


# Best Books 2023

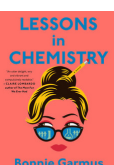
This eclectic selection of titles focuses primarily on books of interests for adult readers published in 2023. The list is compiled from patron and West Linn staff recommendations, as well as those from over a dozen critics' best book of the year lists, including *The New York Times*, *Book Riot*, and *Kirkus Reviews*. *Goodreads* ratings also assisted in compiling the list.

Please ask staff or review our online catalog for a book's availability and current location.

The sections are organized by the author's last name.

Book covers with a  icon on the image have been identified as spectacular audiobooks.

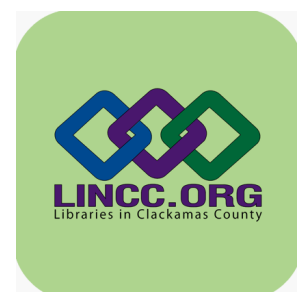
## Top Checkouts 2023



- Desert Star** by Michael Connelly
- Lessons in Chemistry** by Bonnie Garmus
- Happy Place** by Emily Henry
- People We Meet on Vacation** by Emily Henry
- It Starts with Us** by Colleen Hoover
- Demon Copperhead** by Barbara Kingsolver
- Someone Else's Shoes** by Jojo Moyes
- Hello Beautiful** by Ann Napolitano
- Our Missing Hearts** by Celeste Ng
- Tom Lake** by Ann Patchett
- Mad Honey** by Jodi Picoult
- The House in the Pines** by Ana Reyes
- Remarkably Bright Creatures** by Shelby Van Pelt
- The Covenant of Water** by Abraham Verghese



## GET THEM ON



# Hit List Highlights!

These books were published in 2023 and topped our *most checkouts during 2023* list. Here are the highlights from this hit list!

**Happy Place** by Emily Henry (Romance)  
Despite breaking up months earlier, a picture-perfect couple still haven't told their friends about the split and attempt to pretend they are still together at an annual Maine getaway.

**Tom Lake** by Ann Patchett (Fiction)  
In the spring of 2020, Lara's three daughters return to the family's orchard in Northern Michigan. While picking cherries, they beg their mother to tell them the story of Peter Duke, a famous actor with whom she shared both a stage and a romance years before at a theater company called Tom Lake. As Lara recalls the past, her daughters examine their own lives and relationship with their mother, and are forced to reconsider the world and everything they thought they knew.

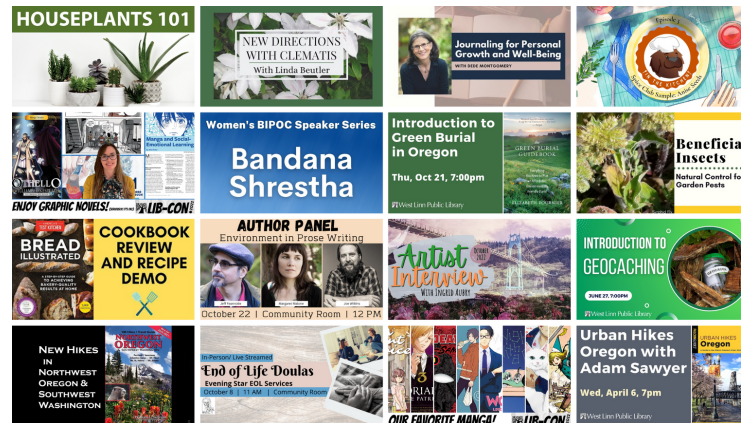
**Someone Else's Shoes** by Jojo Moyes (Fiction)  
When she accidentally takes the wrong gym bag, Sam Kemp tries on a pair of six-inch high Christian Louboutin red crocodile shoes that give her the confidence to change her life, while the shoes' owner tries to cling to her glamorous life after her husband cuts her off.

**Hello Beautiful** by Ann Napolitano (Fiction)  
Awarded a college basketball scholarship away from his childhood home silenced by tragedy, a young man befriends a spirited young woman who welcomes him into her loving, loud, chaotic household.

**The Covenant of Water** by Abraham Verghese (Historical Fiction)  
Spanning the years 1900 to 1977, *The Covenant of Water* is set in Kerala, on South India's Malabar Coast, and follows three generations of a family that suffers a peculiar affliction: in every generation, at least one person dies by drowning and in Kerala, water is everywhere.



# Programs



**Upcoming events for all ages:**  
[bit.ly/wlpl-online-events-programs](https://bit.ly/wlpl-online-events-programs)

**Archived Facebook Live programs:**  
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**Recorded programs on YouTube:**  
[bit.ly/wlpl-youtube-playlists](https://bit.ly/wlpl-youtube-playlists)

## More Recommendations

**Access Other Booklists for Adults:**  
[westlinnoregon.gov/library/booklists-adults](https://westlinnoregon.gov/library/booklists-adults)

**Get Book Recommendations:**  
Adult- [bit.ly/3704Hn1](https://bit.ly/3704Hn1)  
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## Library Locker

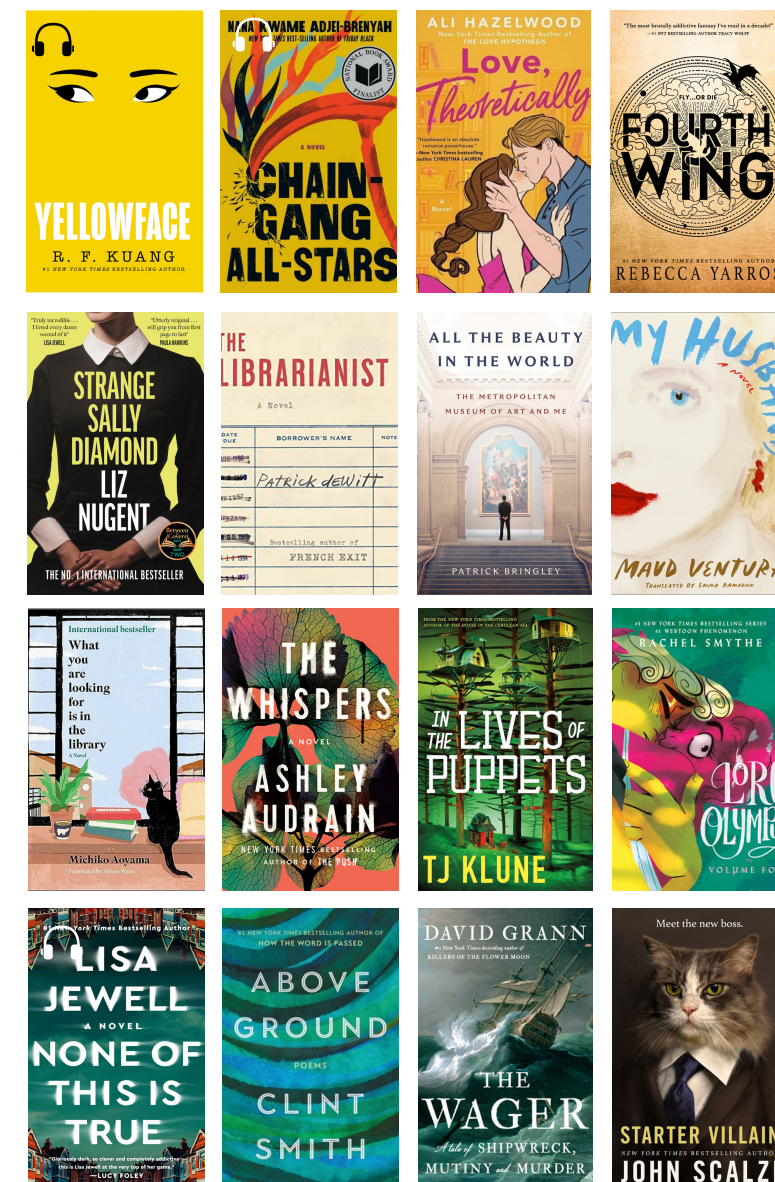
Can't visit the library while we're open? Not yet comfortable coming into the building? The library has a self-service locker for no-contact holds pickup.

Visit: [bit.ly/wlpl-locker](https://bit.ly/wlpl-locker)

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# BEST BOOKS 2023



# FICTION

## STAFF PICKS HIGHLIGHTS

***The Hike*** by Lucy Clarke (Mystery)  
When she and her three best friends go hiking in the stunning mountains of Norway, Liz, as they venture deeper into the wilderness, discovers this remote place hides secrets darker than they could've ever imagined and, if they aren't careful, not all of them will make it out alive.

***Love Theoretically*** by Ali Hazelwood (Romance)  
Secretly offering her services as a fake girlfriend, theoretical physicist Elsie Hannaway engages in an all-out war of scholarly sabotage when the older brother of her favorite client, the cold-hearted experimental physicist who ruined her mentor's career, stands between her and her dream job at MIT.

***Wellness*** by Nathan Hill (Fiction)  
Alongside the challenges of parenting, married couple Jack and Elizabeth encounter cults disguised as mindfulness support groups, polyamorous would-be suitors, Facebook wars and something called Love Potion Number Nine as they undertake separate, personal excavations in their quest to find health and happiness.

***Yellowface*** by R.F. Kuang (Fiction)  
After the death of her literary rival in a freak accident, author June Hayward steals her just-finished masterpiece, sending it to her agent as her own work, but as emerging evidence threatens her success, she discovers just how far she'll go to keep what she thinks she deserves.

***Starter Villain*** by John Scalzi (Sci-Fi)  
When his long-lost uncle dies, leaving him his supervillain business, Charlie, as rich, soulless predators backed by multinational corporations and venture capital come after him, finds going bad looking pretty good with unionized dolphins, hyperintelligent talking spy cats and a terrifying henchperson at his side.

***Fourth Wing*** by Rebecca Yarros (Fantasy)  
As war grows more deadly, Violet Sorrengail joins the elite Navarre: the dragon riders. But she'll need to keep her wits because once you enter the Basgiath War College, there are only two ways out: graduate or die.

## GENERAL



***What You Are Looking For is in the Library (Translation)***  
by Michiko Aoyama

***The Whispers*** by Ashley Audrain

***The Librarianist*** by Patrick deWitt

***Wellness*** by Nathan Hill

***Yellowface*** by R.F. Kuang

***Someone Else's Shoes*** by Jojo Moyes

***Camp Damascus*** by Chuck Tingle

***My Husband*** by Maud Ventura

## Historical



***Weyward*** by Emilia Hart

***The Secret Book of Flora Lea***

by Patti Callahan Henry

***The House of Eve*** by Sadeqa Johnson

***The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store***

by James McBride

***Hello Beautiful*** by Ann Napolitano

***The Covenant of Water***

by Abraham Verghese

***The Lost Bookshop*** by Evie Woods



## Fantasy & Science Fiction



***Starling House*** by Alix E. Harrow

***Thornhedge*** by T. Kingfisher

***The Water Outlaws*** by S. L. Huang

***In the Lives of Puppets*** by TJ Klune (SF)

***Starter Villain*** by John Scalzi (SF)

***The Fragile Threads of Power (Threads of Power #1)***

by V.E. Schwab

***Fourth Wing (Empyrean #1)***

by Rebecca Yarros

## Mystery



***The Hike*** by Lucy Clarke

***All the Sinners Bleed*** by S.A. Cosby

***None of This Is True*** by Lisa Jewell

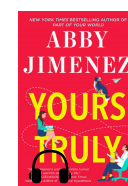
***Just the Nicest Couple*** by Mary Kubica

***Silver Nitrate*** by Silvia Moreno-Garcia

***Strange Sally Diamond*** by Luz Nugent

***Zero Days*** by Ruth Ware

## Romance



***Love Theoretically*** by Ali Hazelwood

***Yours Truly*** by Abby Jimenez

***Things We Hide From the Light***

by Lucy Score

***Business or Pleasure***

by Rachel Lynn Solomon

# NON-FICTION

## STAFF PICKS HIGHLIGHTS

***The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder*** by David Grann (910.9164 GRA 2023)  
In this tale of shipwreck, survival and savagery, the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Killers of the Flower Moon* recounts the events on His Majesty's Ship *The Wager*, a British vessel that left England in 1740 on a secret mission, resulting in a court martial that revealed a shocking truth.

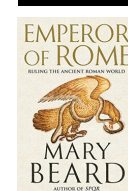
***Be Useful*** by Arnold Schwarzenegger (158.1 SCH 2023)  
Sharing his toolkit for a meaningful life, along with personal stories, and life-changing successes and life-threatening failures alike, the Austrian-born bodybuilder, actor, businessman, philanthropist and politician shows us how to put these tools to work, in service of whatever fulfilling future we can dream up for ourselves.

***Above Ground*** by Clint Smith (811.6 SMI 2023)  
Clint Smith's vibrant and compelling new collection traverses the vast emotional terrain of fatherhood, and explores how becoming a parent has recalibrated his sense of the world. "Above Ground" wrestles with how we hold wonder and despair in the same hands, how we carry intimate moments of joy and a collective sense of mourning in the same body. Smith's lyrical, narrative poems bring the reader on a journey not only through the early years of his children's lives, but through the changing world in which they are growing up—through the changing world of which we are all a part.

***The Good Life: Lessons From the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness*** by Robert Waldinger (302.1 WAL 2023)

What makes a life fulfilling and meaningful? The simple but surprising answer is: relationships. The stronger our relationships, the more likely we are to live happy, satisfying, and overall healthier lives. The invaluable insights in this book emerge from the revealing personal stories of hundreds of participants in the Harvard Study of Adult Development as they were followed year after year for their entire adult lives, and this wisdom is bolstered by research findings from this and many other studies.

## GENERAL



***Emperor of Rome: Ruling the Ancient Roman World***  
by Mary Beard

***All the Beauty in the World: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Me***

by Patrick Bringley

***Poverty, by America***

by Matthew Desmond

***A Fever in the Heartland*** by Timothy Egan

***The Art Thief: A True Story of Love, Crime, and a Dangerous Obsession***

by Michael Finkel

***The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder***

by David Grann

***Quietly Hostile*** by Samantha Irby

***On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe***

by Caroline Dodds Pennock

***Be Useful*** by Arnold Schwarzenegger

***Above Ground*** by Clint Smith

***The In-Between: Unforgettable***

***Encounters During Life's Final Moments***

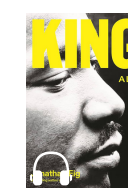
***The Good Life: Lessons From the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness***

by Robert Waldinger

***Master Slave Husband Wife*** by Ilyon Woo



## Memoir



***King: A Life*** by Jonathan Eig

***Daughter of the Dragon: Anna May Wong's Rendezvous with American History***

by Yunte Huang

***Elon Musk*** by Walter Isaacson

***You Could Make This Place Beautiful***

by Maggie Smith

***The Woman in Me*** by Britney Spears

***My Name Is Barbra*** by Barbra Streisand

***Thicker Than Water*** by Kerry Washington



## Graphic Novels



***A Guest in the House*** by Emily Carroll

***Monica*** by Daniel Clowes

***The Princess and the Grilled Cheese Sandwich***

by Deya Muniz

***Lore Olympus #4*** by Rachel Smythe

***Roaming*** by Mariko Tamaki