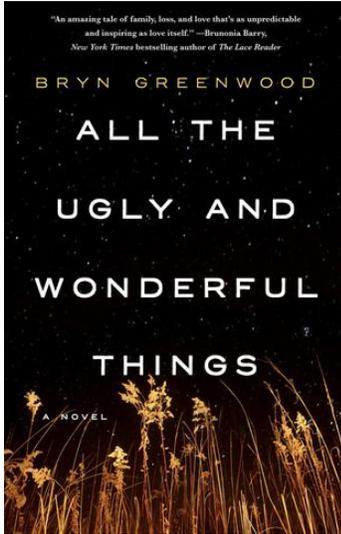


BCLA Readers' Advisory Interest Group - Best Bets 2017

Each year we pick our favourite books that we can't stop recommending to people. Check out our 2017 list below!



All the Ugly and Wonderful Things by Bryn Greenwood

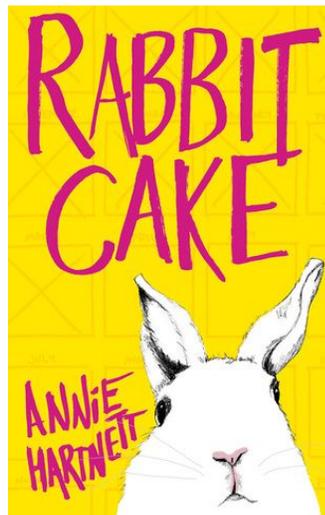
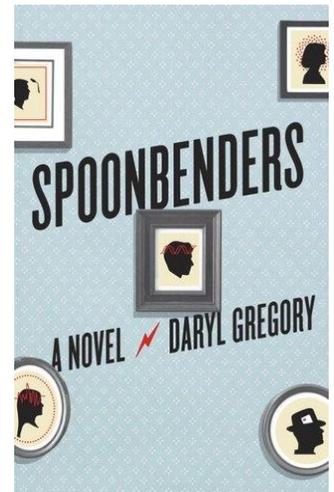
This book will make you uncomfortable. It certainly made me uncomfortable. It will make you question the world and yourself. The strength of it lies in the author's refusal to force a view or opinion on the reader. Greenwood simply tells the story in beautiful language and brings the characters to life so vividly they live in your memory long after you close the book. It is up to the reader to pass judgement, to feel and react.

- Submitted by Ariana Galeano, Richmond Public Library

Spoonbenders by Daryl Gregory

The eclectic "Amazing Telemachus Family" is made up of three generations of psychics, telekinetics, and con artists who find themselves facing all sorts of problems- from navigating their powers, to mob bosses, to 1990s AOL chat. Weaving together many storylines, the novel is a hilarious and heartwarming look at love and family. I'd recommend it to anyone who liked Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney's *The Nest* and also appreciates a healthy dose of weirdness in their books.

-Submitted by Lindsay Russell, Port Moody Public Library

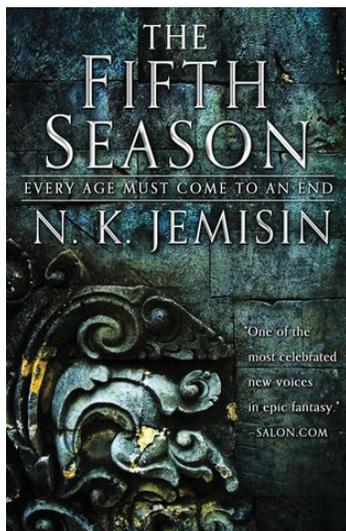


Rabbit Cake by Annie Harnett

Reminiscent of *Where'd You Go Bernadette*, this story is written in the voice of 12 year old Elvis Babbitt as she grieves the loss of her mother. It is a poignant story that is simultaneously achingly sad and utterly hilarious. Highly recommended.

- Submitted by Pat Cumming, West Vancouver Memorial Library

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The Fifth Season by N.K. Jemisin

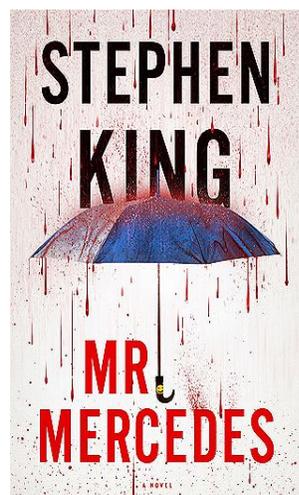
A fantasy novel leagues ahead of others, *The Fifth Season* is set on a continent under the constant threat of apocalypse via natural disaster. Some people in this world, including the main character, have the gift or curse—depending on how you look at it—of being able to move and control the forces beneath the earth's surface; in other words, they can stop or cause natural disasters. The world-building is amazingly inventive and complex, the cast is full of complex, fascinating characters (human and sort-of-human), and the plotting is deftly crafted, with a few brilliant twists.

- Submitted by Casey Stepaniuk, UBC SLAIS Student

The Invoice by Jonas Karlsson

How much is your happiness worth? In this slim novel, Swedish author Karlsson imagines an initiative that calculates the “Experienced Happiness” (E.H.) of each person in the world. Those who have experienced greater than average happiness must pay into a fund which will be redistributed to those who have experienced less happiness. Our protagonist has been assessed with a massive E.H. bill, which vastly exceeds his earnings as a part-time video store employee. This modern parable is gently satirical and thought-provoking.

- Submitted by Tara Matsuzaki, West Vancouver Memorial Library

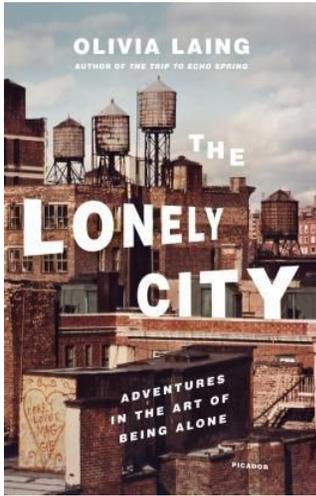


The Bill Hodges Trilogy by Stephen King

While these do each stand on their own, the three of them pack a powerful punch. King puts his hand to hardboiled detective fiction style with some nice twists that look back at his previous work in horror. Strong, unique characters and chilling climaxes in all three novels make for a 'don't put it down' kind of read. Great to have a title that has multiple hooks for our varied library users!

- Submitted by Thomas Quigley, Retired Librarian in Vancouver

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The Lonely City: Adventures in the Art of Being Alone by Olivia Laing

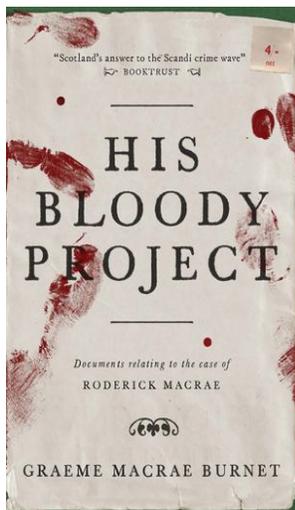
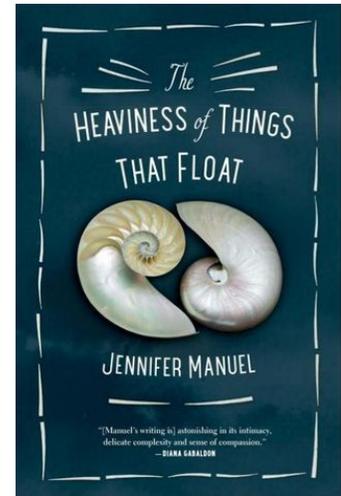
Olivia Laing approaches the topic of loneliness in one part memoir and one part art history lesson in these beautifully poignant essays that explore the subject through artists and the city of New York. A thoughtful and relevant work that allows one to examine what it really means to be lonely in an urban landscape and how it's changed through society and technology in an ever increasing connected world.

-Submitted by Stephanie Hong, Surrey Libraries and Vancouver Public Library

The Heaviness of Things That Float by Jennifer Manuel

Bernadette has spent 40 years as a nurse living on the West Coast of Vancouver Island on the periphery of a remote First Nations reserve. As she faces her retirement and imminent move from the community, she is forced to explore her relationships with the people and place she has grown to deeply love.

- Submitted by Kristy Hennings, Okanagan Regional Library

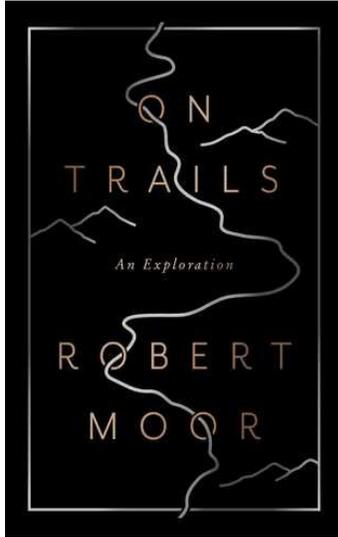


His Bloody Project: Documents Relating to the Case of Roderick Macrae by Graeme Macrae Burnet

With an unreliable narrator, an intricate structure, and a remote and bleak Scottish highland setting, it's not surprising that this book was shortlisted for the 2016 Man Booker. Set in 1869 this novel tells the story of Roderick Macrae who provides the reader with a memoir written while in jail, and plenty of insight into the brutal living conditions that Scottish crofters faced. Was he guilty or insane? You'll have to read the book to find out.

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- Submitted by Shelley Wilson-Roberts, New Westminster Public Library



On Trails: An Exploration by Robert Moor

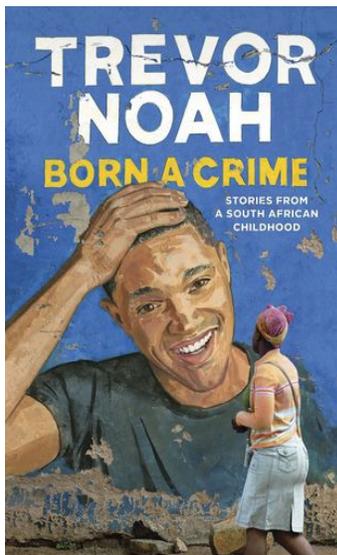
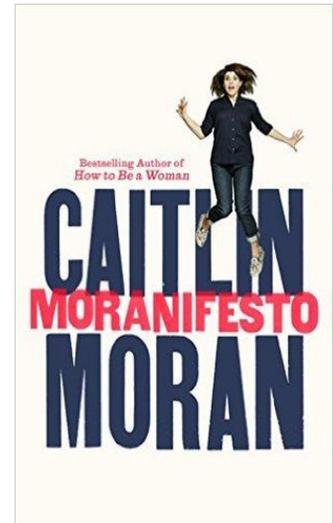
Moor takes a question with what seems like an obvious answer "Where do trails come from?" in the middle of walking the Appalachian trail and brings the reader along with him for a fascinating exploration of history and humanity. A delightful, immersive reading experience and not to be missed.

- Submitted by Meghan Whyte, Surrey Libraries and Vancouver Public Library

Moranifesto by Caitlin Moran

Politics, feminism, family, and pop culture are examined by Gen X's columnists Caitlin Moran in Moranifesto. This book will make you laugh out loud, ponder important issues, and maybe even shock you once or twice. If fiction and non-fiction worlds could merge, Caitlin Moran would be Bridget Jones' funniest and smartest friend.

- Submitted by Cathy Mount, West Vancouver Memorial Library

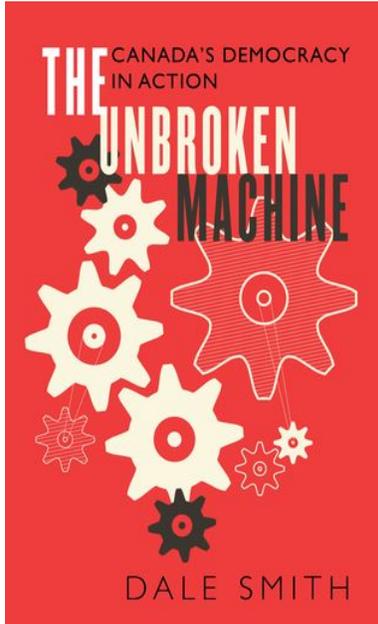


Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah

Comedian Trevor Noah was born to a black mother and white father in South Africa in 1984, when it was against the law for a mixed-racial couple to have a child together. In his biography, Noah describes growing up in apartheid South Africa, being raised by his strong-willed and resilient mother. His tales are often humorous and the reader gets a glimpse of a child growing up in a very different cultural environment. What is truly unforgettable are the harrowing stories Noah tells about living with the restrictions of apartheid.

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- Submitted by Lori Nick, Fraser Valley Regional Library



The Unbroken Machine: Canada's Democracy in Action by Dale Smith

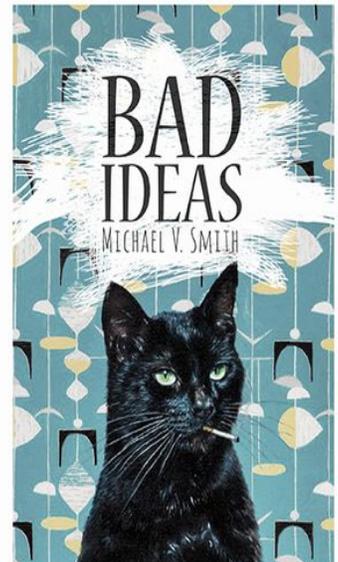
Dale Smith, a freelance journalist in the the Canadian Parliamentary Press Gallery, has done us all a tremendous favour with this 100-page primer on Canadian parliamentary democracy. His mastery of the material makes the book engagingly limpid, while the punchy argumentative style will help novices immediately appreciate the principles behind the various parts of our political system (even if they ultimately come to view some issues differently than Smith.) To achieve true accountability, democracy--which encompasses much more than elections--requires a broadly distributed command of the basics of civic literacy. "The Unbroken Machine" brilliantly deploys the book format to support citizens in performing this function.

- Submitted by Joseph Haigh, New Westminster Public Library

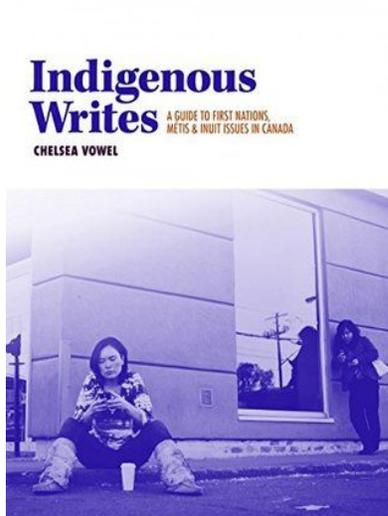
Bad Ideas by Michael Smith

Poetry can seem intimidating, especially if you were scarred by it in english class in high school. But Michael V. Smith's latest collection of poems, "*Bad Ideas*" (2017) is very accessible and richly rewarding: reading his poems feels like watching a beautiful rainbow, his words wash over you in waves of colourful emotions - joy, sadness, grief, and humour. His poetry is not weighed down by oblique references or excess verbiage: he speaks plainly and from his personal experience dealing with family trauma, lost loved ones and long-distance friends. *Bad Ideas* is a great introduction to poetry in the 21st century.

-Submitted by Andrea Davidson, Surrey Libraries



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Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Issues in Canada by Chelsea Vowel

A clear, precise, and unflinching series of essays on the diversity of indigenous issues in Canada, from blood quantum to two-spirit to the Sixties Scoop. Chelsea Vowel, a blogger, lawyer, and educator, writes with a sharp, informative, and entertaining voice. Challenge yourself to pick up this accessible and absorbing book.

Submitted by Chloe Riley, Simon Fraser University and Vancouver Public Library