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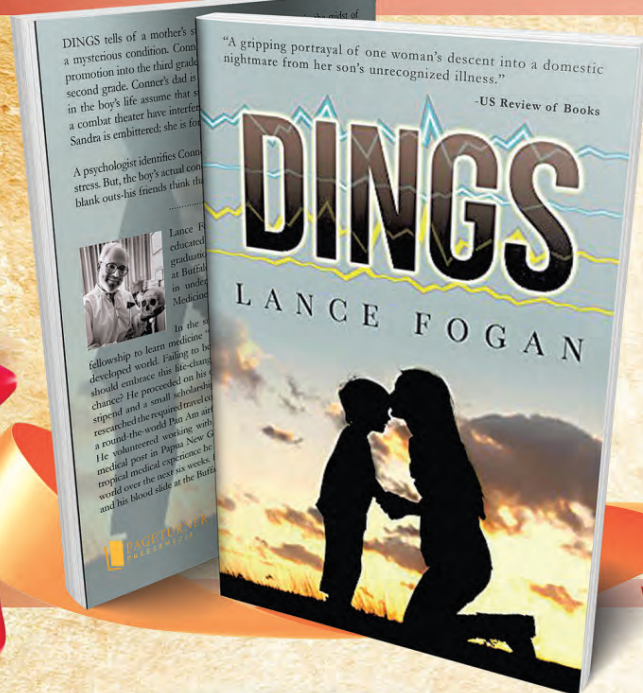
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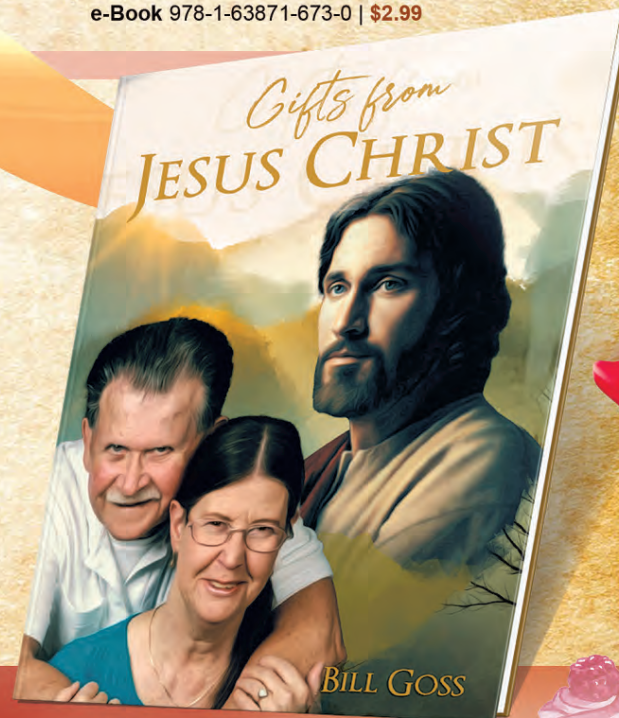
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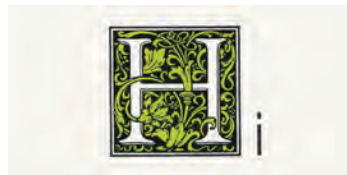


PAGETURNER  
PRESS & MEDIA



# Book Review

The New York Times  
FEBRUARY 12, 2023



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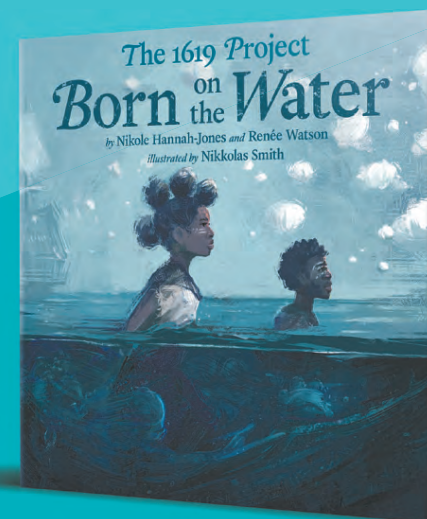
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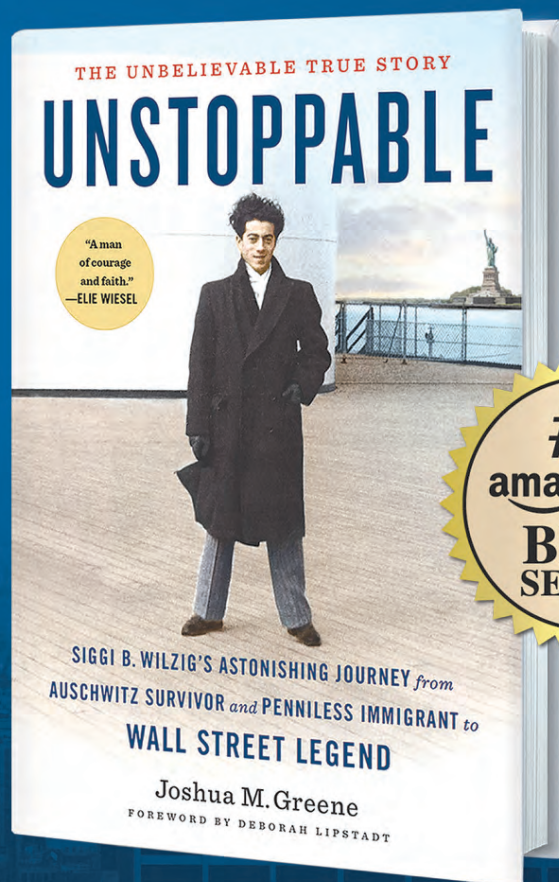
—*Library Journal*

## “BEST HOLOCAUST BOOK of 2021”

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## Newly Published / Visuals



**MI SANGRE**, by Roj Rodriguez. (Hatje Cantz, \$62.) An Austin-based photographer depicts everyday aspects of Mexican life and culture, from charros and escaramuzas to Loteria iconography, as well as how they are reimagined by Mexican Americans on the other side of the border.



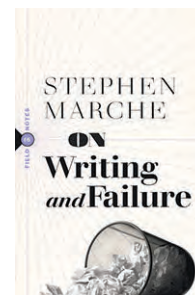
**AMOAKO BOAFO: Soul of Black Folks**, edited by Larry Ossei-Mensah. (Cameron Books, \$40.) This collection renders the Ghanaian artist's rich portraits — centering Black joy and interiority — in calculated brushwork and finger painting.

**COLLAGE: Women of the Prix Pictet Since 2008**, edited by Prix Pictet. (Gestalten, \$60.) This volume collects work by 64 illustrious women photographers on the theme of sustainability, from Polly Braden's depictions of the impact of British austerity to Joana Choumali's embroidery-layered images of walks at dawn.

**FRESH FLY FABULOUS: 50 Years of Hip Hop Style**, by Elizabeth Way and Elena Romero. (Rizzoli Electa, \$55.) Slick Rick writes the foreword to this vibrant exploration of the birth, spread and evolution of hip-hop style — from rec rooms to red carpets — through images and analyses from stylists, designers and more.

## ...Also Out Now

**THE HARD PARTS: A Memoir of Courage and Triumph**, by Oksana Masters with Cassidy Randall. (Scribner, \$28.) A 17-time Paralympic medalist recounts the abuses she endured as an orphan in post-Chernobyl Ukraine, her adoption in America, the struggle of losing both legs and how a lifelong determination fueled her athletic exploits.



**ON WRITING AND FAILURE: Or, On the Peculiar Perseverance Required to Endure the Life of a Writer**, by Stephen Marche. (Biblioasis, paperback, \$12.95.) The Canadian novelist and essayist describes the defining role rejection has played in his career and reflects on its importance in the lives of notable writers, from Ovid to Dostoyevsky and Baldwin.

**IRON CURTAIN: A Love Story**, by Vesna Goldsworthy. (Norton, \$28.95.) In an unnamed Soviet satellite state in 1984, the daughter of a powerful party official and a naïve British poet fall in love. Her reckonings with poverty, capitalism and the idea of “freedom” after moving with him to London are the subject of this bittersweet novel.

**THE SHAMSHINE BLIND**, by Paz Pardo. (Atria, \$28.) In this clever sci-fi noir set in an alternate 2009 San Francisco, a depressed federal agent must stop a plot to release a “psychopigment” that will induce blind faith in the masses.



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## Letters



KARLOTTA FREIER

### Lifelong Readers

TO THE EDITOR:

I thoroughly enjoyed Sadie Stein's delightful and poignant essay ("Closing the Book on Promises to Myself," Jan. 29). As someone who has passed his 70th birthday and is increasingly aware of the finiteness — and shortness — of life, I can certainly relate to Stein's grandfather, for whom the point "seemed to be to cram in as many books as possible before meeting the nothingness his militant atheism mandated; his reading was frenzied and restless."

I often read the Sunday Book Review with both great interest and a hint of despair; after downloading books that capture my fancy onto my Kindle, I know that I will never have time to read most of them, not to mention the countless books stashed in my basement man cave. As Stein relates, the words her grandfather saw on a mug, "So many books, so little time," aptly captures his spirit, as well as that of so many of us aging book lovers.

MICHAEL GOLDEN  
GREAT NECK, N.Y.

### Quaking Narratives

TO THE EDITOR:

In his review of "American Inheritance," by Edward J. Larson (Jan. 22), Jon Meacham mentions Quakers twice, citing them as early opponents of slavery. This is, indeed, the accepted narrative. However, the truth is more complicated. Seventeenth-century Quakers, including William Penn, were major slaveholders, both in the American colonies and on the island of Barbados, and they were active in the slave trade.

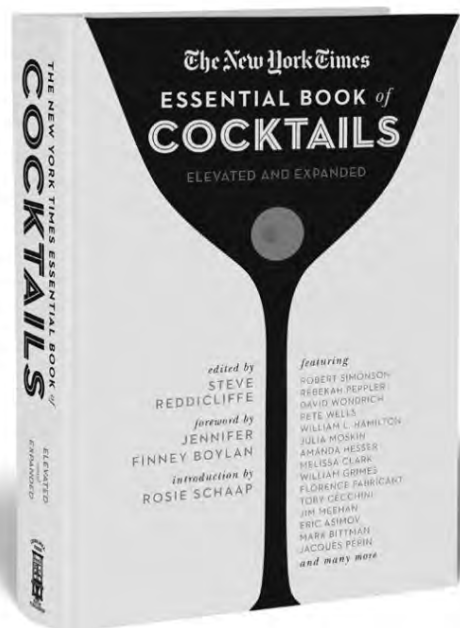
In the 18th century, reformers like Benjamin Lay, John Hepburn, Anthony Benezet and John Woolman fought an uphill battle to persuade their fellow Quakers to condemn slavery, and in 1758, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting finally

banned Quaker involvement in the slave trade. However, owning slaves was not banned by the Meeting until almost 20 years later. In the meantime, generations of Africans lived as enslaved persons on Quaker plantations.

The later-18th- and 19th-century dedication of abolitionist Quakers should be justly admired, but the earlier blindness of the Society of Friends, which continued for over a century, needs to be acknowledged in recounting the full and terrible history of slavery in America.

ALICE W. HOPKINS  
NEW YORK

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### WHAT OUR READERS ARE READING

Bill Neer writes, "I'm reading **PACHINKO**, by Min Jin Lee. I recently finished **RUN, ROSE, RUN**, by Dolly Parton and James Patterson, and **STATE OF TERROR**, by Hillary Clinton and Louise Penny. I had never read books written by two people, they were fun."

Claudia Venable is reading **THE GENE**, by Siddhartha Mukherjee: "I am now deep into the German years before WWII. This up-close view of how medicine and sterilization and 'racial cleansing' became entwined is truly gut-wrenching."

Russell Kinner writes, "During the great isolation, I was sustained by four books: **KEATS'S ODES: A LOVER'S DISCOURSE**, by Anahid Nersessian; **PYM**, by Mat Johnson; and two marvelous historical novels: **THE UNTOUCHABLE**, by John Banville, and **THE MIRROR AND THE LIGHT**, by Hilary Mantel. Her scope and depth compares to Tolstoy's."



## Jojo Moyes

The writer, whose latest novel is ‘Someone Else’s Shoes,’ hasn’t read any classic novels lately, ‘but the Russian greats hang over me every year, feeling like a gaping omission in my education.’

### What books are on your night stand?

“Shrines of Gaiety,” by Kate Atkinson, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “We Should All Be Feminists,” “The Faber Book of Reportage,” edited by John Carey, and around 30 copies of *The New Yorker*.

### What’s the last great book you read?

I loved “Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow,” by Gabrielle Zevin, and I had expected not to love it. I have zero interest in computer games, but it’s about so much more — it’s about creativity, disability, friendship and power dynamics. There is an extraordinary chapter near its climax that made me sob. That rarely happens.

### Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

No. But the Russian greats hang over me every year, feeling like a gaping omission in my education.

### Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

Probably on a train or airplane; somewhere where there is nothing I feel obliged to be doing for a few hours, and few interruptions. I’d like an accompanying mug of tea, a warm seat and the latest novel by an author I love.

### Which writers — novelists, playwrights, critics, journalists, poets — working today do you admire most?

I’m a latecomer to poetry, but right now I find it hits the spots fiction doesn’t always reach. I love Kim Addonizio, Mary Oliver, Jack Gilbert — his “Failing and Flying” was my lodestar when my marriage broke down. Anthony Lane for movie criticism and any column by Marina Hyde — the most biting of modern satirists. Lisa Taddeo’s “Three Women” shows her extraordinary ability to extract secrets, combined with a surgeon’s precision of mind. There are

too many novelists I admire, but I’d read Ann Patchett’s shopping list. Depending on my mood, Lee Child, Lisa Jewell, Liane Moriarty, George Saunders, David Sedaris. I’ll kick myself later for whomever I’ve left out.

### Have you ever written a fan letter to an author?

I’m lucky enough to be friends with many authors — they make especially good pen pals — so I send them unofficial fan mail all the time if I’ve loved something they’ve written. If I didn’t love it, I just pretend I haven’t had time to read it.

### Have you ever changed your opinion of a book based on information about the author, or anything else?

Unfortunately, yes. I idolized an author and her work and plucked up the courage to tell her so when I met her at a literary gathering when I was newly published. She could not have been less interested and looked past me over my shoulder as I spoke. It’s been really hard to love her work as much since.

### What’s the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

Some varieties of female duck have internal genitalia shaped into a spiral — making fertilization without “consent” much harder, in the view of some scientists (from “Bitch,” by Lucy Cooke).

### What kind of reader were you as a child? Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

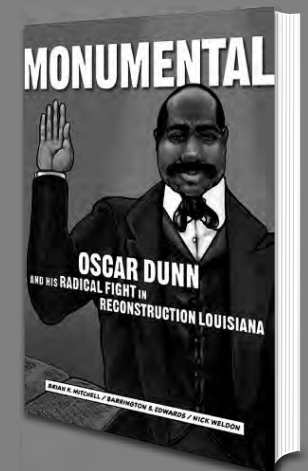
I was an only child and a voracious reader. My grandmother called me a bookworm, and it wasn’t a compliment, as my weekly visits to her were usually spent with my nose buried between the pages. The books that have stayed with me are “The Black Stallion,” by Walter Farley, and “The Secret Garden,” by Frances Hodgson Burnett, and, as a teenager, the books of F. Scott Fitzgerald. I was also a compulsive reader of horror — I could not read horror now if you paid me.

### You’re organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

Tennessee Williams, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and David Sedaris. I’d just sit back and listen. □

*An expanded version of this interview is available at [nytimes.com/books](http://nytimes.com/books).*

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