

Counting Descent Clint Smith

In her dedication Safia Elhillo writes, “The January Children are the generation born in Sudan under British occupation, where children were assigned birth years by height, all given the birth date January 1.” What follows is a deeply personal collection of poems that describe the experience of navigating the postcolonial world as a stranger in one’s own land. The January Children depicts displacement and longing while also questioning accepted truths about geography, history, nationhood, and home. The poems mythologize family histories until they break open, using them to explore aspects of Sudan’s history of colonial occupation, dictatorship, and diaspora. Several of the poems speak to the late Egyptian singer Abdelhalim Hafez, who addressed many of his songs to the *asmarani*—an Arabic term of endearment for a brown-skinned or dark-skinned person. Elhillo explores Arabness and Africanness and the tensions generated by a hyphenated identity in those two worlds. No longer content to accept manmade borders, Elhillo navigates a new and reimagined world. Maintaining a sense of wonder in multiple landscapes and mindscapes of perpetually shifting values, she leads the reader through a postcolonial narrative that is equally terrifying and tender, melancholy and defiant.

They Called Me 299-359 is a poetry anthology written by incarcerated youth of Free Minds. Through moving personal testimony, these young writers explore the challenges of incarceration as well as family, forgiveness, redemption, and dreams.

Clint Smith's debut poetry collection, *Counting Descent*, is a coming of age story that seeks to complicate our conception of lineage and tradition. Smith explores the cognitive dissonance that results from belonging to a community that unapologetically celebrates black humanity while living in a world that often renders blackness a caricature of fear. His poems move fluidly across personal and political histories, all the while reflecting on the social construction of our lived experiences. Smith brings the reader on a powerful journey forcing us to reflect on all that we learn growing up, and all that we seek to unlearn moving forward.

Instant #1 New York Times bestseller. “The Atlantic writer drafts a history of slavery in this country unlike anything you’ve read before” (Entertainment Weekly). Beginning in his hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader on an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks—those that are honest about the past and those that are not—that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation’s collective history, and ourselves. It is the story of the Monticello Plantation in Virginia, the estate where Thomas Jefferson wrote letters espousing the urgent need for liberty while enslaving more than four hundred people. It is the story of the Whitney Plantation, one of the only former plantations devoted to preserving the experience of the enslaved people whose lives and work sustained it. It is the story of Angola, a former plantation—turned—maximum-security prison in Louisiana that is filled with Black men who work across the 18,000-acre land for virtually no pay. And it is the story of Blandford Cemetery, the final resting place of tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers. A deeply researched and transporting exploration of the legacy of slavery and its imprint on centuries of American history, *How the Word Is Passed* illustrates how some of our country’s most essential stories are hidden in plain view—whether in places we might drive by on our way to work, holidays such as Juneteenth, or entire

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neighborhoods like downtown Manhattan, where the brutal history of the trade in enslaved men, women, and children has been deeply imprinted. Informed by scholarship and brought to life by the story of people living today, Smith's debut work of nonfiction is a landmark of reflection and insight that offers a new understanding of the hopeful role that memory and history can play in making sense of our country and how it has come to be.

Between body and spirit, place and soul, love and trauma, and logic and magic, Kailey Tedesco finds herself between two worlds in this stunning collection of debut poetry. Treading the line between the dual nature of our human spirit, this collection brings to light what our physical, and then spiritual, selves' place is in the cosmos and the realm beyond our immediate sight. Through images of Catholicism, heavenly bodies, caul births, dark magic, serpents, and God, Tedesco challenges what it means to be Woman in a world so clouded by opposing truths, illuminating herself and elevating our human experience.

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Poet and contributor to *The Atlantic* Clint Smith's revealing, contemporary portrait of America as a slave owning nation Beginning in his own hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader through an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks-those that are honest about the past and those that are not-that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation's collective history, and ourselves. It is the story of the Monticello Plantation in Virginia, the estate where Thomas Jefferson wrote letters espousing the urgent need for liberty while enslaving over 400 people on the premises. It is the story of the Whitney Plantation, one of the only former plantations devoted to preserving the experience of the enslaved people whose lives and work sustained it. It is the story of Angola Prison in Louisiana, a former plantation named for the country from which most of its enslaved people arrived and which has since become one of the most gruesome maximum-security prisons in the world. And it is the story of Blandford Cemetery, the final resting place of tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers. In a deeply researched and transporting exploration of the legacy of slavery and its imprint on centuries of American history, *How the Word Is Passed* illustrates how some of our country's most essential stories are hidden in plain view-whether in places we might drive by on our way to work, holidays such as Juneteenth, or entire neighborhoods--like downtown Manhattan--on which the brutal history of the trade in enslaved men, women and children has been deeply imprinted. Informed by scholarship and brought alive by the story of people living today, Clint Smith's debut work of nonfiction is a landmark work of reflection and insight that offers a new understanding of the hopeful role that memory and history can play in understanding our country.

The electrifying story of the turbulent year when the sixties ended and America teetered

on the edge of revolution NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH As the 1960s drew to a close, the United States was coming apart at the seams. From August 1969 to August 1970, the nation witnessed nine thousand protests and eighty-four acts of arson or bombings at schools across the country. It was the year of the My Lai massacre investigation, the Cambodia invasion, Woodstock, and the Moratorium to End the War. The American death toll in Vietnam was approaching fifty thousand, and the ascendant counterculture was challenging nearly every aspect of American society. *Witness to the Revolution*, Clara Bingham's unique oral history of that tumultuous time, unveils anew that moment when America careened to the brink of a civil war at home, as it fought a long, futile war abroad. Woven together from one hundred original interviews, *Witness to the Revolution* provides a firsthand narrative of that period of upheaval in the words of those closest to the action—the activists, organizers, radicals, and resisters who manned the barricades of what Students for a Democratic Society leader Tom Hayden called “the Great Refusal.” We meet Bill Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn of the Weather Underground; Daniel Ellsberg, the former Defense Department employee who released the Pentagon Papers; feminist theorist Robin Morgan; actor and activist Jane Fonda; and many others whose powerful personal stories capture the essence of an era. We witness how the killing of four students at Kent State turned a straitlaced social worker into a hippie, how the civil rights movement gave birth to the women's movement, and how opposition to the war in Vietnam turned college students into prisoners, veterans into peace marchers, and intellectuals into bombers. With lessons that can be applied to our time, *Witness to the Revolution* is more than just a record of the death throes of the Age of Aquarius. Today, when America is once again enmeshed in racial turmoil, extended wars overseas, and distrust of the government, the insights contained in this book are more relevant than ever. Praise for *Witness to the Revolution* “Especially for younger generations who didn't live through it, *Witness to the Revolution* is a valuable and entertaining primer on a moment in American history the likes of which we may never see again.”—Bryan Burrough, *The Wall Street Journal* “[One of the] best paperbacks of 2017 so far . . . The book is a rich tapestry of a volatile period in American history.”—*Time* “A gripping oral history of the centrifugal social forces tearing America apart at the end of the '60s . . . This is rousing reportage from the front lines of US history.”—*O: The Oprah Magazine* “The familiar voices and the unfamiliar ones are woven together with documents to make this a surprisingly powerful and moving book.”—*New York Times Book Review* “[An] Enthralling and brilliant chronology of the period between August 1969 and September 1970.”—*Buffalo News* “[Bingham] captures the essence of these fourteen months through the words of movement organizers, vets, students, draft resisters, journalists, musicians, government agents, writers, and others. . . . This oral history will enable readers to see that era in a new light and with fresh sympathy for the motivations of those involved. While Bingham's is one of many retrospective looks at that period, it is one of the most immediate and personal.”—*Booklist*

The poems in *Water & Salt* travel across borders between cultures and languages, between the present and the living past.

"A literary coming-of-age poetry collection, an ode to the places we call home, and a piercingly intimate deconstruction of daughterhood, *Black Girl, Call Home* is a love

letter to the wandering black girl and a vital companion to any woman on a journey to find truth, belonging, and healing. As a competitive spoken-word poet who draws large crowds of people, Jasmine Mans's collection is divided into six sections, each with a corresponding active telephone number where she has recorded excerpts of her poems. You can listen now, just dial! Using poetry to bring change to the world with positive agitation and hoping to prompt dialogue where there is normally fear, poet Jasmine Mans explores the intersection of race, feminism, and queer identity in her latest collection *Black Girl, Call Home...*"--

A source book for American culture in the 1960s and 1970s: "suggested reading" from the *Last Whole Earth Catalog*, from Thoreau to James Baldwin. The *Whole Earth Catalog* was a cultural touchstone of the 1960s and 1970s. The iconic cover image of the Earth viewed from space made it one of the most recognizable books on bookstore shelves. Between 1968 and 1971, almost two million copies of its various editions were sold, and not just to commune-dwellers and hippies. Millions of mainstream readers turned to the *Whole Earth Catalog* for practical advice and intellectual stimulation, finding everything from a review of Buckminster Fuller to recommendations for juicers. This book offers selections from eighty texts from the nearly 1,000 items of "suggested reading" in the *Last Whole Earth Catalog*. After an introduction that provides background information on the catalog and its founder, Stewart Brand (interesting fact: Brand got his organizational skills from a stint in the Army), the book presents the texts arranged in nine sections that echo the sections of the *Whole Earth Catalog* itself. Enlightening juxtapositions abound. For example, "Understanding Whole Systems" maps the holistic terrain with writings by authors from Aldo Leopold to Herbert Simon; "Land Use" features selections from Thoreau's *Walden* and a report from the United Nations on new energy sources; "Craft" offers excerpts from *The Book of Tea* and *The Illustrated Hassle-Free Make Your Own Clothes Book*; "Community" includes Margaret Mead and James Baldwin's odd-couple collaboration, *A Rap on Race*. Together, these texts offer a sourcebook for the *Whole Earth* culture of the 1960s and 1970s in all its infinite variety.

From Kiese Laymon, author of the critically acclaimed memoir *Heavy*, comes a "funny, astute, searching" (*The Wall Street Journal*) debut novel about Black teenagers that is a satirical exploration of celebrity, authorship, violence, religion, and coming of age in post-Katrina Mississippi. Written in a voice that's alternately humorous, lacerating, and wise, *Long Division* features two interwoven stories. In the first, it's 2013: after an on-stage meltdown during a nationally televised quiz contest, fourteen-year-old Citizen "City" Coldson becomes an overnight YouTube celebrity. The next day, he's sent to stay with his grandmother in the small coastal community of Melahatchie, where a young girl named Baize Shephard has recently disappeared. Before leaving, City is given a strange book without an author called *Long Division*. He learns that one of the book's main characters is also named City Coldson—but *Long Division* is set in 1985. This 1985-version of *City*, along with his friend and love interest, Shalaya Crump, discovers a way to travel into the future, and steals a laptop and cellphone from an orphaned teenage rapper called...Baize Shephard. They ultimately take these items with them all the way back to 1964, to help another time-traveler they meet to protect his family from the Ku Klux Klan. City's two stories ultimately converge in the work shed behind his grandmother's house, where he discovers the key to Baize's

disappearance. Brilliantly “skewering the disingenuous masquerade of institutional racism” (Publishers Weekly), this dreamlike “smart, funny, and sharp” (Jesmyn Ward), novel shows the work that young Black Americans must do, while living under the shadow of a history “that they only gropingly understand and must try to fill in for themselves” (The Wall Street Journal).

Alexandra Elle writes frankly about her experience as a young, single mother while she celebrates her triumph over adversity and promotes resilience and self-care in her readers. This book of all-new poems from the beloved author of *Words From A Wanderer* and *Love In My Language* is a quotable companion on the road to healing. *If No Moon* by award-winning author Moira Linehan documents the effects of profound loss and the dark withdrawal into grief. Wherever the author turns—the landscape of her backyard in Massachusetts, a Trappist monastery in Kentucky, the museums of Florence, or the cliffs of Inishmor in Ireland—she sees only the geography of emptiness. Crossovers between craft and art, form and voice, knitting and memory, recur throughout the poems. Lying within the tradition of narrative poetry, elegy, and the lyric, the collection reveals the mysterious journey of return. Coming full circle to find again the lyrical and the transcendent within the everyday, beauty eventually wins out. *If No Moon*, accessible to all who have or will experience loss, is the voice of one who has come to understand that there is no other work but starting over.

From Epicurus to Sam Cooke, the *Daily News to Roots, Digest* draws from the present and the past to form an intellectual, American identity. In poems that forge their own styles and strategies, we experience dialogues between the written word and other art forms. Within this dialogue we hear Ben Jonson, we meet police K-9s, and we find children negotiating a sense of the world through a father's eyes and through their own. From the acclaimed author of *Unfinished Business*, a story of crisis and change that can help us find renewed honesty and purpose in our personal and political lives *Like much of the world, America is deeply divided over identity, equality, and history. Renewal* is Anne-Marie Slaughter's candid and deeply personal account of how her own odyssey opened the door to an important new understanding of how we as individuals, organizations, and nations can move backward and forward at the same time, facing the past and embracing a new future. Weaving together personal stories and reflections with insights from the latest research in the social sciences, Slaughter recounts a difficult time of self-examination and growth in the wake of a crisis that changed the way she lives, leads, and learns. She connects her experience to our national crisis of identity and values as the country looks into a four-hundred-year-old mirror and tries to confront and accept its full reflection. The promise of the Declaration of Independence has been hollow for so many for so long. That reckoning is the necessary first step toward renewal. The lessons here are not just for America. Slaughter shows how renewal is possible for anyone who is willing to see themselves with new eyes and embrace radical honesty, risk, resilience, interdependence, grace, and vision. Part personal journey, part manifesto, *Renewal* offers hope tempered by honesty and is essential reading for citizens, leaders, and the change makers of tomorrow.

WINNER OF THE 2020 PULITZER PRIZE FOR POETRY Finalist for the 2019 National Book Award "100 Notable Books of the Year," The New York Times Book Review "By some literary magic—no, it's precision, and honesty—Brown

manages to bestow upon even the most public of subjects the most intimate and personal stakes."—Craig Morgan Teicher, "I Reject Walls': A 2019 Poetry Preview" for NPR "A relentless dismantling of identity, a difficult jewel of a poem."—Rita Dove, in her introduction to Jericho Brown's "Dark" (featured in the New York Times Magazine in January 2019) "Winner of a Whiting Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship, Brown's hard-won lyricism finds fire (and idyll) in the intersection of politics and love for queer Black men."—O, The Oprah Magazine Named a Lit Hub "Most Anticipated Book of 2019" One of BuzzFeed's "66 Books Coming in 2019 You'll Want to Keep Your Eyes On" The Rumpus poetry pick for "What to Read When 2019 is Just Around the Corner" One of BookRiot's "50 Must-Read Poetry Collections of 2019" Jericho Brown's daring new book *The Tradition* details the normalization of evil and its history at the intersection of the past and the personal. Brown's poetic concerns are both broad and intimate, and at their very core a distillation of the incredibly human: What is safety? Who is this nation? Where does freedom truly lie? Brown makes mythical pastorals to question the terrors to which we've become accustomed, and to celebrate how we survive. Poems of fatherhood, legacy, blackness, queerness, worship, and trauma are propelled into stunning clarity by Brown's mastery, and his invention of the duplex—a combination of the sonnet, the ghazal, and the blues—is testament to his formal skill. *The Tradition* is a cutting and necessary collection, relentless in its quest for survival while reveling in a celebration of contradiction.

Would you like to get rid of your head trash and make more money? Whether you know it or not, your relationship with money is affecting every decision you make and everything you do. Inside this book, you'll discover... * The worst day of my life and how it set me free. Page 19. * Why traditional "money-making" programs have set you up to fail. Page 68. * How an unhappy employee working 80-hour workweeks built a six-figure-per-month business using Noah's methods. Page 80. * Where you are on the Income-Happiness Scale. Page 57. * The 5 simple steps that have generated millions of dollars for Noah's clients. Page 63. And that's just the beginning... "Noah St. John's work is about discovering within ourselves what we should have known all along - we are truly powerful beings with unlimited potential." - Stephen Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* "Noah's program represents one of the most significant breakthroughs in the study of success in decades." - Jack Canfield, co-creator of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* Read this book now and get rid of your head trash about money... Noah St. John is a keynote speaker and bestselling author who's famous for inventing Affirmations(R) and helping people achieve financial freedom. He is the only author in history to have works published by Hay House, HarperCollins, Mindvalley, Nightingale-Conant, and the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* publisher. Watch Noah's free daily training videos at NoahStJohn.com

In his prize-winning poetry collection *Reliquaria*, R. A. Villanueva embraces liminal, in-between spaces in considering an ever-evolving Filipino American

identity. Languages and cultures collide; mythologies and faiths echo and resound. Part haunting, part prayer, part prophecy, these poems resonate with the voices of the dead and those who remember them. In this remarkable book, we enter the vessel of memory, the vessel of the body. The dead act as witness, the living as chimera, and we learn that whatever the state of the body, this much rings true: every ode is an elegy; each elegy is always an ode.

“When an author’s unmitigated brilliance shows up on every page, it’s tempting to skip a description and just say, Read this! Such is the case with this breathlessly powerful, deceptively breezy book of poetry.” —Booklist, Starred Review In his much-anticipated follow-up to *The Crown Ain't Worth Much*, poet, essayist, biographer, and music critic Hanif Abdurraqib has written a book of poems about how one rebuilds oneself after a heartbreak, the kind that renders them a different version of themselves than the one they knew. It's a book about a mother's death, and admitting that Michael Jordan pushed off, about forgiveness, and how none of the author's black friends wanted to listen to "Don't Stop Believin'." It's about wrestling with histories, personal and shared. Abdurraqib uses touchstones from the world outside—from Marvin Gaye to Nikola Tesla to his neighbor's dogs—to create a mirror, inside of which every angle presents a new possibility.

Since launching his career at the *Village Voice* in the early 1980s Greg Tate has been one of the premiere critical voices on contemporary Black music, art, literature, film, and politics. *Flyboy 2* provides a panoramic view of the past thirty years of Tate's influential work. Whether interviewing Miles Davis or Ice Cube, reviewing an Azealia Banks mixtape or Suzan-Lori Parks's *Topdog/Underdog*, discussing visual artist Kara Walker or writer Clarence Major, or analyzing the ties between Afro-futurism, Black feminism, and social movements, Tate's resounding critical insights illustrate how race, gender, and class become manifest in American popular culture. Above all, Tate demonstrates through his signature mix of vernacular poetics and cultural theory and criticism why visionary Black artists, intellectuals, aesthetics, philosophies, and politics matter to twenty-first-century America.

The film and television star draws on personal experiences to present a series of motivational letters that explores such topics as the value of a good education and the media's inappropriate emphasis on material wealth.

Sacco and Vanzetti, the Rosenbergs, and Aileen Wuornos. A witch, a pirate, a slave who poisoned her master. A serial killer, a Quaker, a case of mistaken identity. The earliest to be electrocuted, gassed, and lethally injected; the last to be publicly hanged. In her first book, *Habeas Corpus*, acclaimed poet Jill McDonough gives us fifty sonnets, each about a legal execution in American history. From four hundred years of documentation she conjures – and honors – a chorus of the dead. The sonnets, headed meticulously by name, date, and place, are poignant with the factual, with words and actions reported by eyewitnesses and spoken by the condemned – so limpidly framed that at

moments one forgets the skill that tautens and crystallizes all this into authentic poetry: The warehouse was dingy, cluttered with lumber:thirteen steps, noose, black mask. No hymn, no psalm.He spat out his gum in the chaplain's outstretched palm.Habeas Corpus: you have the body. With a rare control of indignation by sorrow, of subjectivity by the subject's own truth, McDonough's unsparing sonnets reveal the enormity that is the death penalty in America: "a ladder, a hanging tree" for Mary Dyer, "an odor he'd/described in print as peach blossoms, sickening-sweet" for Caryl Chessman, "a hood, their/target, then bang, bang, bang, three noises, quick" for Gary Gilmore, "Two needles in his arm,/blood splatters on the sheet" for Charles Brooks. Taking the words of fifty out of the nearly 20,000 men and women executed since 1608, she reflects them back to us in works of self-effacing artistry. Resurrected from their obscurity these individuals speak our secret history.

An inspiring message from the inaugural Folio Prize winner, George Saunders, one of today's most influential and original writers

"These smart, unsettling stories give us, with vivid detail, both the squalidly ordinary and the terrifyingly extraordinary-and make clear how closely the two are linked."-Ben H. Winters, Edgar-Award-Winning author of "The Last Policeman" "Clint Smith's "Ghouljaw" stories use vivid imagery to build intense close-ups that connect reader with character, then adds psychologies corrupted by sex, loss, betrayal, guilt, cowardice, denial, and that fatal flaw pomposity. With sprightly literate language he twists old motifs into new shapes of the rural gothic, often embodied in some of the spookiest "monsters from the id" yet imagined-creatures gory, squishy, bloody, witchy, wild. Not to forget a demonic "dog" that scared the bejesus out of me! The monsters of humanity, too, find new life here, as blood cults, avenging mystics, violent poachers, PTSD, and repressed memories incarnate. Clint Smith's "Ghouljaw" releases into the reader's world a darkness that teaches, shakes, and warns. Read and after a night of tossing sleep you'll awaken changed. For the better? Well, as it is with Smith's characters, that matter's up to you."-Jim Powell, MFA, Senior Lecturer, IUPUI Over the past several years, Clint Smith has established himself as a powerfully imaginative writer of weird fiction. In this first collection of short stories, Smith demonstrates the multifaceted talents that will establish him as one of the notable weird writers of his generation. What distinguishes Smith's work is both the originality of its weird conceptions and its careful delineation of human character. One of his earliest tales, "Benthos," features both these qualities, telling a grim tale of alienated youth and drug-taking that veers into the grotesquely supernatural. In "The Tell-Tale Offal," Smith cleverly updates Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" in a grisly story of physical horror. In "What Happens in Hell Stays in Hell," Smith uses the war in Afghanistan as a chilling backdrop to unthinkable horrors unleashed in the parched sands of the Middle East. "I have no doubt that Clint Smith will be heard from in the future as a leading practitioner of the modern weird tale. The stories in this collection testify not only to his literary potential but to his already significant accomplishments."-From S. T. Joshi's foreword

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST • "A masterpiece" (Minneapolis Star Tribune), a "devastating" (The New York Times) meditation on Black performance in America from the MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellow and bestselling author of *Go Ahead in the Rain* WINNER OF THE GORDON BURN PRIZE • LONGLISTED FOR THE ANDREW CARNEGIE MEDAL • NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY PUBLISHERS WEEKLY AND ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *ESQUIRE* "Gorgeous essays that reveal the resilience, heartbreak, and joy within Black performance."—Brit Bennett, author of *The*

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Vanishing Half At the March on Washington in 1963, Josephine Baker was fifty-seven years old, well beyond her most prolific days. But in her speech she was in a mood to consider her life, her legacy, her departure from the country she was now triumphantly returning to. "I was a devil in other countries, and I was a little devil in America, too," she told the crowd. Inspired by these few words, Hanif Abdurraqib has written a profound and lasting reflection on how Black performance is inextricably woven into the fabric of American culture. Each moment in every performance he examines—whether it's the twenty-seven seconds in "Gimme Shelter" in which Merry Clayton wails the words "rape, murder," a schoolyard fistfight, a dance marathon, or the instant in a game of spades right after the cards are dealt—has layers of resonance in Black and white cultures, the politics of American empire, and Abdurraqib's own personal history of love, grief, and performance. Abdurraqib writes prose brimming with jubilation and pain, infused with the lyricism and rhythm of the musicians he loves. With care and generosity, he explains the poignancy of performances big and small, each one feeling intensely familiar and vital, both timeless and desperately urgent. Filled with sharp insight, humor, and heart, *A Little Devil in America* exalts the Black performance that unfolds in specific moments in time and space—from midcentury Paris to the moon, and back down again to a cramped living room in Columbus, Ohio.

"Ward takes James Baldwin's 1963 examination of race in America, *The Fire Next Time*, as a jumping off point for this ... collection of essays and poems about race from ... voices of her generation and our time"--

Porsha Olayiwola's debut poetry collection soars with the power and presence of live performance. These poems dip their hands into the fabric of black womanhood and revel in it. *Shimmer* establishes Olayiwola firmly in the lineage of black queer poetics, celebrating the work done by generations of poets from Audre Lorde to Danez Smith. Each poem is a gentle breaking and an inventive reconstruction. This is a book of self and community-care?in pursuit of building a world that will not only keep you alive but will keep you joyful. Advance praise for *i shimmer* sometime, too In Porsha Olayiwola's capable hands, language becomes elastic, becomes kaleidoscopic. *i shimmer* sometimes, too is cinematic, is magic, and graceful education in the possibilities of form -Safia Elillo, Author Of *The January Children* In language that is both pungent and poignant, Porsha Olayiwola plumbs a diaspora of resilience, rich in ringshouts and inner-city blues chanted to the sky. *i shimmer* sometimes, too is luminous indeed. -Jabari Asim, Author of *We Can't Breathe* Each poem is a lesson, a story, a mirror that Olayiwola holds up to ensure we pay attention to that which we may have overlooked. -Clint Smith, Author of *Counting Descent*

Invisible Man is a milestone in American literature, a book that has continued to engage readers since its appearance in 1952. A first novel by an unknown writer, it remained on the bestseller list for sixteen weeks, won the National Book Award for fiction, and established Ralph Ellison as one of the key writers of the century. The nameless narrator of the novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be. The book is a passionate and witty tour de force of style, strongly influenced by T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Joyce, and Dostoevsky.

"Voigt's language dares to stir the dead, to remind us that we are temporary survivors."-Geoffrey Wolff

"Ross Gay's eye lands upon wonder at every turn, bolstering my belief in the countless small miracles that surround us." —Tracy K. Smith, Pulitzer Prize winner and U.S. Poet Laureate The winner of the NBCC Award for Poetry offers up a spirited collection of short lyric essays, written daily over a tumultuous year, reminding us of the purpose and pleasure of praising, extolling, and celebrating ordinary wonders. Ross Gay's *The Book of Delights* is a genre-

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defying book of essays—some as short as a paragraph; some as long as five pages—that record the small joys that occurred in one year, from birthday to birthday, and that we often overlook in our busy lives. His is a meditation on delight that takes a clear-eyed view of the complexities, even the terrors, in his life, including living in America as a black man; the ecological and psychic violence of our consumer culture; the loss of those he loves. Among Gay's funny, poetic, philosophical delights: the way Botan Rice Candy wrappers melt in your mouth, the volunteer crossing guard with a pronounced tremor whom he imagines as a kind of boat-woman escorting pedestrians across the River Styx, a friend's unabashed use of air quotes, pickup basketball games, the silent nod of acknowledgment between black people. And more than any other subject, Gay celebrates the beauty of the natural world—his garden, the flowers in the sidewalk, the birds, the bees, the mushrooms, the trees. This is not a book of how-to or inspiration, though it could be read that way. Fans of Roxane Gay, Maggie Nelson, and Kiese Laymon will revel in Gay's voice, and his insights. *The Book of Delights* is about our connection to the world, to each other, and the rewards that come from a life closely observed. Gay's pieces serve as a powerful and necessary reminder that we can, and should, stake out a space in our lives for delight.

Black Harvard Doctorate in Poetics launches poetry that explores modern blackness. Clint Smith's debut poetry collection, *Counting Descent*, is a coming of age story that seeks to complicate our conception of lineage and tradition. Smith explores the cognitive dissonance that results from belonging to a community that unapologetically celebrates black humanity while living in a world that often renders blackness a caricature of fear. His poems move fluidly across personal and political histories, all the while reflecting on the social construction of our lived experiences. Smith brings the reader on a powerful journey forcing us to reflect on all that we learn growing up, and all that we seek to unlearn moving forward. - Winner, 2017 Black Caucus of the American Library Association Literary Award - Finalist, 2017 NAACP Image Awards - 2017 'One Book One New Orleans' Book Selection

INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER From award-winning actress and political activist America Ferrera comes a vibrant and varied collection of first-person accounts from prominent figures about the experience of growing up between cultures. America Ferrera has always felt wholly American, and yet, her identity is inextricably linked to her parents' homeland and Honduran culture. Speaking Spanish at home, having Saturday-morning-salsa-dance-parties in the kitchen, and eating tamales alongside apple pie at Christmas never seemed at odds with her American identity. Still, she yearned to see that identity reflected in the larger American narrative. Now, in *American Like Me*, America invites thirty-one of her friends, peers, and heroes to share their stories about life between cultures. We know them as actors, comedians, athletes, politicians, artists, and writers. However, they are also immigrants, children or grandchildren of immigrants, indigenous people, or people who otherwise grew up with deep and personal connections to more than one culture. Each of them struggled to establish a sense of self, find belonging, and feel seen. And they call themselves American enthusiastically, reluctantly, or not at all. Ranging from the heartfelt to the hilarious, their stories shine a light on a quintessentially American experience and will appeal to anyone with a complicated relationship to family, culture, and growing up.

In its simplest distillation, *How the Word is Passed* is the story of Clint Smith's visits to seven places that the work and lives of enslaved people built. Those places are Monticello in Virginia; Angola Prison in Louisiana; the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana; Blandford Cemetery in Virginia; Galveston, Texas, where the first Juneteenth was celebrated; Wall Street; and Goree Island, Senegal. *How the Word is Passed* is much more than a travelogue. What Clint Smith does is show us how the history of slavery is not only relevant today but alive today. He does this by revealing how slavery is hidden in plain sight, introducing us to the men and women who have devoted their lives to understanding what so many of us do not know and, finally, by

letting us walk in his shoes as he learns these truths. It is important to briefly describe what this book is not - it is not a polemic, or another work of politics. It is not a sad procession of black death, or a weighty historical tome. *What How the Word is Passed* is the living, breathing kind of history that is made unforgettable in the telling.

Writing from the perspective of a friend, Frederick Joseph offers candid reflections on his own experiences with racism and conversations with prominent artists and activists about theirs—creating an essential read for white people who are committed anti-racists and those newly come to the cause of racial justice. “We don’t see color.” “I didn’t know Black people liked Star Wars!” “What hood are you from?” For Frederick Joseph, life as a transfer student in a largely white high school was full of wince-worthy moments that he often simply let go. As he grew older, however, he saw these as missed opportunities not only to stand up for himself, but to spread awareness to those white people who didn’t see the negative impact they were having. Speaking directly to the reader, *The Black Friend* calls up race-related anecdotes from the author’s past, weaving in his thoughts on why they were hurtful and how he might handle things differently now. Each chapter features the voice of at least one artist or activist, including Angie Thomas, author of *The Hate U Give*; April Reign, creator of #OscarsSoWhite; Jemele Hill, sports journalist and podcast host; and eleven others. Touching on everything from cultural appropriation to power dynamics, “reverse racism” to white privilege, microaggressions to the tragic results of overt racism, this book serves as conversation starter, tool kit, and invaluable window into the life of a former “token Black kid” who now presents himself as the friend many readers need. Backmatter includes an encyclopedia of racism, providing details on relevant historical events, terminology, and more.

“Olivarez steps into the ‘inbetween’ standing between Mexico and America in these compelling, emotional poems. Written with humor and sincerity” (*Newsweek*). Named a Best Book of the Year by *Newsweek* and NPR. In this “devastating debut” (*Publishers Weekly*), poet José Olivarez explores the stories, contradictions, joys, and sorrows that embody life in the spaces between Mexico and America. He paints vivid portraits of good kids, bad kids, families clinging to hope, life after the steel mills, gentrifying barrios, and everything in between. Drawing on the rich traditions of Latinx and Chicago writers like Sandra Cisneros and Gwendolyn Brooks, Olivarez creates a home out of life in the in-between. Combining wry humor with potent emotional force, Olivarez takes on complex issues of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and immigration using an everyday language that invites the reader in, with a unique voice that makes him a poet to watch. “The son of Mexican immigrants, Olivarez celebrates his Mexican-American identity and examines how those two sides conflict in a striking collection of poems.” —*USA Today*

The poignant, “powerful” (*The Boston Globe*) look at how to appreciate life from an extraordinary professor who teaches about death: “Poetic passages and assorted revelations you’ll likely not forget” (*Chicago Tribune*). Why does a college course on death have a three-year waiting list? When nurse Norma Bowe decided to teach a course on death at a college in New Jersey, she never expected it to be popular. But year after year students crowd into her classroom, and the reason is clear: Norma’s “death class” is really about how to make the most of what poet Mary Oliver famously called our “one wild and precious life.” Under the guise of discussions about last wills and last breaths and visits to cemeteries and crematoriums, Norma teaches her students to find grace in one another. In *The Death Class*, award-winning journalist Erika Hayasaki followed Norma for more than four years, showing how she steers four extraordinary students from their tormented families and neighborhoods toward happiness: she rescues one young woman from her suicidal mother, helps a young man manage his schizophrenic brother, and inspires another to leave his gang life behind. Through this unorthodox class on death, Norma helps kids who are barely hanging on to understand not only the value of their own lives, but also the secret of fulfillment: to throw

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yourself into helping others. Hayasaki's expert reporting and literary prose bring Norma's wisdom out of the classroom, transforming it into an inspiring lesson for all. In the end, Norma's very own life—and how she lives it—is the lecture that sticks. “Readers will come away struck by Bowe's compassion—and by the unexpectedly life-affirming messages of courage that spring from her students' harrowing experiences” (Entertainment Weekly).

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