

ALPHA ORDER, AUTHOR -

"Long List" NOV 2021 (recommendations subcommittee, posted to web May 2022)

Author	Title	Book Review	Notes/ Genre
Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi	Americanah (2013)	https://archive.nytimes.com/2013/06/09/books/review/americanah-by-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie.html "Americanah tells the story of a smart, strong-willed Nigerian woman named Ifemelu who, after she leaves Africa for America, endures several harrowing years of near destitution before graduating from college." She becomes an astute observer of and commentator on African Americans and American Africans and race relations in general in the U.S. "Americanah is witheringly trenchant and hugely empathetic, both worldly and geographically precise, a novel that holds the discomfiting realities of our times fearlessly before us. It never feels false." https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/05/31/reviews/980531.31garner.html?module=inline	F
Bryson, Bill	A Walk in the Woods (1998)	An accounting of Bill Bryson's trek on the Appalachian Trail. "Once he and Katz (his walking buddy) have hit their stride, there are countless fine moments on the unexpected joys of deprivation and the possible threats from bears, hypothermia and the often spooky (think "Deliverance") strangers they meet along the way... Readers "may find themselves turning the pages with increasing amusement and anticipation as they discover that they're in the hands of a satirist of the first rank, one who writes (and walks) with Chaucerian brio.	NF
	The Life & Times of the Thunderbolt Kid (2006)	https://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/15/books/review/Jennings.t.html This memoir provokes "a continuous wry, nostalgic smile in anyone born during the 50's."	NF
Chernow, Ron	Hamilton (2004)	https://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/25/books/creating-capitalism.html "... his most bitter rivals, Jefferson, and Adams, outlived him by decades and did everything they could to bury his reputation. So, there is no Hamilton monument in Washington, but at least we now have Ron Chernow's moving and masterly <i>Alexander Hamilton</i> , which is by far the best biography ever written about the man."	NF
Doctorow, E. L.	The Book of Daniel (1971)	https://www.nytimes.com/1971/06/07/archives/no-handwriting-on-the-wall.html A distracted young Ph.D. candidate cannot separate his academic work from his family's history. "Instead (he) produces notes toward an autobiographical novel about his Old-Left parents, Paul and Rochelle Isaacson, who in the early 1950's were electrocuted for passing atom bomb secrets to the Russians... Mr. Doctorow ... freely acknowledges the looming presence of the Rosenberg Case by building a high-tension bridge between reality and fiction."	HF
Erdrich, Louise	The Plague of Doves (2008)	A terrible act of racism stands at the center of Louise Erdrich's masterly new novel: in the early years of the 20th century, after five members of a white family are found murdered, a group of men run down a party of Indians and deliver "what was called at the time 'rough justice'The hangings will haunt the town of Pluto (a small white settlement on the western edge of the North Dakota Ojibwe), but over the decades descendants of the victims and the vigilantes will also find their lives intertwining in myriad, unexpected ways, as love and friendship and random fate conspire to blunt, if not redeem, the specter of the past. https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/29/books/29kaku.html	F
Eugenides, Jeffrey	Middlesex (2002)	Middlesex, begins with "a startling announcement by its narrator, Cal, that he is a hermaphrodite, born in 1960 as a darling baby girl and reborn in 1974 as an awkward teenage boy." Middlesex has two faces -- one comedic, the other tragic -- and the novel turns the story of Cal's coming of age into an uproarious epic, at once funny and sad, about misplaced identities and family secrets.	F

		[SPOILER ALERT: don't read beyond paragraph 4 in this review - it gives away too much.] https://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/03/books/books-of-the-times-the-american-dream-seen-in-a-child-s-nightmare.html	
Fitzgerald, F. Scott	The Great Gatsby		C Fiction
Foley, Lucy	The Guest List (2020)	"Evoking the great Agatha Christie classics <i>And Then There Were None</i> and <i>Murder on the Orient Express</i> , Lucy Foley's clever, taut new novel, THE GUEST LIST takes us to a creepy island off the coast of Ireland, where a young couple are about to get married." https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/books/summer-reading.html	CF
Ghosh, Amitav	The Glass Palace (2001)	"A middle-class Bengali, who as an officer in the British Indian Army has learned to dance the tango and to eat roast beef with a knife and fork. He is in Malaya during World War II when he is asked by a much less Anglicized colleague to desert and join a group of renegade Indians who plan to help the Japanese defeat the British and liberate India." https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/01/02/11/reviews/010211.11mishrat.html	HF
Kirsch, Adam	The Blessing & the Curse: The Jewish People & their Books in the 20 C. (2020)	"The poet and critic Adam Kirsch seizes upon that conflicted quality of Jewish experience as the organizing principle for his new survey of some of the most significant and compelling Jewish books of the 20th century. Kirsch offers for each book a crystal-clear and eloquently phrased summation that no intelligent reader could disagree with. ... more than anything else, Kirsch's new book is an expression of his abiding faith....is a traditional liberal faith in books themselves, and in their power to edify, soothe and unite people." https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/06/books/review/the-blessing-and-the-curse-adam-kirsch.html	NF
Lefteri, Christy	Beekeeper of Aleppo (2019)	"Beekeeper traces the path of a pair of refugees whose lives have been shattered by the years-long war in Syria, and who have little hope to guide them but a cousin who awaits them in the U.K." The author is the daughter of Cypriot refugees. https://time.com/5658426/the-beekeeper-of-aleppo-book-review/	
Mahfouz, Naguib	The Palace Walk (1956-7, English 1988)	https://www.nytimes.com/1990/02/04/books/a-pious-and-depraved-life.html <i>Palace Walk</i> , centers on the life of a family living through the period between the end of World War I and the beginning of the 1919 revolution against British rule, a time of dramatic change in Egypt." [Think <i>Song of the Captive Bird</i> .]	HF Egypt
Nevo, Eshkol	World Cup Wishes (2007)	Four friends in their late 20's, in Tel Aviv, have been watching the World Cup together since 1986. In 1998, one of the friends suggests they each write 'where he dreams of being in another four years.' The novel is an account their wishes and what becomes of them by the time of the 2002 World Cup. Change is in fact the novel's driving force. How the friends change - and how Israel changes around them. The story which seemed straightforward, is anything but. What started as a realistic novel about everyday life in Israel evolves into a story about storytelling. In doing so, it confirms Nevo as one of the best young Israeli writers today." https://www.thejc.com/culture/books/review-world-cup-wishes-1.15512	Israeli F
Shakespeare	Hamlet	Hamlet! What about pairing it with <i>Rosenkranz & Guildenstern are Dead</i> , by Tom Stoppard (See below)	C F
Shaw, George Bernard	Pygmalion (1912)	https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3825/3825-h/3825-h.htm The play is available at above link or as a free eBook. The tale of a young, brash woman from the Cockney slums of London and her relationship with an eccentric professor of phonetics; intimations of class distinctions and social and gender inequality - the play that inspired <i>My Fair Lady</i> .	play

Singer, I. B.		SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE	
Stoppard, Tom	Rosencranz & Guildenstern are Dead (1964)	https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1967/10/17/90411984.pdf?pdf_redire ct=true&ip=0 "This then is the play of <i>Hamlet</i> not seen through the eyes of Hamlet, or Claudius, or Ophelia or Gertrude, but a worm's eye view of tragedy seen from the bewildered standpoint of (the minor players, courtiers) Rosenkranz & Guildenstern." Read together with <i>Hamlet</i> ?	play
Stuart, Douglas	Shuggie Bain (2020)	Recipient National Book Award; Booker Prize; autobiography: gay son of an alcoholic mother in 1980's Glasgow https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/books/douglas-stuart-shuggie-bain.html	Scottish Author, fiction
Towles, Amor	The Lincoln Highway	"Upon the death of his father, 18-year-old Emmett Watson is released early from a juvenile work farm in Kansas and driven home by a kind warden to a small town in Nebraska, where he is reunited with his precocious 8-year-old brother, Billy. Facing foreclosure on the family farm and violent retribution from the family of the bully he accidentally killed at the fairgrounds, Emmett has an immediate and stark choice — should he stay, or should he go? https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/books/review/amor-towles-lincoln-highway.html	HF
Tyler, Anne	The Redhead at the Side of the Road	READ	F
Wharton, Edith	Ethan From		CF
Whitehead, Colson	Harlem Shuffle	https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/books/review/colson-whitehead-harlem-shuffle.html Karan Mahajan Above is one of five reviews NYT published about "Shuffle," Three other columns listed it as well: <i>20 New Books to Read This Season</i> ; <i>8 New Books We Recommend this Week Sept. 23, 2021</i> , and <i>19 New Books Coming this September Aug. 28, 2021</i> . Also see <i>The Atlantic</i> and <i>Kirkus Review</i>	NF
Zafon, Carlos Ruiz	The Shadow of the Wind (2004)	READ	F

Selection Criteria NEXT PAGE:

BOOK SELECTION CRITERIA

- The Book Group prefers quality literature that will broaden our horizons and lend itself to satisfying discussion.
- We prefer books that members (or their acquaintances) have read (and *commended*) and/or literature that has been *favorably reviewed* by a reputable source, (such as The New York Times, The New Yorker, Kirkus Review, Jewish Review of Books, The Guardian, etc.).
- *Availability* is a consideration, BUT if we plan ahead, we should be able to order anything we want through local books stores or online suppliers.
- An effort will be made not to repeat authors and to alternate categories.

These are general categories and are not meant to be all-inclusive:

Non-fiction:

World history,
Jewish History,
social science,
science, etc.

Fiction

English (language) literature, (American, British, Canadian)
 Classic
 Contemporary
Historical fiction
Mystery, adventure
Israeli authors (fiction or nonfiction)
Other international authors (fiction or nonfiction)