

Reading Guide

@SMILEITSJOY'S QUARTERLY READING GUIDE



VOLUME 01 • ISSUE NO. 2

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CREATOR'S NOTE



Hey Y'all,

As a Black woman, last summer was rough. And unfortunately, the anti-black violence didn't begin last summer nor did it end.

When I first set down to design this quarter's reading guide, I wanted to be very intentional about what books I featured. So, I decided that every book would be by a Black author. I wanted to illustrate that Black people are more than just a hashtag. That we are creative, passionate, innovative. We are humans. We are people. This guide isn't here to convince you of that, but to show that Black joy exists in spite of the violence that we face daily.

I hope you enjoy these book recommendations and the drink recipes and wine suggestions.

Tips on how to navigate the guide:

If you want to learn more about the book or buy it, click the picture and it will take you right where you need to be.

If something is underlined, it will take you to another page to get a discount!

As always, Stay Lit

@smileitsjoy



Summer Wine Box

So, I love wine as much as the next person. I have thought about joining a many of wine subscription clubs; however, none of them seemed right. They were either too expensive or just not what I was looking for.

Then I came across BOXT. A woman owned, Texas based start up that is environmentally conscious.

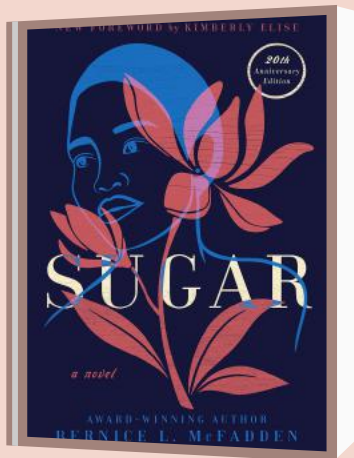
Wine straight to your door in a beautiful BOXT; more over college wine in a box. This is an upgrade. This company focuses on profiles versus the stuffiness of of titles/names. Check them out here [BOXT!](#)



Back Stacks

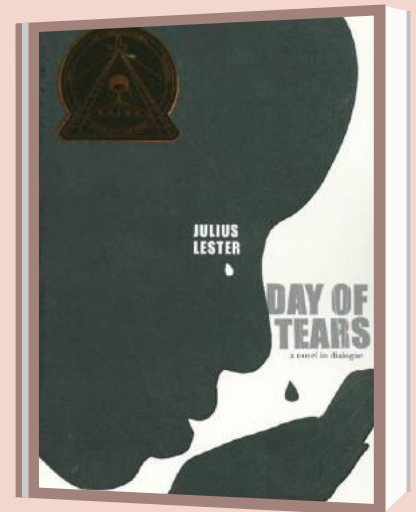
Books that have been out at least two years that should be on your shelves

Click the book icon to purchase the book from my affiliate link



Listen, I finished this book in one day! I did not want to put this down! Small town upended by a new arrival. Good looking former prostitute who has unknown ties to this town. Bernice L. McFadden cannot write a bad book! As juicy as this novel is, it is also one that dives into the loss and suffering. It's a ride and I highly suggest!

I read this book when I was in high school. I do not know how I stumbled upon this book at such a young age but it made such an impression on me. It is about the largest slave auction in the history of the nation. This story follows specific enslaved people. Honestly, it is a tearjerker and worth the read!



This reprint of this book, with an extremely beautiful cover, rocked me to my core. It is a novel that critiques the mental health care system in the UK for Black patients. It's about two patients who form an interesting bond when they are both institutionalized. But as the story goes on, you learn that maybe they shouldn't be there but instead they just need to be loved. To have someone be there when their life goes to shit!

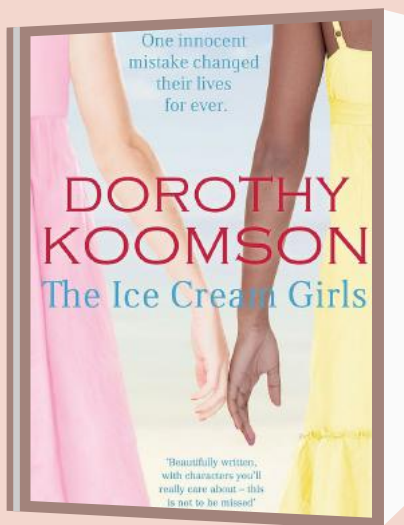
Back Stacks

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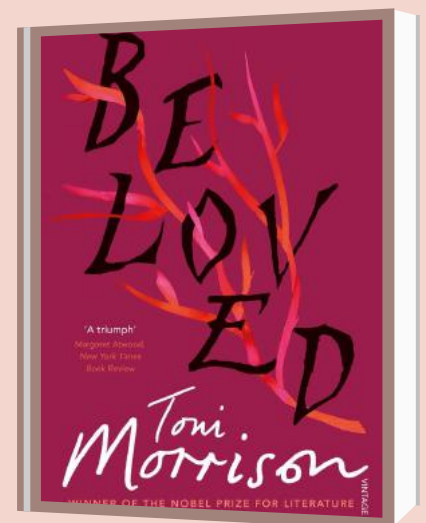
This collection is just what I wanted but nothing I expected. I love Frank Ocean and to read a whole collection dedicated to his work and what it means to be Frank Ocean in a world that is always watching.

I have to say that was my favorite part; although, I loved the entire thing. The way she was able to talk about killer whales, humanity, Frank Ocean, Blackness, being Black in America, love and desire so effortlessly is impeccable.



Don't let the title fool you, this book is anything but sweet. This book is a thriller of sorts. Two friends as teenagers are the only witnesses to a crime; however, now as adults one of them wants to tell the truth and the other wants the past to stay hidden. What is the crime? What happens at the end? Who did it? So many questions, a book you gotta read to find out the answers.

It's Toni Morrison! That's the Recommendation!



A Break with Bourbon

Bourbon Smash

Ingredients

2 ounces (4 tablespoons)

Noble Oak bourbon

**1/4 lemon, sliced into 2
wedges**

5 large mint leaves

**1 ounce (2 tablespoons)
maple syrup or simple
syrup**

**Soda water, for serving
Crushed ice, for serving**



Instructions

1) Place the lemon wedges and mint leaves in a cocktail shaker. Muddle 4 to 5 times to extract flavor.

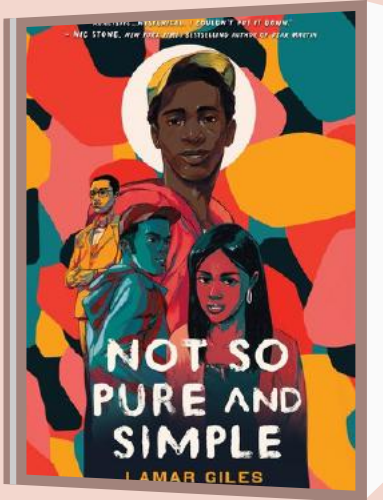
2) Add the bourbon and maple syrup and fill the shaker with ice. If desired, add a splash of soda water. Shake until cold and strain into a glass. Serve with crushed ice.

get \$1 shipping with the code SHIPNOBLEOAK on
Caskers or Flaviar

Front Stacks

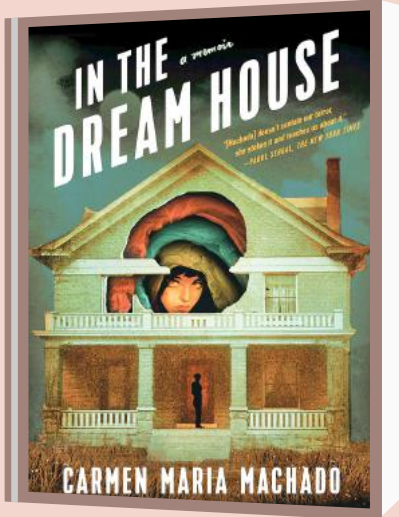
Books that have been released within the last year that you absolutely should prioritize

Click the book icon to purchase the book from my affiliate link

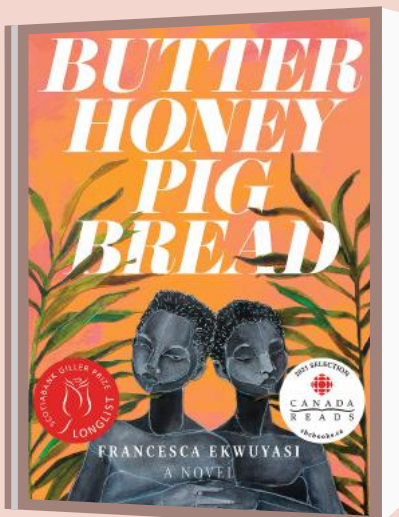


This book, wow! It was nothing like I was expecting but it was everything I wanted to read. The way this story was written really just moved me.

The layers that Giles wrote with was so impressive that I felt like the story wouldn't have worked any other way. There were no throwaway characters in this book and no storylines that didn't matter. This is one of my favorite young adult reads. There are so many life lessons that anyone can learn from this book are so necessary.



I wish I could say that I was prepared for this book, but I cannot. I think what sets this book apart from many other memoirs is its form. I felt like each "chapter" was just the right amount of information that allowed readers to digest and really think through Machado's life. This book is so important because it reminds us that abuse is not all the same and it is not confined by heteronormative structures. I believe that this should be required reading because her story/life is important. Also, I love reading anything from authors of color from the University of Iowa as a fellow Hawkeye.

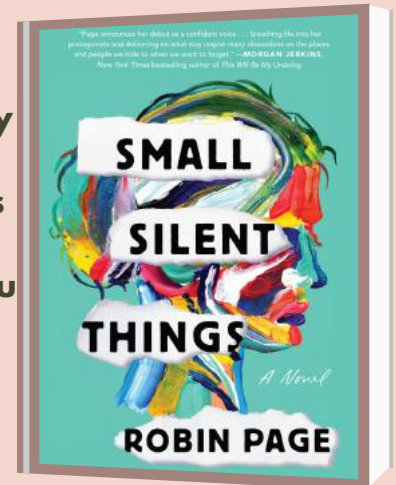


This is one of those books that you look like a maniac trying to explain to people. This was a book, for me, that I was sad that I had to put down every time I had to go do something else. The structure of this book is also what sets it apart from others. It is told through three different perspectives. Twins who haven't seen each other since college and a mother who her own demons. The syntax, the word choice, and the emotion in the novel reads nothing like a debut.

Front Stacks

Books that have been released within the last year that you absolutely should prioritize

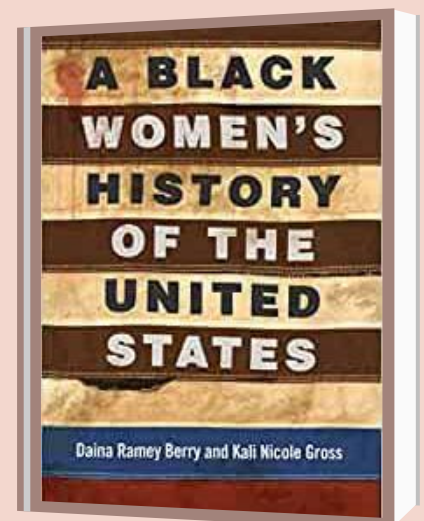
I am actually mad this book did not get that much attention in the Bookstagram circuit. On the surface, this book is about an unhappy wife; however, as you dig deeper and turn each page you realize this story is about so much more than that. It's a story that reminds that you cannot run away from things you do not address. It is a warning that everything you think you want, really is not what you need. There is not much I can say without giving it away, but I will say: grab your Kleenex and a seatbelt.



I said to myself, I want a light read. I picked this one up because I love a good romance; however, this is nothing light. A Nigerian character who has a mother who only wants her to marry a Nigerian man; however, what happens when she has a one night stand and falls in love with a white man? Buckle up, this story moves fast. Don't let the slight predictability in the beginning deter you from reading; I promise it's nothing like you think it is going to be.



I am bias because Dr. Berry, the co-author, is my mentor BUT i mean it when I say this is a book that you need on your shelves. When we think of Black History Month we think of all the great men that are featured; however, where are the Black women? This book's mission is to correct the erasure that has been done to the Black women's role in history. Everything you think you know is about to be shaken to its core.





Time Out With Tequila

1. Fill serving glass a little more than half full of ice. Pour in 2 oz of fresh grapefruit juice.
2. Add 1 tablespoon of fresh lime juice.
3. Follow with 2 teaspoons of honey syrup. (Honey syrup recipe below)
4. Pour in 2 oz club soda.
5. Top with 2 oz tequila.
6. Stir to combine.

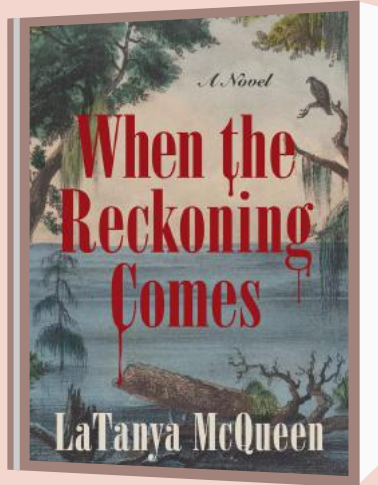
**Add more ice if necessary.
Garnish finished cocktail with a
grapefruit wedge.**

Honey paloma

Future Stacks

Upcoming releases that should without a doubt be on your radar

Click the book icon to purchase the book from my affiliate link



This book is what that movie ANTEBELLUM tried to be—GOOD. This book understood the assignment.

When The Reckoning Comes

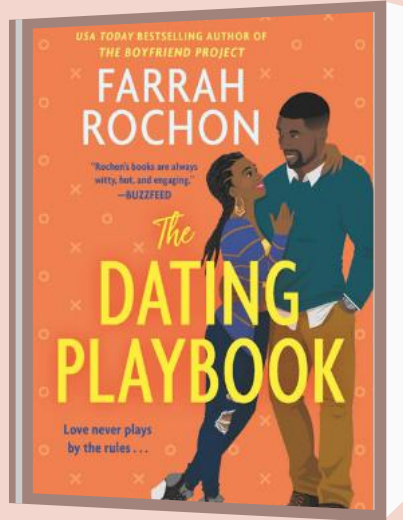
Well this book was giving me:

Secrets, more secrets, ghosts, maybe love, another ghost, another ghost.

Key words/phrases for you to get interested in this book:

Plantation turned wedding venue is haunted. Estranged best friends meet up after 10 years. Secrets are spilled. Things are seen. Are those ghosts or are they real?

Somebody is murdered, or are they? Failed revolt.



Okay, So I loved the first book in the series! So I was so excited to get an early copy of this to review! So think: you're an up and coming personal trainer and then an NFL player (who you don't know because you don't know anything about football) shows up at your bootcamp! Then all of a sudden you're fake dating and then maybe it isn't fake dating. Listen, this book is great, steamy, and a fun read for the summer.



Three Black women are linked in unexpected ways to the same influential white man in Stockholm as they build their new lives in the most open society run by the most private people.. An executive, a flight attendant, and a refugee. The story is told through all of their different vantage points. I am so excited for y'all to read this book. This is a debut that I have been waiting for.

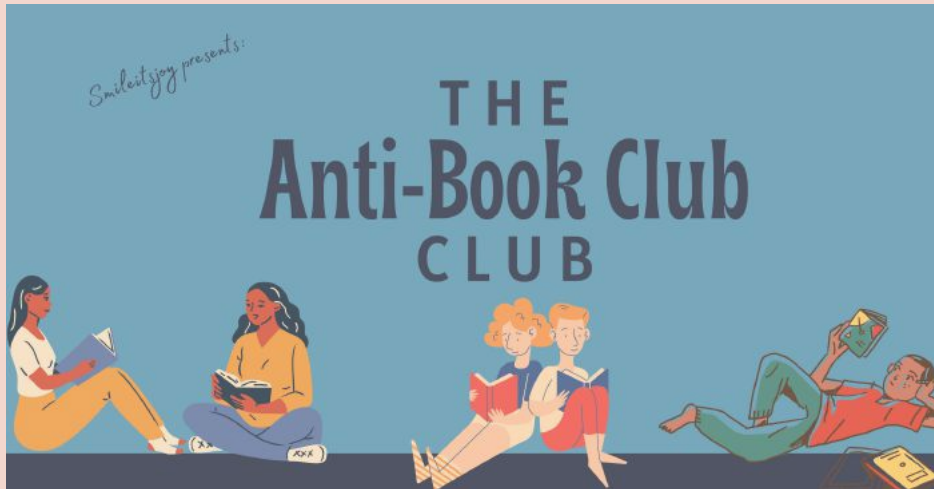
The Extras



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