

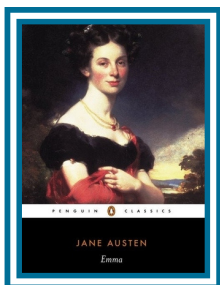
# Staff Picks

2023

Check out our favorite books,  
movies and more!

# Adult Fiction

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## *Emma* by Jane Austen

A wonderful English novel!

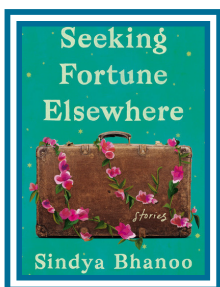
-Kathryn, Special Collections  
Supervisor



## *Big Swiss* by Jen Beagin

For anyone who has been to or is considering therapy. This is nothing like therapy. But it's really weird and gross and thought-provoking, so if that's your thing, I'd highly recommend.

-Claire, Information Services  
Librarian



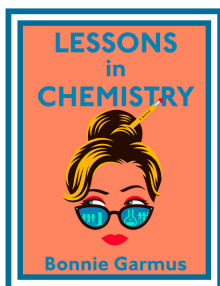
## *Seeking Fortune Elsewhere* by Sindya Bhanoo

The haunting stories show us how immigrants' paths, and the paths of those they leave behind, are never simple. The author takes us along on their complicated journeys where regret, hope, and triumph appear in disguise.

-Malavika, Library Trustee

## ***Lessons in Chemistry*** **by Bonnie Garmus**

This book is amazing. A woman chemist in the early 1960s who isn't afraid to speak her mind and fight for what she deserves. Bonus: it's a television show now!

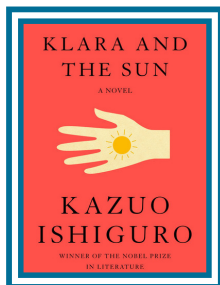


-Stephanie, Information Services Librarian

I came to know of this book when I saw the author interviewed on CBS Sunday Morning- It is a captivating and thought-provoking novel and it seamlessly blends science and storytelling. It's a celebration of resilience, intellect, and the pursuit of dreams. It left me with a sense of inspiration and a newfound appreciation for the wonders of chemistry.

-Malavika, Library Trustee

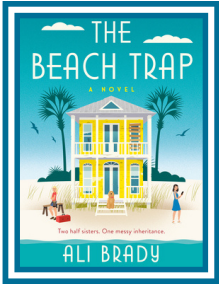
## ***Klara and the Sun*** **by Kazuo Ishiguro**



This story made you think about what it is to be human. Can an AI robot exhibit behaviors that are more human than those of the people around it? Can an artificial friend have faith?

-Valerie, Information Services Supervisor

***The Beach Trap***  
**by Ali Brady**

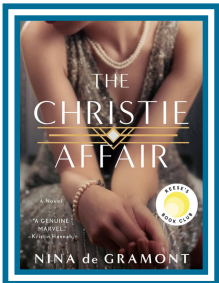


Kat and Blake meet for the first time at the age of 12 at Camp. The two girls seem drawn together and find that they are connected in a way that neither expected. Years later, faced with heartbreak and loss, Kat and Blake are reunited. The family beach house is not what Blake had expected and Kat is determined to keep the house in her family.

I loved, loved loved this title! If you are looking for the perfect “beach read” this is for you!

-Brittany, Community Outreach Supervisor

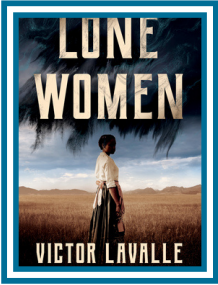
***The Christie Affair***  
**by Nina de Gramont**



Wow, I think that this book might have risen to one of my favorite books of all time. There is always so much more to a story and I am so happy to have had the chance to read this beautiful, heartbreaking, and intriguing tale.

-Brittany, Community Outreach Supervisor

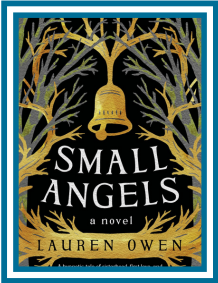
***Lone Women***  
**by Victor LaValle**



An absolutely delightful, chilling read about many different kinds of women trying to settle in the American West in the year 1915. This novel is riddled with suspense as it tells the story of family, friendship, hardship, community, and perseverance.

-Bianca, Branch Supervisor

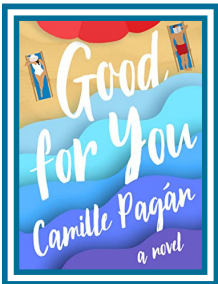
***Small Angels***  
**by Lauren Owen**



The novel pulls you in with the promise of a scary story about a small English town with a dark past. The underlying sense of dread throughout keeps you hooked. Nothing feels safe, even when it is. Excellent writing and a gripping plot.

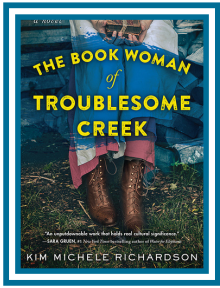
-Emily, Technical Services Clerk

***Good For You***  
**by Camille Pagán**



Good For You is a story of finding your strength even in the darkest of times. Pagan paints a gorgeous story making this a perfect summer read!

-Brittany, Community Outreach Supervisor



***The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek***  
by Kim Michele Richardson

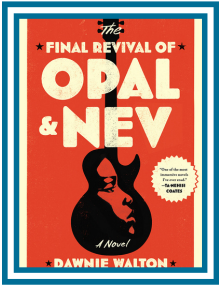
This book was heartbreaking and beautiful. As an outreach librarian, this book was just what I needed.

-Brittany, Community Outreach Supervisor

***The Final Revival of Opal & Nev***  
by Dawnie Walton

Richly drawn characters in this fictional oral history of a 1970s rock duo. It is so well written, I had to double check if Opal and Nev were real people.

-Beth, Information Services Librarian



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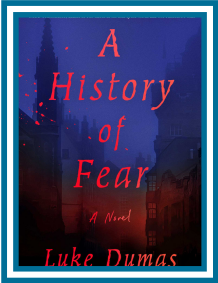
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# Horror

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## ***A History of Fear*** by Luke Dumas



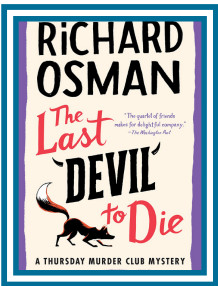
A young man found guilty of murdering a classmate is found dead in his prison cell, leaving a manifesto behind claiming the devil made him do it. Fast paced, thrilling, and told in a series of chapters followed by interviews, text messages, and transcripts.

-Emily, Technical Services Clerk

# Mystery

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## ***The Last Devil to Die*** by Richard Osman



This is the latest book in the Thursday Murder Club series. I like the quirky characters and seeing what is happening in their lives as they work to solve a new mystery.

-Merideth, Technical Services Supervisor

# Romance

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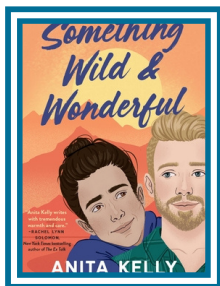
## *The Fiancée Farce* by Alexandria Bellefleur



Bookstore owner Tansy and heiress/romance novel cover model Gemma meet by chance and decide to placate their overstepping families by pretending to be engaged. Sweet and charming and well-known tropes made fresh and fun!

-Lexie, Assistant Director

## *Something Wild & Wonderful* by Anita Kelly



Ben and Alexei find love and healing as they hike the Pacific Crest Trail. A beautiful representation of love, mental health, and the healing powers of nature.

-Lexie, Assistant Director

## *Summer Reading* by Jenn McKinlay

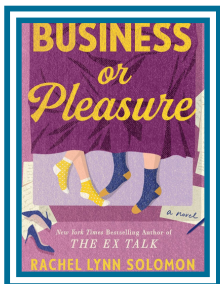


The book is about relationships - ones with friends, family, and a new love. It made me laugh and cry.

-Merideth, Technical Services  
Supervisor



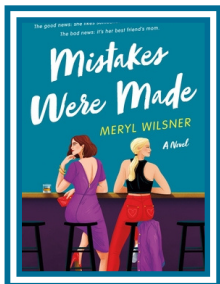
***Business or Pleasure***  
by Rachel Lynn Solomon



After the first steamy scene, I expected to not enjoy this title and THEN the twist!

-Stephanie, Information Services Librarian

***Mistakes Were Made***  
by Meryl Wilsner



College senior Cassie is left reeling when the gorgeous woman she hooked up with at the local bar turns out to be her best friend's mom - and the two of them just can't stay away from each other. Super steamy, genuine and heartfelt, a total page-turner.

-Lexie, Assistant Director

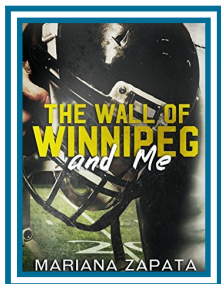
***The Boyfriend Candidate***  
by Ashley Winstead



The 2 main characters were going to have a one-night stand, but end up pretending to be in a relationship. They learn a lot about themselves through this. But, do they end up together?

-Merideth, Technical Services Supervisor

***The Wall of Winnipeg and Me*  
by Mariana Zapata**



I love the down-to-earth characters that Mariana Zapata creates. Vanessa and Aiden are both struggling and keep isolated from others when unusual circumstances place them together. By supporting each other, they learn to grow and challenge themselves professionally and personally.

-Amy, Archivist



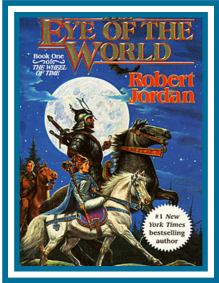
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# Fantasy

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## *The Wheel of Time Series* by Robert Jordan and Brandon Sanderson

It is a great fantasy series!

-Kathryn, Special Collections  
Supervisor

# Science Fiction

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## *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers

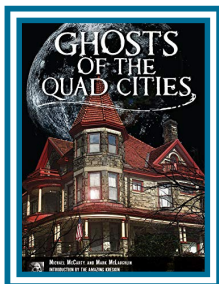
A monk and a robot travel the wilderness together, seeking out the answer to the question "what do people need?" Thoughtful, comforting, and above all hopeful.

-Lexie, Assistant Director

# Nonfiction

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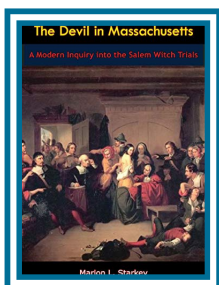
## ***Ghosts of the Quad Cities*** by Michael McCarty and Mark McLaughlin



Mr. McCarty does a wonderful job exploring the ghosts and legends of the Quad Cities. I always enjoy his books.

-Amy, Archivist

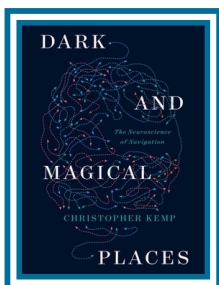
## ***The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry into the Salem Witch Trials*** by Marion L. Starkey



An engaging read about an interesting period of American history.

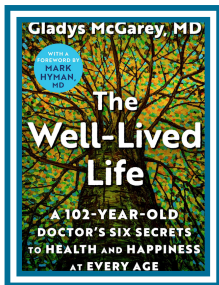
-Kathryn, Special Collections Supervisor

## ***Dark and Magical Places: The Neuroscience of Navigation*** by Christopher Kemp



I think I picked up the book for two reasons : my daughter is studying Neurosciences, and I am always amazed by the research she shares with us and secondly, when I read a quick review while I was cataloging the book, I wanted to know more.

-Malavika, Library Trustee

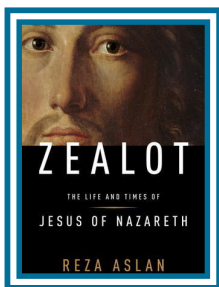


***The Well-Lived Life: A 102-Year-Old Doctor's Six Secrets to Health and Happiness at Every Age***  
by Gladys McGarey, MD

I read the book and really enjoyed her perspective on enjoying life and living it to the fullest.

-Joanna, Cataloging Librarian

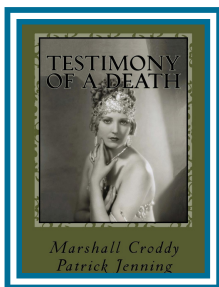
***Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth***  
by Reza Aslan



Aslan presents an interesting historical account of the time in which Jesus lived and died and compares it with that presented in the biblical texts. I found this book to be interesting and thought provoking.

-Steve, Library Board of Trustees President

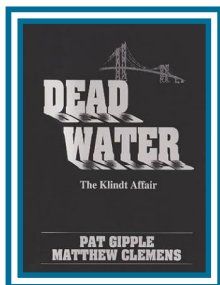
***Testimony of a Death***  
by Marshall Croddy & Patrick Jenning



Great research into the life, death, and legend of 1920s movie star Thelma Todd who was found dead in her car. The authors separated the rumors that have grown over the years, while unearthing some interesting facts about her life and what (or who) might have led to Thelma's mysterious death.

-Amy, Archivist

***Dead Water***  
**by Pat Gipple & Matthew Clemens**



An easy and interesting read about the Joyce Klindt Murder that took place in Davenport, Iowa in 1983. This story fascinated the Quad Cities for years when housewife Joyce Klindt disappeared. In a short time, a torso was found in the Mississippi River. Follow the police as they remember the case and the Scott County prosecutors as they put her husband on trial.

-Amy, Archivist

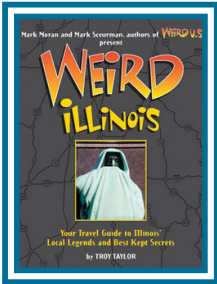
***Nature Style***  
**by Alana Langan and Jacqui Vidal**



It was not as much as styling the homes with plants but more so the curiosity of what the authors had done with their placement in the various parts of the home. Whether you're a green thumb or a novice, this book showcases the transformative power of nature within the confines of our homes.

-Malavika, Library Trustee

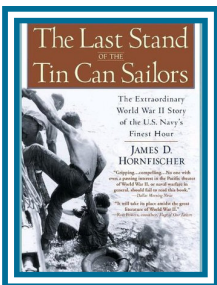
## **Weird Illinois** by Troy Taylor



Troy is an author of many books on ghosts, legends, and crime. This book offered a fun opportunity to learn things we never knew and helped us plan some getaways to visit little known sites of interest.

-Amy, Archivist

## **The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors** by James D. Hornfischer

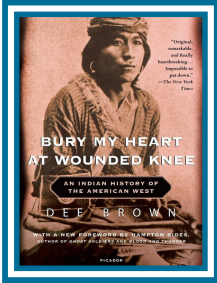


This book provides a riveting account of the Battle of Leyte Gulf during WWII and tells how a group of US escort carriers and destroyer escorts, including the USS Samuel B. Roberts, engaged a much larger Japanese battle group, including cruisers and a battleship, and drove them back. The "Sammy B", was one of the US ships lost in the battle. It's remains were found near the Phillipines in June of 2022, at a depth of around four miles, the deepest shipwreck ever found

-Steve, Library Board of Trustees  
President

## ***Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown**

Coincidentally, I happened to read this book very near Columbus/ Indigenous Peoples Day. This wasn't planned but it turned out to be very fitting as the book opens with the "discovery" and settlement of America and continues into how the Native Americans were tricked and forced to move from parts of the country the White Man wanted to parts of the country he didn't want - yet. This is a very detailed account of a very sad period in our country's history.



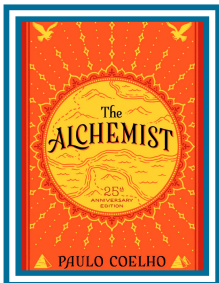
-Steve, Library Board of Trustees  
President

## **Audiobooks**

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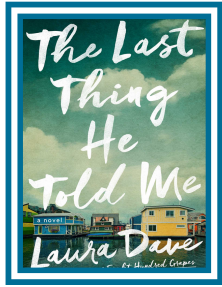
### ***The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho**

I listened to the audiobook narrated by Jeremy Irons who did an amazing job. This book demonstrates the spiritual nature of self-discovery and the importance of following your dreams.



-Joanna, Cataloging Librarian





***The Last Thing He Told Me***  
by Laura Dave

This book was mysterious and full of interesting characters and had a great plot line! I really enjoyed it!

-Brittany, Community Outreach Supervisor

***Really Good, Actually***  
by Monica Heisey



This was laugh out loud funny. The main character, Maggie, is trying to pull herself together after less than 2 years of marriage and a divorce before age 30. It is sometimes cringey how un-self-aware she is, but you know you wouldn't be any better off in her situation.

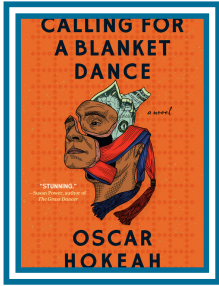
-Beth, Information Services Librarian

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**Davenport Public Library offers a variety of book clubs for adults and young people. Scan to see what we have to offer!**



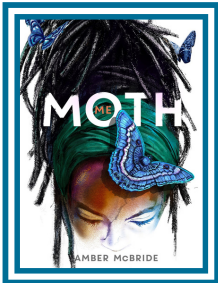
**Calling for a Blanket Dance  
by Oscar Hokeah**



A multigenerational story told through multiple voices as we follow the life of Ever Geimausaddle, a half Kiowa half Cherokee Native American. Hokeah fully immerses the reader in the language and culture of both of the tribes living in nearby towns in Oklahoma.

-Bianca, Branch Supervisor

**Me: Moth  
by Amber McBride**



A young woman's journey to re-find herself after losing her family in a car accident. I can't say more than that without spoiling the ending. BIPOC and Native American voices are represented in this novel.

-Emily, Technical Services Clerk

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**Sign up for Recommends, a monthly newsletter tailored to your reading interests! Scan the QR code below to get started!**



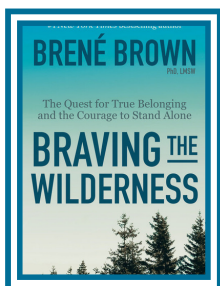
***My Government Means to Kill Me*  
by Rasheed Newson**



Told in the form of a memoir, this work of fiction depicts living life in New York as a young black gay man during the 1980s. While a work of fiction, Newson captures the culture of the gay male community of that time, boldly exploring the epidemic and how it devastated the entire LGBT community.

-Bianca, Branch Supervisor

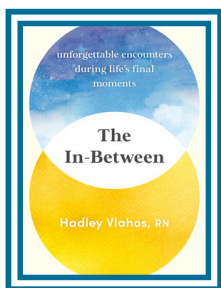
***Braving the Wilderness*  
by Brené Brown**



I listened to the audiobook. The author's narration definitely added to the enjoyment of the book. She is very down-to-earth, and her ideas on belonging are enlightening.

-Joanna, Cataloging Librarian

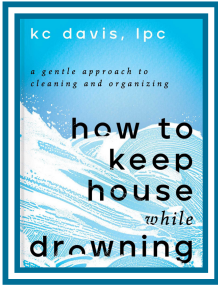
***The In-Between*  
by Hadley Vlahos**



I listened to the audiobook which was narrated by the author. I liked the way the book was structured. The chapters covered individual patients she worked with as a hospice nurse. I learned a lot about what a hospice nurse does and was touched by the stories of her patients' lives.

-Joanna, Cataloging Librarian

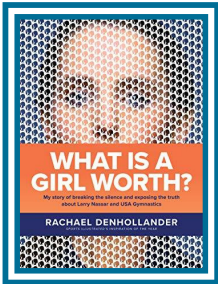
## ***How to Keep House While Drowning*** **by K.C. Davis**



This book gives you permission to keep your home functional not perfect. No checklists, just guidance.

-Beth, Information Services Librarian

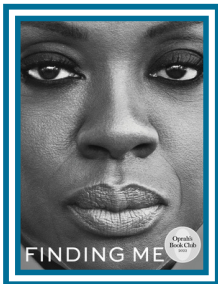
## ***What Is a Girl Worth?*** **by Rachael Denhollander**



Rachel Denhollander's memoir clearly and articulately explains her life's journey toward recovering from the sexual abuse of a trusted and well-renowned doctor. This story truly exemplifies the difficult and sometimes impossible journey faced by survivors seeking justice for abuse, making one realize how little a girl is actually worth.

-Bianca, Branch Supervisor

## ***Finding Me*** **by Viola Davis**



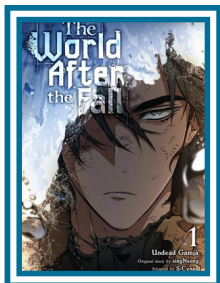
Watching Viola Davis on the big screen, one would never guess that she grew up in extreme poverty, living among rats and wetting the bed until age 12. Davis' memoir shares her most vulnerable secrets and her incredible journey to a globally recognized, Oscar-winning actor.

-Bianca, Branch Supervisor

# Graphic Novels

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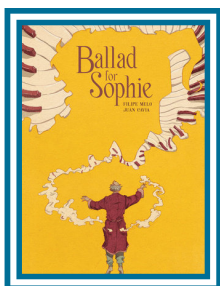
## ***The World After the Fall*** **by S-Cynan and singNsong**



One of my favorite litrpg series, this manhwa presents a unique take on the “tower ascension” genre. Follow the last Tower Walker as he uncovers the truth of the tower and questions the meaning of “being alive.”

-Elena, Information Services Librarian

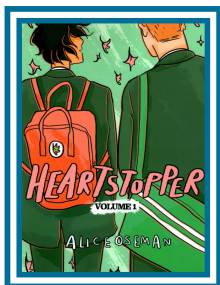
## ***Ballad for Sophie*** **by Filipe Melo and Juan Cavia**



The story, its sentiment, and how it's artistically rendered are perfect. The creator also composed a piece to accompany the ending. I read this in January of 2023 and I'm still thinking about how it made me feel.

-Claire, Information Services Librarian

## ***Heartstopper*** **by Alice Oseman**



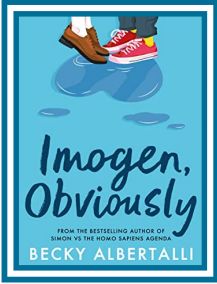
I read four volumes of this in one day. Oseman writes about heavy topics in a way that is realistic. I can't wait for more!

-Stephanie, Information Services Librarian

# Young Adult

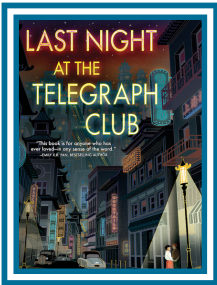
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## ***Imogen, Obviously*** by Becky Albertalli



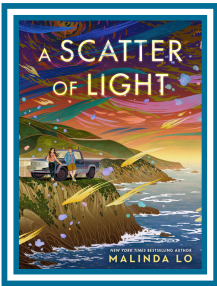
Token straight ally Imogen gets her world turned upside down when she meets Tessa and finds herself wondering if the box everyone has been putting her in doesn't fit after all. A beautiful, vulnerable story of identity and self-discovery.

-Lexie, Assistant Director

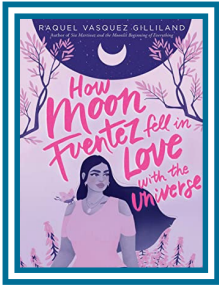


## ***Last Night at the Telegraph Club & A Scatter of Light*** by Malinda Lo

These are companion novels that are 'loosely' connected story wise. Both are queer fiction that are beautifully written talking about major historical events.



-Stephanie, Information Services Librarian



***How Moon Fuentes Fell in Love with the Universe***  
by Raquel Vasquez Gilliland

This book was gorgeously written, irreverent, and features a main character who actually has big emotions and feelings.

-Stephanie, Information Services Librarian

## Children's Books

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***The Yawns Are Coming***  
by Christopher Eliopoulos



For a book about two friends avoiding going to bed, this picture book casts a surprising trance over my toddler. It seems to reassure him that tomorrow will be so much fun.

-Beth, Information Services Librarian

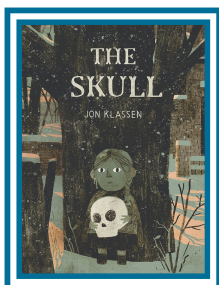
**Big**  
by Vashti Harrison



If this book doesn't win the Caldecott Medal this year, I will shatter. Both the story and illustrations by Vashti Harrison are STUNNING. Follow along as a child discovers how to love themselves while living in a world where words have the power to both hurt and heal. Have a tissue box handy.

-Amber, Youth Services Librarian

**The Skull**  
by Jon Klassen



A beautiful retelling of a Tyrolean folktale about a girl who befriends a skull. This picture book will especially appeal to tweens and teens due to the chapter book feel and ghoulish personality. The Author/Illustrator's note at the end is a must read!

-Amber, Youth Services Librarian

**Benita and the Night Creatures**  
by Mariana Llanos

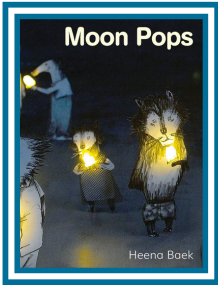


My toddler loved learning the names of the night creatures who try to scare Benita. He always laughs when Benita tells the creatures to "Be quiet! I'm trying to read!"

-Beth, Information Services Librarian



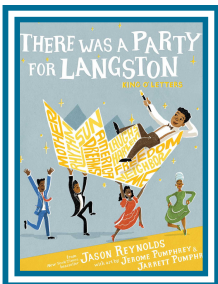
## ***Moon Pops*** **by Heena Baek**



Moon Pops is a fresh, summery retelling of a Korean folktale by internationally acclaimed Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award winner Heena Baek. During a hot evening, the moon begins to melt. Granny decides to collect the moon drops and make popsicles for her neighbors, but what will she do when the moon rabbits come by looking for their home? Every time I read this book, I find something new to delight me in the glowing illustrations.

-Amber, Youth Services Librarian

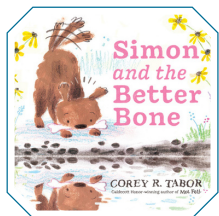
## ***There Was a Party for Langston*** **by Jason Reynolds, Jerome Pumphrey and Jarrett Pumphrey**



This is such a lovely, joyful picture book about a real life party at the Schomburg Library that brought together some of history's greatest authors to celebrate Langston Hughes. It feels exciting to read a picture book that flows and jumps and sings while also managing to introduce young readers to so many important historical figures.

-Amber, Youth Services Librarian

## ***Simon and the Better Bone*** **by Corey R. Tabor**



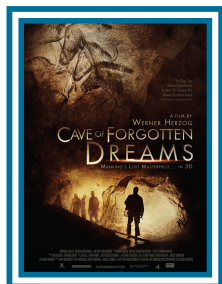
This is my choice for best-dog-picture-book of the year! (Past winners include *Hot Dog*, *The Longest Letsgoboy*, *Good Rosie*, *Best Day Ever*, *Snook Alone*, and *Please, Puppy, Please!*) Simon is happy to have found a great bone, until he walks by a pond and sees another dog with a better bone. Simon is so playful and sweet, that you will want to just scoop him out of the book for a hug.

-Amber, Youth Services Librarian

## **Movies & Television**

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### ***Cave of Forgotten Dreams*** **(Documentary)**



Excellent documentary about the ancient Chauvet Cave in Southern France which has evidence of some of the earliest human paintings.

-Kathryn, Special Collections  
Supervisor

## ***The Good Girls*** **(Television)**



Three women are tired of playing by the rules and not having anything to show for it. Enter desperation and a crazy plan to rob a store. Hilarity and drama ensue.

-Emily, Technical Services Clerk

## ***The Legend of Vox Machina*** **(Television)**



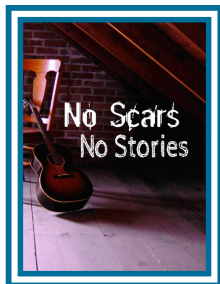
Definitely not for kids! An animated adaptation of the first campaign of the popular DND show, Critical Role. But you do not have to be a fan of them or know anything about them or DND to enjoy this show!

-Emily, Technical Services Clerk

## **Music**

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### ***No Scars No Stories*** **by Lojo Russo**



Great music from a local artist!

-Kathryn, Special Collections  
Supervisor

# Video Games

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## *Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* (Nintendo Switch)



Tears of the Kingdom measures up to the high expectations set by Breath of the Wild. It delivers a follow-up adventure with fresh building mechanics and multiple layers of exploration. With a massive open world map, the game offers countless hours of entertainment.

-Elena, Information Services Librarian

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