

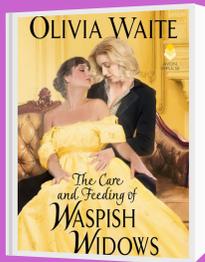
SPRING 2021 Staff Picks for Adults



Aurora
Public
Library
District

The Care and Feeding of Waspish Widows, by Olivia Waite

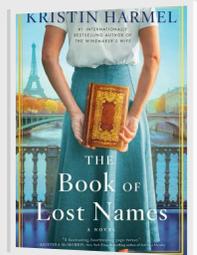
Adult Services Librarian
Megan says:



Since her beloved husband passed away, Agatha Griffin has given everything to the printing business they started together. But the arrival of lovely beekeeper Penelope Flood may inspire Agatha to reach out for love one more time. If you love Regency romances but wish there were more stories about women loving women, Olivia Waite's Feminine Pursuits series has you covered. The first book, *The Lady's Guide to Celestial Mechanics*, is also available at APLD!

The Book of Lost Names, by Kristin Harmel

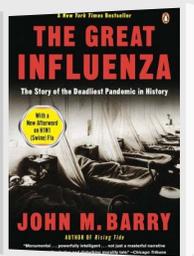
Adult Services Paraprofessional
Kevin says:



A Florida librarian sees a photograph that sends her thoughts back in time to WWII Europe. Using her forging skills, she had created fake identification papers for Jewish children fleeing the Nazi occupation of France. But she also sought to preserve their real names and Jewish heritage in a codebook that has resurfaced in the present day. Although the wartime setting is obviously fraught, the characters give the story a cozy and hopeful feel - which many of us need right now!

The Great Influenza, by John M. Barry

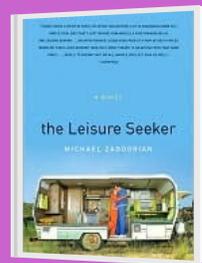
Events and Program Coordinator
Krista says:



The Great Influenza is a good nonfiction read right now because of the strong parallels Barry unwittingly exposes between the mishandling of the 1918 influenza pandemic and the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, the reader is given an unexpected glimpse into the presidency of Woodrow Wilson and his control of news and information outlets during the war.

The Leisure Seeker, by Michael Zadoorian

Events and Program Coordinator
Krista says:



The Leisure Seeker is a tender story about an elderly couple who wish to end life on their own terms, by escaping the exhausting grind of doctors, hospitals, and worried adult children to set out on an adventure in their trusty RV. The destination is Disneyland, but the journey is life and death. Readers will be touched by the love between John and Ella, who are both struggling with illness, and by the tenacity and spirit of this unlikely protagonist duo. When is the last time your realistic fiction featured an elderly couple from Detroit? Exactly.

The Queen's Gambit, by Walter Tevis

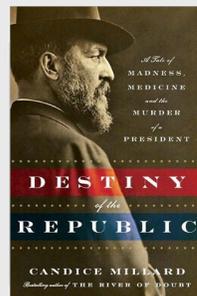
Collection Development Librarian
Leigh says:



I've always had an interest in chess because my father played at a competitive level. The novel *The Queen's Gambit* takes you inside the mind of a chess prodigy and vividly conveys the experience of playing against masters of the game, and from the female perspective. Excellent on its own, or as a companion piece to the Netflix series.

Destiny of the Republic, by Candice Millard

Collection Development Librarian
Leigh says:



Destiny of the Republic tells the fascinating drama of how James A. Garfield rose from poverty to be elected President, only to be shot four months after his inauguration. Unfortunately the medical care he received was archaic and he died not from the gunshot, but from infection. I knew almost nothing about Garfield before reading this, but his life and death as told by Millard is one of my favorite "nonfiction that reads like fiction" books. Also a great read for book groups.

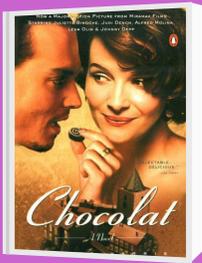
SPRING 2021 Staff Picks for Adults



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Chocolat, by Joanne Harris

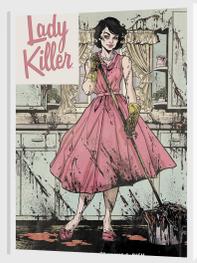
Adult Services Librarian
Megan says:



A delectable book about a mysterious woman who opens a chocolate shop in a small French town and encourages her new neighbors to indulge themselves and find new connections through food. I read *Chocolat* during Lent so I could experience the feeling of the story unfolding in real time, but it's delicious any time of year. If you enjoyed the 2000 film starring Juliette Binoche, you'll definitely love the book!

Lady Killer, by Joëlle Jones & Jamie S. Rich

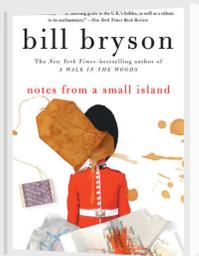
Adult Services Librarian
Megan says:



Josie has a loving husband, two beautiful daughters, and a lucrative and fulfilling career as an assassin. But when her boss decides that she's become a liability, she'll need to apply her specific skillset to protecting her comfortable suburban life. Co-writer Jones provides stunning art for this graphic novel series, including pitch-perfect send-ups of 1960s advertisements. Great for anyone who wishes classic James Bond films had more killer ladies.

Notes from a Small Island, by Bill Bryson

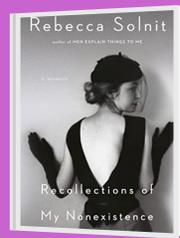
Adult Services Librarian
Cailín says:



One of my favorite travel writers, Bill Bryson, is the perfect antidote for these uncertain times. He will take you on a hilarious adventure in any of his numerous books; however, he's at his best when writing about his adopted country, England. In *Notes from a Small Island*, Bryson sets off on a farewell tour of the county he has called home for the past twenty years, noting the endearing quirks of the English along the way.

Recollections of My Nonexistence, by Rebecca Solnit

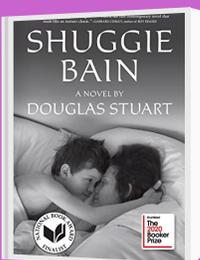
Adult Services Librarian
Cailín says:



Have you ever read a book that felt like the author was speaking directly to you? That was how it felt reading *Recollections of My Nonexistence*, and I suspect it is for a lot of women. Solnit speaks to feminist issues in her essay collections, *Men Explain Things To Me* and *The Mother of All Questions*, but here she writes movingly about her own experience. She wrote her memoir, she says, not because her story is different or special, but because it is ordinary.

Shuggie Bain, by Douglas Stuart

Adult Services Librarian
Cailín says:



At times funny, heartbreaking, and full of love, *Shuggie Bain* is an intimate portrait of a working-class Glaswegian family in the 1980's. Agnes is beaten down by the world and struggling with addiction, and Shuggie is her devoted son who has never quite fit in with anybody but her. Their world is both exceedingly tender and brutal and, in disparate ways, they display a mixture of fragility and strength as their family slowly disintegrates. This novel is a time commitment but it's worth the effort. These characters will stay with you for some time.

SPRING 2021 Staff Picks for Teens



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Wings of Ebony, by J. Elle

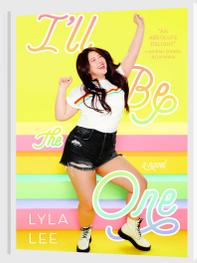
Reference Assistant
Karen says:



I chose this book after hearing the author's interview in the webinar Lifting Voices: Books Like Us: The Power of Seeing Yourself Reflected in a Book. It's a story of marginalized races, magic, non-stop action, family bonds, friendship, and becoming aware of racism and social injustice. It's a hard to put down read that will leave you anticipating the next book in the series. Strong language, recommended for ages 14 & above.

I'll Be The One, by Lyla Lee

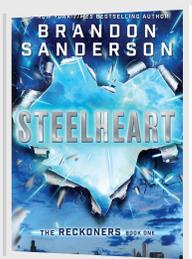
Teen Librarian
Flannery says:



Skye Shin knows that the world of K-pop is competitive, and only the skinniest girls get the spotlight. But Skye also knows that she's a talented singer and dancer and she's not going to let anything get in the way of her becoming the world's best plus-sized K-pop star. This book was so uplifting and made me smile at every page. I loved that Skye was confident and believed in herself no matter what. I also found some awesome music through this book!

Steelheart, by Brandon Sanderson

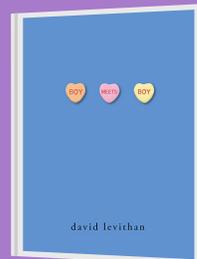
Teen Librarian
Phoebe says:



Superheroes meet dystopian in this fantastic post apocalyptic story. Ten years ago, Calamity came. It was a burst in the sky that gave ordinary people extraordinary powers, but these people are no heroes. With incredible gifts came the desire to rule. Now the world is broken up and ruled by the whims of the most powerful Epics. The Reckoners, A shadowy group of ordinary humans, spend their lives studying Epics, finding their weaknesses, and then assassinating them. And David wants in. This is an action packed adventure, with a good dose of humor and laugh out loud moments, plus Brandon Sanderson always manages to throw in some kind of twist. Recommend for fans of action and superheroes.

Boy Meets Boy, by Dan Levithan

Teen Librarian
Phoebe says:



This book is a sweet, feel good high school romance. Recommend for someone looking for a diverse light read. Paul is a high school sophomore; his best friend Joni might not be his best friend anymore, his other best friend Tony is dealing with ultra-religious parents, the ex-that broke his heart is hanging around a lot more, and then there is Noah, the boy who might just be The One. Boy Meets Boy takes place in a kind of gay utopia (for example they have the Joy Scouts because the Boy Scouts wouldn't accept gay members). It is not always realistic—it just made me happy to read.

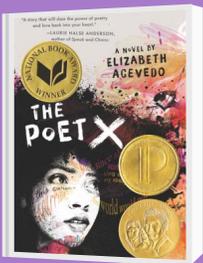
SPRING 2021 Staff Picks for Teens



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The Poet X, by Elizabeth Acevedo

Library Assistant
Caitlin says:



Xiomara Batista discovers a love and passion for slam poetry but worries about how she will navigate this passion alongside her mother's strict religious beliefs. She's invited to join her school's slam poetry club but knows her mother would never approve. Despite this fact, she can't stop thinking about performing her work. To make matters worse, she's developing feelings for a classmate. Recommended for anyone who isn't a fan of books in verse, this one will change your mind. Or give the audiobook a try, as it is recorded by slam poet and author Elizabeth Acevedo!

Ancient Magus Bride, by Kore Yamazaki

Teen librarian
Phoebe says:



Chise Hatori is a penniless orphan troubled by visions of strange creatures. When a man with the head of a beast, wielding strange powers, obtains her through a slave auction, Chise begins a strange new life, filled with magic, fairies, and creatures from folklore (largely English). The man is a "magus," a powerful sorcerer. After freeing Chise from her captivity, he announces that she will become his apprentice--and his bride (honestly it is less creepy than it sounds). Both characters end up teaching each other, as they learn about themselves and how the world works. Recommended for fans of shojo manga and folklore based fantasy.

Everything Sad is Untrue, by Daniel Nayeri

Reference Assistant
Elke says:



I heard Daniel Nayeri present this book at a webinar before its publication. I was hooked when he praised the strength of his mother. I was intrigued by the refugee story from a country like Iran. I am an immigrant, not a refugee, but you will always compare your country of birth with your new chosen country, even more so, if you had to leave that country behind forever. This is one of the most powerful books I ever read. A little difficult to get used to the patchwork text, as Scheherazade in One Thousand and One Nights, it brings Persian culture closer to us and also lets us see our Western culture in a different light. I laughed so hard, but also felt his pain. As Nayeri says in the book: "If we really listen in the parlors of our minds and look at each other as we were meant to be seen - then we would fall in love." I fell in love with that book. I ask you to open your hearts and read it. He well deserves to be the winner of the 2021 Michael Printz Award of Excellence in Young Adult Literature. I wish I could meet him in person.

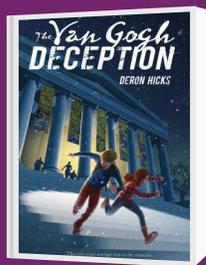
SPRING 2021 Staff Picks for Children



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The Van Gogh Deception, by Deron R. Hicks

Library Assistant
Caitlin says:



Who is the young boy found in Washington DC's National Gallery of Art and why can't he remember who he is? His foster sister Camille names him Art and together they decide to try to use the few clues they have, such as his extensive knowledge of art, to figure out his identity. Their investigation leads them to realizing that something isn't quite right with the newly discovered Van Gogh painting up for sale...A thrilling story full of mystery, danger, and digital QR codes of famous paintings, The Van Gogh Deception will intrigue any mystery lover to attempt to figure the mystery out themselves!

Hide and Seek, by Daka Hermon

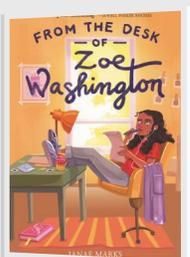
Library Assistant
Caitlin says:



Justin's best friend Zee has returned after going missing for a year but he isn't the same. He is full of scars, destructive, and starts speaking nonsense about the game of hide and seek at his homecoming party. When another neighbor kid goes missing in a similar way as Zee, Justin and his friends realize something isn't right and what took Zee has come for all of them to bring them into a shadowy realm full of your greatest fears. A truly spooky tale of fear, grief, and friendship, Hide and Seek is perfect for fans of R.L. Stine or Katherine Arden's Small Spaces.

From the Desk of Zoe Washington, by Janae Marks

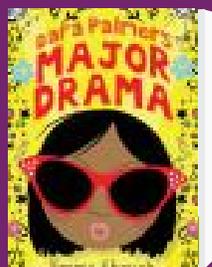
Library Assistant
Caitlin says:



Twelve-year-old Zoe's goal of the summer is to do so well at her bakery internship that her parents will finally let her try out for the Food Network's Kids Bake Challenge. But things get complicated when she receives a birthday letter from her incarcerated birth father Marcus, claiming to be innocent of the crime that locked him up for her entire life. Zoe decides to secretly write him back and investigate if he is telling the truth, all while trying to improve her baking techniques and settle differences with her best friend. A truly heartwarming book that successfully explores some tougher topics, this book is sure to become a middle grade classic.

Dara Palmer's Major Drama, by Emma Shevah

Library Position
Elke says:



Cambodian New Year is celebrated on April 13/14. This is the story of an adopted girl from an orphanage who dreams of stardom. Raised by a British family with another adoptee from Russia, she has to find her place in this blended family while longing to find out about her origins. She also learns about sibling rivalry, pleasing parents, but the biggest lesson she has to master if she wants to be an actress is to imagine herself in someone else's shoes. You try that! It is a super fun read in the style of Diary of a Wimpy Kid..

When Life Gives You Mangos, by Kereen Getten

Reference Assistant
Karen says:



The location, a Jamaican island, and the memory loss of the main character, Clara, are what piqued my interest in this book. It's the story of 12 year old Clara and her struggle with her memory, changing friendships and more. Just like her father, Clara loved the water and surfing but this year is different. She won't even put her feet in the ocean since she lost her memory! She befriends her isolated, estranged uncle, who the town has turned their back on and learns about him and herself. I was just as surprised as Clara at the plot twist! You will be too.