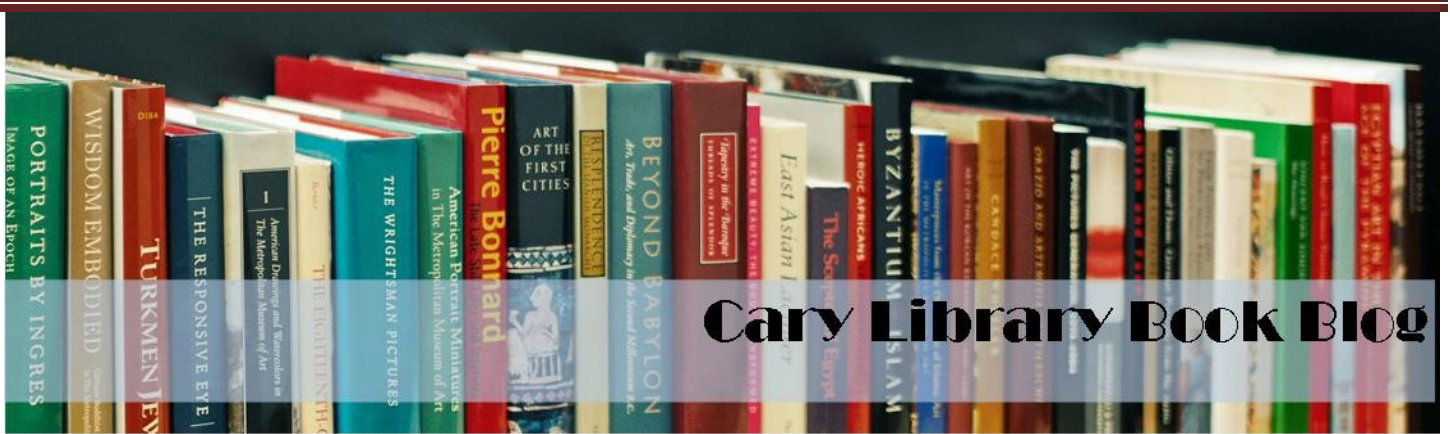


September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations



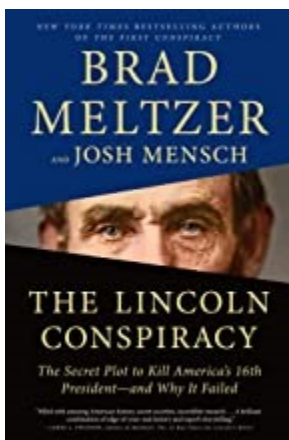
We want to hear from you. Please send a blurb about something you've read and want to share with CML. Postings will be published seasonally. Next posting will be in Winter 2020-21. Send your recommendations to

jadelbergCML@gmail.com

*This season's blog has **13** entries (including 2 series) from enthusiastic readers. We invite you to dip into these suggestions and then recommend to your friends, neighbors, and fellow readers. We all have so much to share.*

Non-Fiction

The Lincoln Conspiracy by Brad Meltzer and Josh Mensch (Non-Fiction)

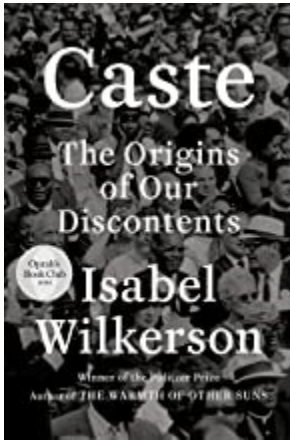


A wonderful account of the conspiracy to assassinate Lincoln on his way to his initial inauguration. Though this book is nonfiction with many pages of credits and notes at the end, it is very readable and quite absorbing. I learned a lot about the era, the culture of the times, and how it all still resonates today. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Judy Danielson

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

Caste: the Origin of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson (Non-fiction/Contemporary Issues)



Barack Obama, as a young Senator, was attending a black-tie affair when another guest requested that he get him a drink. The author, a black female writing for the New York Times, met her interview subject only to be firmly turned away as he insisted he 'was waiting to be interviewed for the New York Times.' These and many, many such anecdotes are included in this highly personal account of what it means to be of the lowest caste in our country. The author explains the distinction between the notions of 'racism' and 'caste.'

While the drive to categorize others is a universal experience, nowhere are the effects of caste felt as viciously and pervasively as in the United States. Did you know that the Third Reich looked to the Deep South for a playbook on population manipulation and subjugation?

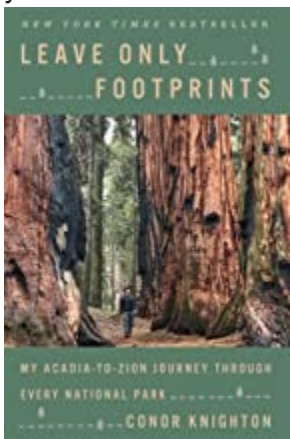
This is a powerful account of the effects of the caste system on all of us. Ms Wilkerson's writing is a gift. Please give it a read – you will be outraged, enlightened and hopefully edified as you gain an understanding of how we got here.

Wilkerson is the author of *The Warmth of Other Suns*, which the Cary Library also owns.

Reviewed by Chris Jones

LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS by Conor Knighton (Non-Fiction/Outdoors)

This NYT Times bestseller is a good read! The subtitle is, *My Acadia - to Zion Journey Through Every National Park*. However, the author doesn't visit every US National Park, but as many as he can in a year's time.



Why? As a young, single journalist his assignments were to write about his National Park experiences. Conor is admittedly NOT a seasoned hiker or camper, but always has a fun and upbeat attitude about his adventures.

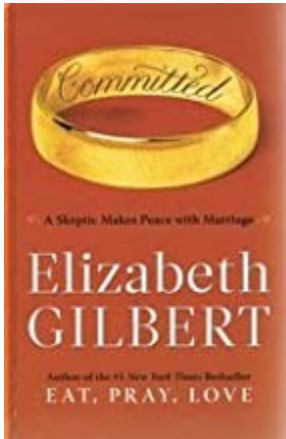
Although I've visited many National Parks over the years, this book provided new and interesting facts about familiar and not so familiar places.

If you like books about hiking, travel and nature, like I do, you'll enjoy Conor's book. I highly recommend it.

Reviewed by Dave Petell

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

Committed by Elizabeth Gilbert. (Memoir)



This book is a sequel to EAT, PRAY, LOVE. It caught my attention because under the title in smaller letters it says: “A Skeptic Makes Peace with Marriage.” Since I have not been very good at marriage, I decided to see what I could learn.

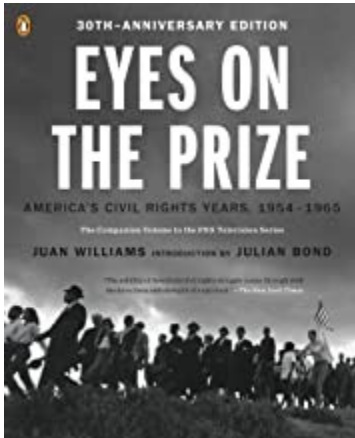
COMMITTED is the story of one woman’s efforts to make peace with marriage before she entered into it for a second time. Over ten months, Gilbert and her fiancé Felipe, from Brazil, who you met in EAT, PRAY, LOVE, travel across Southeast Asia waiting for the government of the U.S. to allow them to return to the U.S. and marry. This part is fascinating and complicated and at times seems unbelievable.

Gilbert probes people of all cultures and societies to learn just what it is about the institution of marriage that both excites her but fills her with dread. As she says in the prologue of her book: “This book could never have come into existence without the influence of 27 extraordinary women. These 27 women range in age from their early twenties to their mid-nineties. All of these women have an above-average sense of humor. All of them, at some point in their lives, have experienced heartbreaking loss.”

In conclusion, I am glad that I read it. Although it is not a page-turner, it is wonderfully executed in story form and I would recommend it. I have donated a copy to the Cary Library.

Reviewed by Jill Howes

Eyes on the Prize (Civil Rights Movement Documentary on DVD)



The 3 DVD set Eyes on the Prize documenting the civil rights movement in the south during the 50s and 60s, was originally shown on Public Television between 1987 and 1990. I watched it then, maybe you did too. I highly recommend that you watch it again or for the first time. It is brilliant. Black and white news clips (the Emmett Till murder trial, freedom riders on the bus and off, the buses being blown up, the attack on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the Little Rock seven trying to go to school and much more) and sound bites of famous and infamous speeches (MLK, Ike, Orval Faubus, JFK, Wallace and others), are interwoven with interviews of the participants (civil rights activists, segregationists and federal officials) conducted for the documentary. The images are accompanied by music: spirituals, blues, folk, country and rock and roll. The documentary is narrated by Julian Bond who delivers a clear and compelling lesson from history - a lesson that is especially timely right now.

Reviewed by Jane Andrews

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

The Pull of the Stars by Emma Donoghue (Fiction)



The setting is a maternity ward in Dublin during the 1918 influenza epidemic. Oddly prescient, the draft of this novel was submitted just as Covid-19 hit our shores.

Who knew that there were nay-sayers and 'anti-maskers' even then? The shortage of hospital staff and supplies, the empty stores, and the out-size effect of the pandemic on the poor is all too familiar now. But the pandemic is a backdrop; at its core it is a love story.

This novel is not for the faint of heart – the author aptly describes the harrowing pain and transcendent joy that childbearing presents. WWI, and the Irish civil unrest weave their way in. One learns about the abusive residential institutions for unwed mothers and orphans common in Ireland in that era. The sexist conventions of the day force the nurse to creatively bend the rules for the good of her patients, even as her skills far surpass those of the physicians in charge. For those who enjoy historical novels, this one fits the bill.

Reviewed by Chris Jones

The Marsh King's Daughter by Karen Dionne (Thriller)



Her mother was kidnapped as a teen, and so Helena is raised to survive in the wilderness of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Her father escapes prison and she is the only person with skills to capture him.

Reviewed by Steve Dodge

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

The Last Runaway by Tracy Chevalier (Historical Fiction)



If you're an historical fiction fan, like me, you'll want to read Tracy Chevalier's novel, *The Last Runaway*. Set in Ohio, 1850, the story of the Underground Railroad is told through the eyes and actions of a young English Quaker, Honor Bright. With an indomitable spirit, Honor puts her own faith and personal relationships in jeopardy as she embraces the network that is helping slaves make their way to Canada and freedom. She lives her life true to her name, Honor.

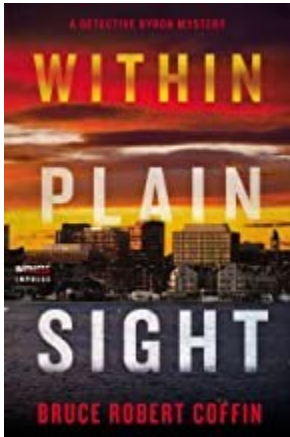
Heartbreaking at times, and uplifting, as well, it is riveting to the end. Quilters will appreciate the attention given to the making and history of quilts during this time period.

Tracy Chevalier's, *GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING*, remains my favorite of her work, but this 2013 book comes in a close second. It is not until the very end of *The Last Runaway* - the last letter - that Honor Bright's direction is revealed. I must admit, the ending took me by surprise.

I highly recommend this book in these trying times of our country's quest for racial and social justice and equality.

Reviewed by Bev Petell

Within Plain Sight by Bruce Robert Coffin (Maine Fiction/Mystery)

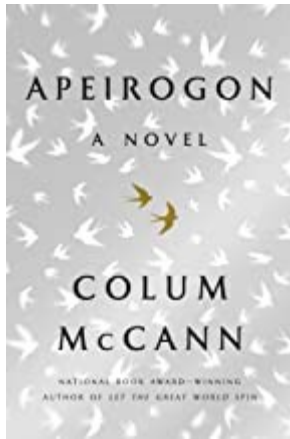


Another Portland murder investigation involving a rich, superstar family. Get down and dirty in Portland. A good read.

Reviewed by Steve Dodge

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

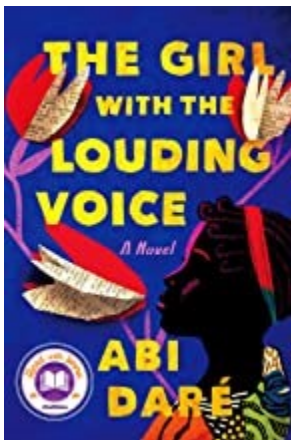
Apeirogon by Colum McCann (Fiction)



A fiction telling of the true stories of Bassam Aramin who is Palestinian and Rami Elhanan who is Israeli. McCann uses the construct of 1001 bits to mimic an apeirogon. Ok, if this doesn't peak your curiosity..... This story will stay with you for a very long time. Reflections on what it means to be human told through the most horrific circumstances. A must read.

Reviewed by Mary Jean Cowing

The Girl With the Louding Voice by Abi Dare (Contemporary Fiction)



What a book. It knocked my socks off. Abi Dare's first work of fiction is more than a coming of age novel of a young Nigerian girl desperately trying to get an education. First forced into an arranged and unwanted marriage at age 14, and escaping into the next fiasco, a life of servitude as she was sold yet again, this novel moves full throttle so powerfully that it is hard to put down. The voice of the protagonist--dreaming to have a "louding voice" so she can help herself and help others equally as powerless--will stay with you for a long time. As unrelenting as her challenges were, her quirky humor and courageous determination to keep moving forward make this story one I will never forget.

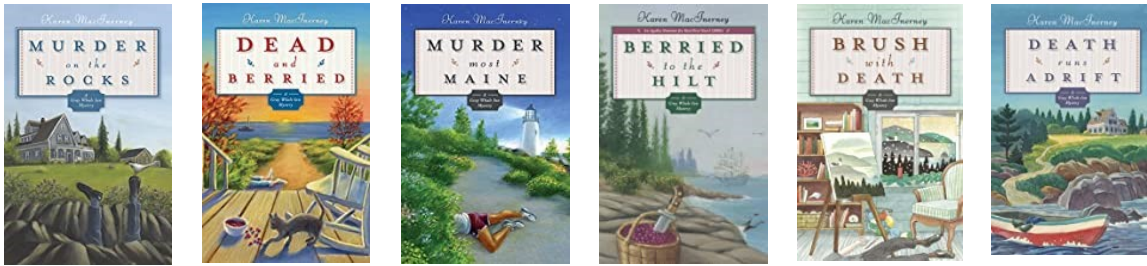
Interestingly, I had just finished reading *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*, about a young Appalachian woman trapped in poverty, sold into a disastrous marriage by her father and again hit with every challenge life could throw at her. The similarities fifty years apart, on the other side of the world, were striking, as girls/women facing such grinding poverty and being seen as expendable commodities seems all too universal. There is also a link between the two books in that human kindness and decency on the part of one person changed the whole trajectory of their fate.

I thank summer resident Elsa Falls for alerting me to read this book and purchase for the Cary Library.

Reviewed by Janet Adelberg

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

Gray Whale mystery series By Karen MacInerney (Maine Mystery/Setting)



This series is set in/on Cranberry Island, Maine. The Gray Whale Inn mystery series is entertaining and enjoyable.

Karen MacInerney grew up in the Northeast and visits frequently. She lives in Texas.

Her first book, *Murder on the Rocks*, debuted in 2006 and was a finalist for the Agatha Award for Best First Novel.

Natalie Barnes left Texas and spent her savings to buy the Gray Whale Inn on Cranberry Island. As the innkeeper she meets many people. She loves to bake and cook for her guests; recipes are included. The descriptions of life on the island, the people who live there both year-round and part time and the beauty of the place all contribute to the compelling mysteries. And then there is John the handsome, talented sculptor who rents her carriage house. Somehow Natalie finds herself involved in solving murders.

The library has the first 6 and will soon have the full complement of 10 mysteries.

Reviewed by Cynthia Pelliccia

Cadfael Series by Ellis Peters (Mystery)

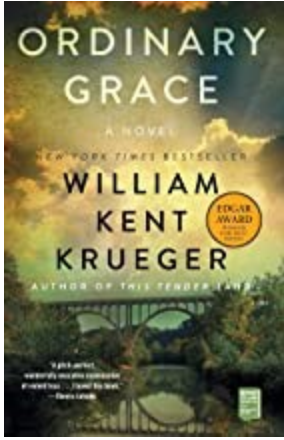


The Cadfael series by Ellis Peters provides a gentle escape from our current grim reality. Cadfael is a brother at a monastery in Shrewsbury, England during the Middle Ages. While there is always a murder or two, there is relatively little blood and gore, and the plots are clever and raise ethical questions which Cadfael addresses as he solves the mystery. The setting (the monastery, the town and the rural countryside) is charming and the historical details of the medieval world are fascinating. Cadfael himself, a Welshman, crusader turned monk, now the herbalist and apothecary for the monastery, is kind, wise, funny, and sometimes even irreverent - absolutely delightful. A blast from the past.

Reviewed by Jane Andrews

September 2020 Wayne Readers' Recommendations

Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger (Fiction)



This is a wonderful coming of age novel. The story is a murder mystery told by Frank, a thirteen-year-old boy. Frank and his younger brother are the main characters. Krueger is masterful in his development of these boys, their family and friends. Told from Frank's perspective, the world seems to fall apart, but he comes to realize that there is Ordinary Grace that helps him deal with the crises in his world.

Reviewed by Lucy DiRenzo