a place that encourages sameness. —Jess



Skinship: Stories
by Yoon Choi • KNOPF

In her assured debut collection, Yoon Choi plumbs the depths and writes to the breadth of the Korean American experience in these penetrating short stories. Through the eyes of the young and the aging, the parents, their children, husbands and wives, sisters and aunts, *Skinship* honors the complexity, affection, and grace of identity in relationship, especially those

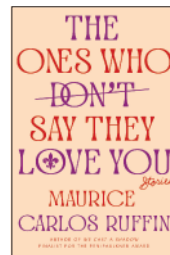
stressed by the transition between countries and cultures. This is not so much a book of a-ha moments, but one of expert unveiling and seeing fully—a beautiful, deeply humanizing read. —Melinda



The President and the Frog
by Carolina De Robertis
KNOPF

A fascinating, unusual novel inspired by Pepe Mujica, the ex-president of Uruguay. Political, personal, and philosophical, the narrative alternates between past and present. As a reporter interviews the retired ex-president, distant memories surface. Memories of solitary confinement. Memories of the woman he

loved. Memories of his conversations with the frog that shared his cell. Beautiful writing and a story of love, hope, and survival come together to make this a very special read. —Trey



The Ones Who Don't Say They Love You: Stories
by Maurice Carlos Ruffin
ONE WORLD

A phenomenal collection of short stories packing a punch that left me breathless. These could only come from the experience of being Black and living in the heart and soul of New Orleans. Flash fiction that burns for a single page and leaves an indelible impression.

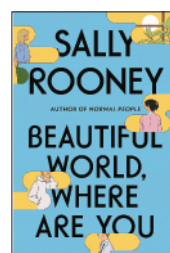
Longer narratives that dive deep into the lives of the characters and the sights and sounds of the city. Maurice Carlos Ruffin is an extraordinary storyteller! —Trey



The Manningtree Witches
by A.K. Blakemore
CATAPULT

The debut novel of poet A.K. Blakemore, *The Manningtree Witches*, is utterly unique and hypnotic. This novel is a story of witches, of mothers and daughters, and of the way communities distort stories to their own ends. From the very first line, the lyrical, Middle English style transported me and made me

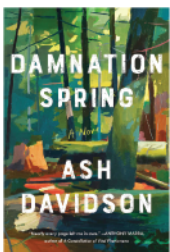
feel acutely the paranoia and passion of the characters. I look forward to seeing what this author does next! —Brooks



Beautiful World, Where Are You
by Sally Rooney
FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX

Beautiful World, Where Are You? is Sally Rooney at her Rooney-est, tackling the intricacies of sex, love, and friendship once again. But this time she's gone existential, incorporating philosophical musings about Marxism and the working class; what it means to be a writer of books about friendship, love, and sex; and

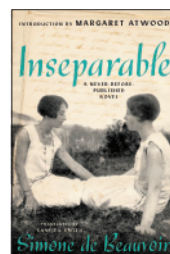
where beauty might bloom most bountifully. A must-read for current fans, and a rich entry point for anyone who hasn't yet dabbled in Rooneyism. Profound, funny, and emotionally sprawling. —Jess



Damnation Spring
by Ash Davidson
SCRIBNER

This is an epic tale of family and community set in a small logging town in the Pacific Northwest. A midwife seeks explanations for why so many pregnancies are ending in grief. Her high climbing husband courts danger every day he works far above the ground. Their town is facing the end of logging as

a generational way of life. Beautiful immersive writing brings you deep into the old-growth redwood forest. *Damnation Spring* is a remarkable debut novel. —Trey



Inseparable
by Simone de Beauvoir • ECCO

This previously unpublished novel by French feminist and existential philosopher Simone de Beauvoir is an intimate examination of what is, for most of us, our first experience of love beyond family—that of close childhood friendship. This novel follows fictive versions of de Beauvoir and her childhood friend “Zaza” as they come of age and come to terms with what it means to

be a woman, to know God, and to establish themselves as individuals in early twentieth century France. *Inseparable* will resonate with anyone who's ever had a friend that seems to light up the room. —Zoe

GRAPHIC



Crisis Zone

by Simon Hanselmann · FANTAGRAPHICS

Seasoned fans of Meg (a witch), Mogg (a black cat), and Owl (an owl) will recognize some familiar panels from the R-rated daily postings that kept me on the edge of my phone during 2020. This tome perfectly captures the paranoia and confusion of early quarantine, but tenfold in the insanity that is the crew's hard partying ways including werewolf

divorce, arson, several bags full of thongs, a doomed treehouse, and a whole lot of dysfunctional love. —Celeste

MYSTERY

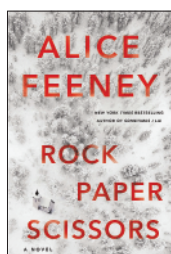


Velvet Was the Night

by Silvia Moreno-Garcia · DEL REY

Maite is a secretary too busy reading romantic comics rather than living a life on her own. Elvis spends each day memorizing a new word and works for a man called El Mago. The two are bonded together by what feels like fate: the disappearance of Maite's neighbor. Told in alternating points of view, Silvia Moreno-Garcia (*Mexican Gothic*) returns with

an enticing noir mystery set in 1970's Mexico City perfect for new and returning readers. —Andrea



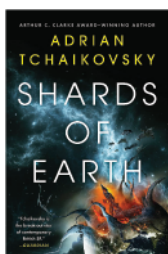
Rock Paper Scissors

Alice Feeney · FLATIRON BOOKS

Ten years of marriage and a love story that won't quit. A weekend away for a couple at the breaking point. Tragedies and secrets of the past coming to call. You may think you know this story, but Alice Feeney got me, with genuinely shocking (and satisfying!) twists and turns, following her vivid characters through the halls of memory and a remote Scottish get-away. An

atmospheric marital thriller with literary notes, perfect to wrap up with as the weather turns cold and the spooky season approaches. —Jocelyn

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY



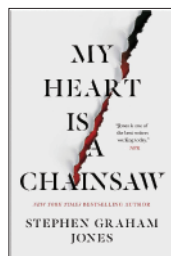
Shards of Earth

by Adrian Tchaikovsky
ORBIT

Shards of Earth has the politics, usurping madness, power grabs, cultists—all the things you want in a space opera. You follow Idris, a war hero, make a discovery that sets the anticipation and fear for the rest of the book. It's intellectually challenging, but the payoff is fulfilling and philosophical. I crossed into dark places

reading this. I wondered if people deserve the chance to save their world from destruction! —Morgan

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY

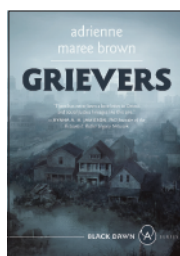


My Heart Is a Chainsaw

by Stephen Graham Jones
GALLERY / SAGA

Stephen Graham Jones never misses. *My Heart Is a Chainsaw* is for those of us who have a life-long love for horror, putting us behind the wheel with protagonist Jade and her knowledge of all things chainsaw and jumpscare when blood splatter metaphorically (and physically) hits the fan. If you loved *Mongrels* or *The*

Only Good Indians, please do yourself a favor and read this book! —MJ



Grievors

by adrienne maree brown
AK PRESS

Grievors depicts an unyielding virus, H-8, which attacks only the Black citizens of Detroit, and sends its hosts into a catatonic state of mourning. Dune is our sharp-witted and brooding protagonist, who is determined to find answers after her mother becomes patient zero. It's no surprise that adrienne maree

brown is a dedicated student of Octavia Butler—this novel reads with the same level of intensity, grief, and hope found in *Parable of the Sower*.

—Holly

NONFICTION



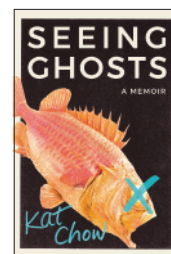
I Live a Life Like Yours: A Memoir

by Jan Grue
FSG ORIGINALS
PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

Jan Grue unfolds some of the universals of human existence via the specifics of his own body and life in this lovely, powerful memoir. With graceful, poetic narrative translated by B.L. Crook, Grue maneuvers in and out of memories, global locations, meditations on

right and wrong, quotations philosophic, filmic, and musical, and careful critique of our inaccessible world, ultimately towards a quiet fire of self-determination and joy. A book that will linger in the body, between breaths.

—Jocelyn



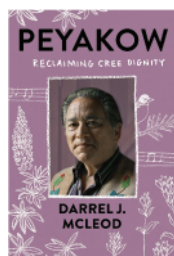
Seeing Ghosts: A Memoir

by Kat Chow
GRAND CENTRAL PUBLISHING

When Kat Chow was thirteen, her mother died of cancer, and she has been living with her ghost ever since. In this powerful memoir, Kat turns to her family's stories and ephemera to find answers for what she had lost, what haunts her still. In doing so, she unearths and honors the complexity of her entire family, from

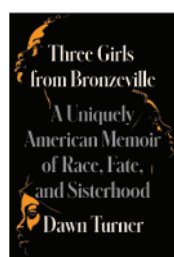
her father who immigrated from China and dreamed in America, to his parents, to her own childhood and that of her older sisters, all affected by grief and loss and always undying love.

—Melinda



Peyakow: Reclaiming Cree Dignity
by Darrel J. McLeod
MILKWEED EDITIONS

In his follow up to *Mamaskatch*, the memoir of his childhood, McLeod offers an intimate window into adulthood as a queer Cree man in Canada. We follow his career path from teaching to negotiating, working with the government towards First Nations rights and treaties, feeling his celebrations and frustrations. We are taken on his personal journey back to his Cree heritage, one forced from him by the systemic erasure and untangling of his people. While there is trauma and loss, both personal and generational, there is also healing, generosity, and introspection—a balance that helps us all. —Melinda



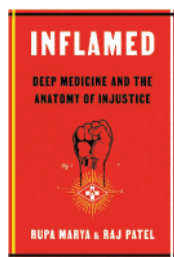
Three Girls from Bronzeville: A Uniquely American Memoir of Race, Fate, and Sisterhood
by Dawn Turner
SIMON & SCHUSTER

Dawn Turner, notable Chicago journalist, traces the memories of her childhood growing up in Bronzeville, a neighborhood founded with great hope during the Great Migration to ultimately decay under the weight of economic, social, and racial inequities. Turner delivers a powerful, introspective, and heartfelt account of the trajectory of young women who may have had each other but ultimately faced differing levels of support, opportunity, and redemption. —Casey



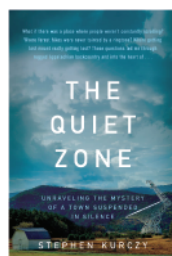
On Freedom: Four Songs of Care and Constraint
by Maggie Nelson
GRAYWOLF PRESS

Only Maggie Nelson could knit together the lexicon of “freedom” with references from academics, writers, and activists in such alluring fashion. This piece is perennial while being timely with the recent adoption of the word “freedom” by authoritarian and right-wing ideologies. She guides the reader along the passageways of freedom and its negative (through paradoxically sometimes truer interpretation) “unfreedom,” through art, sex, drugs, and climate. —Celeste



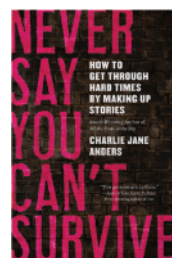
Inflamed: Deep Medicine and the Anatomy of Injustice
by Rupa Marya & Raj Patel
FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX

“Modern medicine always reflects the colonial politics of its time.” I’m a certified health book freak, always scouring the shelves for authors presenting new, insightful information on the connection between our health and the societies we care for it in. *Inflamed* is all of that and more. Written in an accessible voice, anyone with a body needs to read this. —MJ



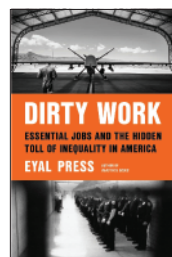
The Quiet Zone: Unraveling the Mystery of a Town Suspended in Silence
by Stephen Kurczyk
DEY STREET BOOKS

One of quietest towns in the world is in rural West Virginia. Due to the presence of Green Bank Observatory, many of the radio frequencies of modern life are banned such as cell phones and Wi-Fi. This town should be truly free from the noise of modern life, but not everything is so simple. I was utterly fascinated by this slice of America that was at once silent and roiling. Do not miss this one. —Ivy



Never Say You Can't Survive
by Charlie Jane Anders
TORDOTCOM

The last couple years have been, quite honestly, a bit wackadoodle. Pandemic, social upheaval, the moldy tangerine finally being removed from the White House. In *Never Say You Can't Survive*, Charlie Jane Anders has given us a how-to for survival—by writing stories. She is the pink-hair adorned mind that brought us *All the Birds in the Sky*, *Victories Greater than Death*, and *The City in the Middle of the Night*, as well as multiple short stories. *Never Say You Can't Survive* is full of personal anecdotes and helpful ways to not only survive, but maybe even thrive in the crazy current times we're in. —Joe



Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America
by Eyal Press
FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX

“Cheaply run prisons were a lot like cheaply run wars.” This book sheds light in the darkest corners in America—prison, Silicon Valley, slaughterhouses—revealing what people do when they have to. Unsurprisingly, insight drips onto every page because *Dirty Work* is unafraid to show cold, candid truths and a heavy hand of nastiness. The book is morally compromised but that's no fault. It's complex in that it presents the perspective of those that engage in these activities, and those that suffer. I recommend this for anyone who is interested in the shades of gray that hide in plain sight. —Morgan



Unfollow Me: Essays on Complicity
by Jill Louise Busby
BLOOMSBURY PUBLISHING

A cross of memoir and cultural criticism, Busby is known online for her takes on performative activism and white fragility. In *Unfollow Me* she turns the lens on the very mechanism through which she came into the public consciousness. How whole people are reduced to blurbs and likes, plus her personal history that led to the collision of the public and the private on social media. —Celeste