Fiction Titles

Mosquitoland by David Arnold
Mosquitoland is a road trip book. Mim Malone, a teenager living with her father and stepmother in Mississippi, learns that her mother is ill and she must travel to Cleveland, Ohio. She jumps on a Greyhound bus with a backpack full of cash and adventures, both good and bad, ensue.

Hex by Sarah Blackman
Alice is a motherless child, born to a motherless child, and raised with neither care nor grace. Her response to this multiple abandonment is a lifelong obsession with her best friend Ingrid, or Thingy, as Alice calls her, and a sort of fantastic narcissism wherein she figures herself as the nexus of a supernatural world she understands through a blend of mountain lore, indigenous Cherokee legend, and the dangerous idiom of the fairy-tale girl who enters the forest despite being warned.

The novel is written in blended parts and is crafted as an address to Thingy’s daughter, Ingrid the Second, who is now in Alice’s care. Alice attempts to tell Ingrid the story of her life: her friendship with Thingy; her troubled relationships with her father, a small-town sexual troubadour; her stepmother, a hard-minded business woman who treats all interactions as commerce; her marriage to her husband Jacob, a silent figure of tremendous will; and her growing suspicion that Ingrid is another girl-child around whom disaster accumulates. Simultaneously, Alice tells the child the kind of bedtime stories she herself has used to make sense of her world. For Alice, and thus in Hex, the line between fantasy and reality is nonexistent, the mountain is older than its geology, and the world a limbo in which everything that has ever happened is coming around again.
Alice and Oliver by Charles Bock

Readers will fall in love with Alice Culvert from the moment she bounces onto the page, baby strapped to her chest, cotton skirt swirling around her knee-high leather boots, and coffee in her hand. Strong yet vulnerable, she's a woman on a mission, and when she convulses in a wet, nerve-wracking cough, Bock (Beautiful Children) envelops us in a sense of foreboding. Through the eyes of those who care for Alice-husband Oliver, best friend Tilda, take-charge mom, and various New Age gurus-a picture emerges of a woman powered by a ferocious love for her daughter who refuses to be cowed by a leukemia diagnosis and pending bone-marrow transplant. Bock does not shy away from the horrible indignities concomitant with Alice's treatments, circa 1993 and a world away from today's latest protocols. Most impressive is the way the author deals so forthrightly with Oliver's difficult role as caretaker, juggling his own needs with those of his wife, his child, and his fledgling business. VERDICT Informed by his own wife's illness and death, Bock's novel is a searingly honest, wryly funny, deeply loving tribute to those facing mortality and struggling through the maze of health insurance and treatment options while trying to hold on to their humanity. -From Library Journal

At the Edge of the Orchard by Tracy Chevalier

James Goodenough, whose family had originally settled in Connecticut from England, brings his family to Ohio to carve out a new life for them in the Black Swamp in 1838. Swamp fever gradually picks off their children and they wrestle daily with survival. This course will see their family engulfed in tragedy and fifteen years later we pick up with their youngest son, Robert, who has been running west since, trying to escape his memories of what happened, taking solace in a very different kind of tree—the redwoods and sequoias of California. But Robert's past catches up with him and he's forced to confront what he's running from and work out for himself that you can't run forever.
Glory Over Everything: Beyond The Kitchen House by Kathleen Grissom

Continues the story of Jamie Pyke, son of both a slave and master of Tall Oakes, whose deadly secret compels him to take a treacherous journey through the Underground Railroad. This new, stand-alone novel opens in 1830, and Jamie, who fled from the Virginian plantation he once called home, is passing in Philadelphia society as a wealthy white silversmith. After many years of striving, Jamie has achieved acclaim and security, only to discover that his aristocratic lover Caroline is pregnant. Before he can reveal his real identity to her, he learns that his beloved servant Pan has been captured and sold into slavery in the South.

The Girl Giant by Kristen Den Hartog

Ruth Brennan is a giant, "a rare, organic blunder pressed into a dollhouse world," as she calls herself. Growing up in a small town, where even an ordinary person can't simply fade into the background, there is no hiding the fact that Ruth is different: she can see it in the eyes of everyone around her, even her own parents. James and Elspeth Brennan are emotionally at sea, struggling with the devastation wrought on their lives by World War II and with their unspoken terror that the daughter they love may, like so much else, one day be taken away from them. But fate works in strange ways, and Ruth finds that for all the things that go unsaid around her, she is nonetheless able to see deeply into the secret hearts of others—their past traumas, their present fears, and the people they might become, if only they have courage enough.
The Sunlit Night by Rebecca Dinerstein

In the beautiful, barren landscape of the Far North, under the ever-present midnight sun, Frances and Yasha are surprised to find refuge in each other. Their lives have been upended - Frances has fled heartbreak and claustrophobic Manhattan for an isolated artist colony; Yasha arrives Brooklyn to fulfill his beloved father's last wish: to be buried "at the top of the world." They have come to learn how to be alone. But in Lofoton, an archipelago of six tiny islands in the Norwegian Sea, ninety-five miles north of the Arctic Circle, they form a bond that fortifies them against the turmoil of their distant homes, offering solace amidst great uncertainty. With nimble and sure-footed prose, Dinerstein reveals that no matter how far we travel to claim our own territory, it is ultimately love that gives us our place in the world.

The Turner House by Angela Flournoy

The Turners have lived on Yarrow Street for over fifty years. Their house has seen thirteen children grown and gone--and some returned; it has seen the arrival of grandchildren, the fall of Detroit's East Side, and the loss of a father. The house still stands despite abandoned lots, an embattled city, and the inevitable shift outward to the suburbs. But now, as ailing matriarch Viola finds herself forced to leave her home and move in with her eldest son, the family discovers that the house is worth just a tenth of its mortgage. The Turner children are called home to decide its fate and to reckon with how each of their pasts haunts--and shapes--their family's future.
**Black Apple by Joan Crate**

Tells the story of Sinopaki, a Blackfoot girl who grows up in the residential school system on the Canadian prairies under the sharp eye, and torment, of Mother Grace at the St. Mark Residential School that is run by the sisters of Brotherly Love, an order of nuns dedicated to saving Indigenous children.

**The Book of Memory by Petina Gappah**

Memory, the narrator of Petina Gappah’s The Book of Memory, is an albino woman languishing in Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison in Harare, Zimbabwe, after being sentenced for murder. As part of her appeal, her lawyer insists that she write down what happened as she remembers it. The death penalty is a mandatory sentence for murder, and Memory is, both literally and metaphorically, writing for her life. As her story unfolds, Memory reveals that she has been tried and convicted for the murder of Lloyd Hendricks, her adopted father. But who was Lloyd Hendricks? Why does Memory feel no remorse for his death? And did everything happen exactly as she remembers?
Heat and Light by Jennifer Haigh

Forty years ago, Bakerton coal fueled the country. Then the mines closed, and the town wore away like a bar of soap. Now Bakerton has been granted a surprise third act: it sits squarely atop the Marcellus Shale, a massive deposit of natural gas.

To drill or not to drill? Prison guard Rich Devlin leases his mineral rights to finance his dream of farming. He doesn’t count on the truck traffic and nonstop noise, his brother’s skepticism or the paranoia of his wife, Shelby, who insists the water smells strange and is poisoning their frail daughter. Meanwhile his neighbors, organic dairy farmers Mack and Rena, hold out against the drilling—until a passionate environmental activist disrupts their lives.

Told through a cast of characters whose lives are increasingly bound by the opposing interests that underpin the national debate, Heat and Light depicts a community blessed and cursed by its natural resources. Soaring and ambitious, it zooms from drill rig to shareholders’ meeting to the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor to the ruined landscape of the “strippins,” haunting reminders of Pennsylvania’s past energy booms. This is a dispatch from a forgotten America—a work of searing moral clarity from one of the finest writers of her generation, a courageous and necessary book.

The Opposite of Everyone by Joshilyn Jackson

After being placed in foster care, Paula Vauss grows up to become a tough divorce attorney only to have her life thrown into chaos by an astonishing revelation and a cryptic message from the mother she has not seen in years.
**God Help the Child** by Toni Morrison

Spare and unsparing, God Help the Child—the first novel by Toni Morrison to be set in our current moment—weaves a tale about the way the sufferings of childhood can shape, and misshape, the life of the adult.

At the center: a young woman who calls herself Bride, whose stunning blue-black skin is only one element of her beauty, her boldness and confidence, her success in life, but which caused her light-skinned mother to deny her even the simplest forms of love. There is Booker, the man Bride loves, and loses to anger. Rain, the mysterious white child with whom she crosses paths. And finally, Bride's mother herself, Sweetness, who takes a lifetime to come to understand that "what you do to children matters. And they might never forget."

**Dumplin’ by Julie Murphy**

From School Library Journal: Sixteen-year-old Dolly Parton-loving Willowdean doesn't usually struggle with her identity and self-confidence as a fat girl in a small Texas town, where her mother leads the local pageant scene, until hot former jock Bo kisses her. In this novel, Murphy takes her time letting Willowdean explore her feelings about a variety of situations relating to friendship, jealousy, sexual attraction, drag queens, her obese aunt's death, her relationship with her mother, and her own self-worth. Murphy celebrates small-town Texas with her strong sense of community and culture, in part by creating very realistic and deep characters to populate Willowdean's world, having them frequent places like truck beds and fast-food joints, and giving them pure Texan dialogue: "Oh God, roll down the mother flippin' windows!" Unlike the similarly smart, funny, and large heroines of Robin Brande's Fat Cat (Knopf, 2009) or Suzanne Supplee's Artichoke's Heart (Dutton, 2008), Willowdean doesn't have to lose the weight to get the boy and her confidence, but instead remains a strong and realistic overweight girl to whom many readers will aspire: "I'm not doing this to be some kind of Joan of Fat Girls, or whatever. I'm doing this...for me."
**Ladivine by Marie Ndiaye**

On the first Tuesday of every month, Clarisse Rivière leaves her husband and young daughter and secretly takes the train to Bordeaux to visit her mother, Ladivine. Just as Clarisse's husband and daughter know nothing of Ladivine, Clarisse herself has hidden nearly every aspect of her adult life from this woman, whom she dreads and despises but also pitied. Long ago abandoned by Clarisse's father, Ladivine works as a housecleaner and has no one but her daughter, whom she knows as Malinka.

After more than twenty-five years of this deception, the idyllic middle-class existence Clarisse has built from scratch can no longer survive inside the walls she's put up to protect it. Her untold anguish leaves her cold and guarded, her loved ones forever trapped outside, looking in. When her husband, Richard, finally leaves her, Clarisse finds comfort in the embrace of a volatile local man, Freddy Moliger. With Freddy, she finally feels reconciled to, or at least at ease with, her true self. But this peace comes at a terrible price. Clarisse will be brutally murdered, and it will be left to her now-grown daughter, who also bears the name Ladivine without knowing why, to work out who her mother was and what happened to her.

**The Life and Death of Sophie Stark by Anna North**

Gripping and provocative, The Life and Death of Sophie Stark is a haunting story of fame, love, and legacy told through the propulsive rise of an iconoclastic artist. Sophie Stark begins her filmmaking career by creating a documentary about her obsession, Daniel, a college basketball star. But when she becomes too invasive, she finds herself the victim of a cruel retribution. The humiliation doesn't stop her. Visionary and unapologetic, Sophie begins to use stories from the lives of those around her to create movies, and as she gains critical recognition and acclaim, she risks betraying the one she loves most.
The Assistants by Camille Perri

The debut novel that J. Courtney Sullivan calls "addictive, hilarious, and smart. It's "9 to 5 for the student loan generation" and Publishers Weekly describes as "if the characters from HBO’s Girls were capable of larceny and blackmail."

Rule #1: All important men have assistants. Rule #2: Men rule the world. Still. Rule #3: There is enough money. There is so much money.

Tina Fontana is a thirty-year-old executive assistant to Robert Barlow, the CEO of Titan Corp., a multinational media conglomerate. She's excellent at her job and beloved by her famous boss—but after six years of making reservations and pouring drinks from bottles that cost more than her rent, the glamour of working for a media company in New York has completely faded, but her student loan debt has not.

When a technical error with Robert's expense report presents Tina with the opportunity to pay off the entire balance of her loans with what would essentially be pocket change for her boss, she hesitates. She's always played by the rules, but this would be a life-changer. As Tina begins to fall down the rabbit hole of her morally questionable plan, other assistants with crushing debt and fewer scruples approach her to say that they want in. Before she knows it, she's at the forefront of a movement that has implications far beyond what anyone anticipated.

Featuring an eclectic clan of co-conspirators, a love interest far too handsome to be trusted, and a razor-sharp voice full of wry humor, The Assistants is a rallying cry for the leagues of overeducated and underpaid women who are asking themselves, How is it that after all these years, we are still assistants?

The Beautiful Bureaucrat by Helen Phillips

In a windowless building in a remote part of town, the newly employed Josephine inputs an endless string of numbers into something known only as The Database. After a long period of joblessness, she's not inclined to question her fortune, but as the days inch by and the files stack up, Josephine feels increasingly anxious in her surroundings—the office's scarred pinkish walls take on a living quality, the drone of keyboards echoes
eerily down the long halls. When one evening her husband Joseph disappears and then returns, offering no explanation as to his whereabouts, her creeping unease shifts decidedly to dread.

As other strange events build to a crescendo, the haunting truth about Josephine's work begins to take shape in her mind, even as something powerful is gathering its own form within her. She realizes that in order to save those she holds most dear, she must penetrate an institution whose tentacles seem to extend to every corner of the city and beyond. Both chilling and poignant, The Beautiful Bureaucrat is a novel of rare restraint and imagination. With it, Helen Phillips enters the company of Murakami, Bender, and Atwood as she twists the world we know and shows it back to us full of meaning and wonder-luminous and new.

**Bone Gap by Laura Ruby**

Bone Gap is the story of Roza, a beautiful girl who is taken from a quiet midwestern town and imprisoned by a mysterious man, and Finn, the only witness, who cannot forgive himself for being unable to identify her kidnapper. As we follow them through their melancholy pasts, their terrifying presents, their uncertain futures, acclaimed author Laura Ruby weaves a heartbreaking tale of love and loss, magic and mystery, regret and forgiveness—a story about how the face the world sees is never the sum of who we are.

**The Year of the Runaways by Sunjeev Sahota**

Three young men, and one unforgettable woman, come together in a journey from India to England, where they hope to begin something new -- to support their families; to build their fortunes; to show their worth; to escape the past. They have almost no idea what awaits them.
After the end of a brutal civil war, London is divided, with slums standing next to a walled city of elites. Monk-like masters are selected for special schooling and shut away for decades, learning to write beautiful compositions for the chimes, played citywide morning and night, to mute memory and keep the citizens trapped in ignorance.

The Chimes by Anna Small

Raven Cycle Series by Maggie Stiefvater

Synopsis for Book 1: The Raven Boys - Every year, Blue Sargent stands next to her clairvoyant mother as the soon-to-be dead walk past. Blue never sees them—until this year, when a boy emerges from the dark and speaks to her.

His name is Gansey, a rich student at Aglionby, the local private school. Blue has a policy of staying away from Aglionby boys. Known as Raven Boys, they can only mean trouble.

But Blue is drawn to Gansey, in a way she can't entirely explain. He is on a quest that has encompassed three other Raven Boys: Adam, the scholarship student who resents the privilege around him; Ronan, the fierce soul whose emotions range from anger to despair; and Noah, the taciturn watcher who notices many things but says very little.

For as long as she can remember, Blue has been warned that she will cause her true love to die. She doesn't believe in true love, and never thought this would be a problem. But as her life becomes caught up in the strange and sinister world of the Raven Boys, she's not so sure anymore.
Non-Fiction Titles

*We Should All Be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

In this personal, eloquently-argued essay—adapted from her much-admired TEDx talk of the same name—Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, award-winning author of *Americanah*, offers readers a unique definition of feminism for the twenty-first century, one rooted in inclusion and awareness. Drawing extensively on her own experiences and her deep understanding of the often masked realities of sexual politics, here is one remarkable author’s exploration of what it means to be a woman now—and an of-the-moment rallying cry for why we should all be feminists.

*The Almost Nearly Perfect People: Behind the Myth of the Scandinavian Utopia* by Michael Booth

Journalist Michael Booth has lived among the Scandinavians for more than ten years, and he has grown increasingly frustrated with the rose-tinted view of this part of the world offered up by the Western media. In this timely book he leaves his adopted home of Denmark and embarks on a journey through all five of the Nordic countries to discover who these curious tribes are, the secrets of their success, and, most intriguing of all, what they think of one another.

Why are the Danes so happy, despite having the highest taxes? Do the Finns really have the best education system? Are the Icelanders as feral as they sometimes appear? How are the Norwegians spending their fantastic oil wealth? And why do all of them hate the Swedes? In *The Almost Nearly Perfect People* Michael Booth explains who the Scandinavians are, how they differ and why, and what their quirks and foibles are, and he explores why these societies have become so successful and models for the world. Along the way a more nuanced, often darker picture emerges of a region plagued by taboos, characterized by suffocating parochialism, and populated by extremists of various shades. They may very well be almost nearly perfect, but it isn't easy being Scandinavian.
Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

For Ta-Nehisi Coates, history has always been personal. At every stage of his life, he's sought in his explorations of history answers to the mysteries that surrounded him—most urgently, why he, and other black people he knew, seemed to live in fear. What were they afraid of? ... Coates takes readers along on his journey through America's history of race and its contemporary resonances through a series of awakenings—moments when he discovered some new truth about our long, tangled history of race, whether through his myth-busting professors at Howard University, a trip to a Civil War battlefield with a rogue historian, a journey to Chicago's South Side to visit aging survivors of 20th century America's 'long war on black people,' or a visit with the mother of a beloved friend who was shot down by the police.

Rise of the rocket girls : the women who propelled us, from missiles to the moon to Mars by Nathalia Holt

In the 1940s and 50s, when the newly minted Jet Propulsion Laboratory needed quick-thinking mathematicians to calculate velocities and plot trajectories, they didn't turn to male graduates. Rather, they recruited an elite group of young women who, with only pencil, paper, and mathematical prowess, transformed rocket design, helped bring about the first American satellites, and made the exploration of the solar system possible.

For the first time, Rise of the Rocket Girls tells the stories of these women—known as "human computers"—who broke the boundaries of both gender and science. Based on extensive research and interviews with all the living members of the team, Rise of the Rocket Girls offers a unique perspective on the role of women in science: both where we've been, and the far reaches of space to which we're heading.
Born survivors: Three Young Mothers and Their Extraordinary Story of Courage, Defiance, and Hope by Wendy Holden

Relates the true account of three pregnant women who met in Auschwitz, where they concealed their pregnancies from infamous Nazi doctor Josef Mengele and fought for their survival as well as the survival of their newborns as they embarked on a treacherous journey to freedom.

Household Workers Unite: the Untold Story of African American Women Who Built a Movement by Premilla Nadasen

Resurrecting a little-known history of domestic-worker activism from the 1950s to the 1970s, Nadasen shows how these women were a far cry from the stereotyped passive and powerless victims; they were innovative labor organizers who tirelessly organized on buses and streets across the United States to bring dignity and legal recognition to their occupation.

The Lovers: Afghanistan's Romeo & Juliet: the True Story of how they Defied their Families and Escaped an Honor Killing by Rod Nordland

Zakia and Ali were from different tribes, but they grew up on neighboring farms in the hinterlands of Afghanistan. By the time they were young teenagers, Zakia, strikingly beautiful and fiercely opinionated, and Ali, shy and tender, had fallen in love. Defying their families, sectarian differences, cultural conventions, and Afghan civil and Islamic law, they ran away together only to live under constant threat from Zakia's large and vengeful family, who have vowed to kill her to restore the family's honor.
Looking Ahead (in order of publication date)

**Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi (June 7)**

From different villages in 18th-century Ghana, half-sisters Effia and Esi lead very different lives, with Effia married off to an Englishman and living comfortably in Cape Coast Castle and Esi imprisoned in that very castle before being sold into slavery in America. Then the narrative sweeps through to the Civil War, the Great Migration, and more, effectively embracing several centuries of American history and its formative influences.

**The Mandibles: A Family 2029-2047 by Lionel Shriver (June 21)**

In 2029, the United States is engaged in a bloodless world war that will wipe out the savings of millions of American families. Overnight, on the international currency exchange, the “almighty dollar” plummets in value, to be replaced by a new global currency, the bancor. In retaliation, the president declares that America will default on its loans. The government prints money to cover its bills. What little real currency remains for savers is rapidly eaten away by runaway inflation. The Mandibles have been counting on a sizable inheritance, once their ninety-seven-year-old patriarch dies. When their birthright turns to ash, what began as mere disappointment spirals into the challenge of sheer survival.

Avery is petulant that she can’t buy olive oil, while her sister Florence is forced to take now-homeless family members into her cramped household. Their aunt Nollie, an expat author, returns from abroad at seventy-three to a country that’s unrecognizable. Nollie’s brother Carter fumes at caring for their demented stepmother, now that an assisted-living facility isn’t affordable. Only Florence’s oddball teenage son Willing, an economics autodidact, will save this formerly august American family from the streets.
**Vinegar Girl by Anne Tyler (June 21)**

Pulitzer Prize winner and American master Anne Tyler brings us an inspired, witty and irresistible contemporary take on one of Shakespeare’s most beloved comedies.

Kate Battista feels stuck. How did she end up running house and home for her eccentric scientist father and uppity, pretty younger sister Bunny? Plus, she’s always in trouble at work - her pre-school charges adore her, but their parents don’t always appreciate her unusual opinions and forthright manner.

Dr. Battista has other problems. After years out in the academic wilderness, he is on the verge of a breakthrough. His research could help millions. There’s only one problem: his brilliant young lab assistant, Pyotr, is about to be deported. And without Pyotr, all would be lost. When Dr. Battista cooks up an outrageous plan that will enable Pyotr to stay in the country, he’s relying - as usual - on Kate to help him.

Kate is furious: this time he’s really asking too much. But will she be able to resist the two men’s touchingly ludicrous campaign to bring her around?

**Behold the Dreamers by Imbolo Mbue (August 23)**

The American dream is put to the test by the economic disaster of 2007. Among the spate of novels forged in the crucible of the previous decade, Mbue’s impressive debut deserves a singular place. This diversely peopled and crisply narrated story follows the trajectories of two Manhattan families, one at the top of the social heap and the other at the bottom. In the foreground is Jende Jonga, an immigrant from Cameroon, his wife, Neni, studying to be a pharmacist, and their young son. When Jende, who has been working as a dishwasher, scores a job as a chauffeur for Clark Edwards, a muckety-muck at Lehman Brothers with a troubled wife and similarly aged son, the fates of the Jongas and the Edwardses become entwined. Except for a nagging immigration problem being handled by a lousy lawyer, things go very well at first. Jende loves dressing up in a suit and driving a Lexus while Clark conducts endless cellphone conversations and laptop machinations in the back seat. Neni excels in school and becomes pregnant with a child who will be born a U.S. citizen.

Then, during her summer hiatus in the Hamptons, Mrs. Edwards hires Neni to help with child care. One day she finds her employer disheveled and crashed out at midday; around this time, Clark starts having Jende take him for one-hour visits to the Chelsea Hotel. Cracks in the Edwards marriage are paralleled by trouble for the Jongas, too. Yet the magnitude of the catastrophe makes itself clear only slowly--particularly to immigrant eyes, dazzled by everything from shopping at Pathmark to the presidency of Obama to the freedom of Occupy protesters to demonstrate without being rounded up and thrown into prison. They will learn.