

2019 OBCB History and Cultures

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History and Cultures Titles

Achorn, Edward. Every Drop of Blood: Hatred and Healing at Abraham Lincoln's Second Inauguration. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2020.

Achorn weaves together the stories of the host of characters that had converged on Washington, from grievously wounded Union colonel Selden Connor in a Washington hospital, embarrassingly drunk new vice president Andrew Johnson, and poet-journalist Walt Whitman, to soldiers' advocate Clara Barton, African American leader Frederick Douglass (who called the speech "a sacred effort"), and conflicted actor John Wilkes Booth, all swirling around the complex figure of Lincoln.

Aslan, Reza. God: A Human History. Random House, 2017.

Aslan illuminates the rich history of religion from cave paintings through the founding of modern religions. Throughout, he explores the tendency to ascribe human features to spiritual beings in order to explore what is universal about religious belief.

Backderf, Derf. Kent State: Four Dead in Ohio. Abrams Comicarts, 2020.

The story of the Kent State shootings of May 4, 1970 is told through the eyes of the victims and the deep research of comic artist Derf Backderf.

Berry, Julie. Lovely War. Viking, 2019.

The goddess of love, caught in the arms of the god of war, spins a tale of four humans in love during WWI to convince her jealous husband, the god of fire, that love is an art worthy of admiration.

Butler, Octavia and Duffy, Damien. Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation. Harry N. Abrams, 2018.

In this well-done adaptation of the classic, Dana fights for her life as she is mysteriously forced back into Antebellum times to save her relatives, slave and slave owner, from harm so that she will ultimately be born in the future.

Cullen, Dave. Parkland: Birth of a Movement. Harper, 2019.

Rather than focusing on the shooter(s) as he did with his earlier Columbine, Cullen instead focuses on the survivors of this devastating school shooting and how they turned their tragedy into activism.

Dionne, Evette. Lifting as We Climb: Black Women's Battle for the Ballot Box. Viking Books for Young Readers, 2020.

Through history and biography interludes, Dionne names the Black women suffragists who history has all but forgotten and recounts their roles in the fight for women's right to vote.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. An Indigenous people's History of the United States. Beacon Press, 2015.

This book opens by challenging the standard tale of the "discovering" of America. It addresses conflicting cultural concepts of private property and extractive industries, land conservation and environmental rights,

social activism, the definition of what it means to be "civilized," and the role of the media in shaping perceptions. There is a young reader's adaptation that is well-suited to grades 7-10. Each version is eye-opening and thought provoking.

Fitzgerald, Tom and Marquez, Lorenzo. *Legendary Children: The First Decade of RuPaul's Drag Race and the Last Century of Queer Life.* Penguin, 2020.

Using RuPaul's Drag Race as a framing device, bloggers and fashion experts Tom and Lorenzo impart an immense amount of queer history. Household names and little-known pioneers are given equal heft along with some of the most well-known competitors of the titular reality show.

Graff, Garrett M. *The Only Plane in the Sky: An Oral History of 9/11.* Avid Reader Press, 2019.

An unflinching and vivid minute-by-minute account of 9/11 told by the ones who lived through it.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo."* Amistad, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2018.

One of America's great authors stayed three months with 86-year-old Cudjo Lewis, interviewing him about his slave ship voyage from Africa and his enslavement in Alabama in the last years of the Civil War. Hurston's manuscript is an invaluable contribution to our shared history and culture.

Kendi, Ibram X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America.* Bold Type Books, 2016.

A National Book Award-winning work that comprehensively traces the history and evolution of racism and racist ideas in America. Kendi effectively shows how these ideas were created to rationalize and promote inequality, and how they can be dismantled.

Keefe, Patrick Radden. *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland.* Doubleday, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2019.

The killing of a mother in Northern Ireland becomes a story of terrorism, hunger strikes, politics and outrunning your past. This extremely well-researched account uses plentiful interviews and primary sources.

Khorram, Adib. *Darius the Great is Not Okay.* Dial Books, 2018.

A teen boy, who feels split between his American and Persian identities and suffers from clinical depression, finds unexpected friendship and self-understanding while visiting family in Iran.

King, Charles. *Gods of the Upper Air: How a Circle of Renegade Anthropologists Reinvented Race, Sex, and Gender in the Twentieth Century.* DoubleDay Books, 2019.

King traces the life of the father of cultural anthropology, Franz Boas, and some of the notable women he mentored, including Margaret Mead and Zora Neal Hurston. Boas' work aimed to dispel the narrative that cultures ranged from "primitive" to "advanced" and encouraged anthropologists to remove their own biases when learning about new cultures.

Lewis, John. *March, Books 1-3.* Top Shelf Productions, 2013, 2015, 2016.

Congressman John Lewis was an integral leader of the Civil Rights movement, and this graphic memoir trilogy showcases his struggles and successes in fighting for justice and freedom for all Black Americans.

Mafi, Tahereh. *A Very Large Expanse of Sea.* HarperTeen, 2019.

Being the new girl at school is hard enough, but being the new Muslim girl at school a year after 9/11 is brutal. Shirin has built up emotional walls to protect herself from all of the hate, but when Ocean shows interest in getting to know her, will she let her defenses down?

Majumdar, Megha. *A Burning*. Knopf, 2020.

Majumdar's visionary debut is set in Bengal, India, and is told in the voices of Jivan, a suspect in a train bombing, and her transgender neighbor and alibi Lovely. This timely novel reflects the volatile political situation in India, while also casting a critical eye on social media and its harmful effects.

Noah, Trevor. *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*. Quill Tree Books, 2018.

Daily Show's Trevor Noah shares his powerful story of growing up in South Africa when his existence was considered an actual crime.

Ortiz, Paul. *An African American and Latinx History of the United States*. Beacon Press, 2018.

Ortiz skillfully places the intersecting movements for African American and Latinx civil rights at the center of the history of the Americas. This timely study of the last 200 years helps today's readers understand persisting issues while inspiring solidarity across the Americas.

Richardson, Kristen. *The Season: A Social History of the Debutante*. W.W. Norton, 2019.

Being a debutante wasn't just wearing a beautiful dress in beautiful surroundings; it was often a political or financial charade, simply the duty of a daughter of the wealthy. Richardson's timeline travels from Elizabethan England to present day America. A little studied topic in women's history.

Sepetys, Ruta. *Fountains of Silence*. Philomel Books, 2019.

Through the eyes of a young man who is the heir to a Texas oil fortune, Sepetys examines the Franco regime in 1950s Spain. Family, love, death, poverty, and brief moments of joy reign in this novel about a little-talked about time in history.

Takei, George. *They Called Us Enemy*. Top Shelf Productions, 2019.

George Takei opens up about his experiences as a young child when he and his family were forced to move into an Internment Camp during the 1940s in this powerful graphic memoir.

Wang, John. *The World Eats Here: International Street Food and Home Cooking-Recipes and Their Stories from the Queens Night Market*. The Experiment, 2020.

In his cookbook inspired by a neighborhood street market, Wang includes the stories of the diverse people who make the food along with their recipes.

Ward, Peter. *The Clean Body: A Modern History*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019.

Ward provides a fascinating history of hygiene on the European and North American continents from bathing to laundering.