

## RECOMMENDED NEXT READS

**"I ripped through this memoir like it was the most erudite romance novel in the world. This is a truly compelling look at sexuality, marriage, and parenthood in this century." – Emma Straub, *New York Times* bestselling author**

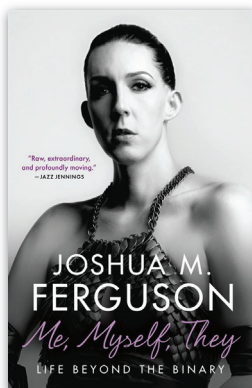
If you, like Emma Straub and us at hoopla, ripped through Molly Wizenberg's memoir and were left breathless for a new compelling read...we've got it! Here we explore various themes threaded through *The Fixed Stars*. Find the theme you're hungriest to further explore, and read across the row to find your new favorite.

View the full collection here: <https://www.hoopladigital.com/collection/10945>



## LGBTQ+ VOICES: BIOGRAPHY, MEMOIR, AND MAKING HISTORY

From individual journeys to the history of the greater LGBTQ+ community, these true stories shed light on shared experiences and personal journeys.



### ME, MYSELF, THEY BY JOSHUA M. FERGUSON

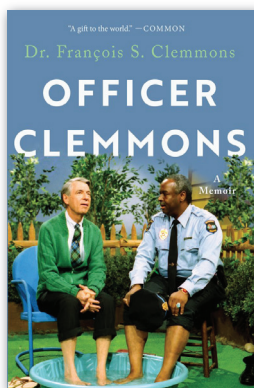
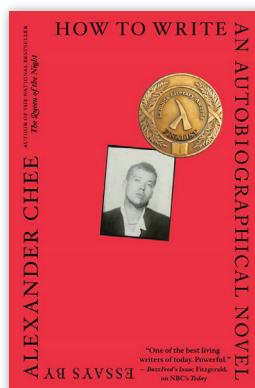
On May 7, 2018, Joshua M. Ferguson made history by becoming the first person to receive a non-binary birth certificate with an "X" designation in the province of Ontario. This memoir recounts the tumultuous evolution of their identity, including traumatizing experiences with gender conversion therapy, bullying, depression, sexual assault, and violent physical assault. But Ferguson's journey is above all about survival, transformation, and self-acceptance. *Me, Myself, They* is a powerful, honest, and inspirational memoir that explains what it feels like to never truly fit into the prescribed roles of boy or girl, woman or man.

### HOW TO WRITE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL BY ALEXANDER CHEE

Winner of the Publishing Triangle's Randy Shilts Award for Gay Nonfiction \* Recipient of the Lambda Literary Trustees' Award \* Finalist for a Lambda Literary Award for Gay Memoir/Biography  
As a novelist, Alexander Chee has been described as "masterful" by Roxane Gay, "incendiary" by the *New York Times*, and "brilliant" by the *Washington Post*. His first collection of nonfiction is a manifesto on the entangling of life, literature, and politics, and how the lessons learned from a life spent reading and writing fiction have changed him. In these essays, he grows from student to teacher, reader to writer, and reckons with his identities as a son, a gay man, a Korean American, an artist, an activist, a lover, and a friend.

### OFFICER CLEMMONS BY FRANÇOIS CLEMMONS

When he earned his role on the award-winning television series *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, a new, wide world opened for



Francois Clemmons—but one which also required him to make painful personal choices and sacrifices. *Officer Clemmons* details his incredible life story, from his early years in Alabama and Ohio through his studies as a music major at Oberlin College, where he began to investigate and embrace his homosexuality, to a chance encounter with Fred Rogers which changed the whole course of both men's lives, leading to a deep, spiritual friendship and mentorship spanning nearly forty years.

### MEAN BY MYRIAM GURBA

True crime, memoir, and ghost story, *Mean* is the bold and hilarious tale of Myriam Gurba's coming of age as a queer, mixed-race Chicana. Blending radical formal fluidity and caustic humor, Gurba takes on sexual violence, small towns, and race, turning what might be tragic into piercing, revealing comedy. This is a confident, intoxicating, brassy book that takes the cost of sexual assault, racism, misogyny, and homophobia deadly seriously.

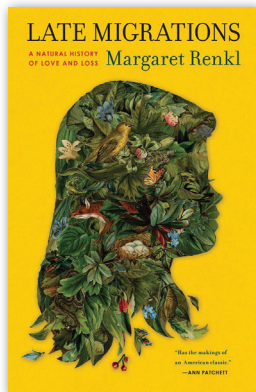
### QUEER, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE BY SARAH PRAGER, ZOE MORE O'FERRALL

Queer author and activist Sarah Prager delves deep into the lives of 23 people who fought, created, and loved on their own terms. From high-profile figures like Abraham Lincoln and Eleanor Roosevelt to the trailblazing gender-ambiguous Queen of Sweden and a bisexual blues singer who didn't make it into your history books, these astonishing true stories uncover a rich queer heritage that encompasses every culture, in every era. By turns hilarious and inspiring, the beautifully illustrated *Queer, There, and Everywhere* is for anyone who wants the real story of the queer rights movement.

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## MODERN FAMILY

Family can be a group we are born into or a group we choose. Here, we present family rendered in both fiction and real life—a kaleidoscope of arrangements that shows endless options to the familial orbit.



### **LATE MIGRATIONS** BY MARGARET RENKL

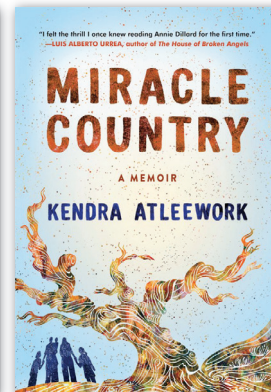
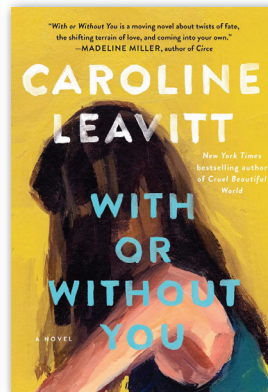
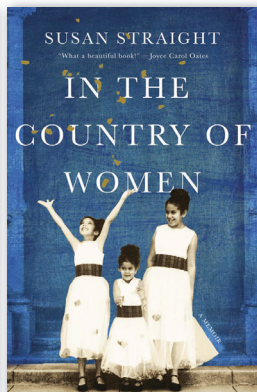
Growing up in Alabama, Margaret Renkl was a devoted reader, an explorer of riverbeds and red-dirt roads, and a fiercely loved daughter. Here, in brief essays, she traces a tender and honest portrait of her complicated parents—her exuberant, creative mother; her steady, supportive father—and of the bittersweet moments that accompany a child's transition to caregiver. And here, braided into the overall narrative, Renkl offers observations on the world surrounding her suburban Nashville home. Ringing with rapture and heartache, these essays convey the dignity of bluebirds and rat snakes, monarch butterflies and native bees. As these two threads haunt and harmonize with each other, Renkl suggests that there is astonishment to be found in common things: in what seems ordinary, in what we all share.

### **CROOKED HALLELUJAH** BY KELLI JO FORD

*Crooked Hallelujah* tells the stories of Justine—a mixed-blood Cherokee woman—and her daughter, Reney, as they move from Eastern Oklahoma's Indian Country in the hopes of starting a new, more stable life in Texas amid the oil bust of the 1980s. However, life in Texas isn't easy, and Reney feels unmoored from her family in Indian Country. Against the vivid backdrop of the Red River, we see their struggle to survive in a world—of unreliable men and near-Biblical natural forces, like wildfires and tornados—intent on stripping away their connections to one another and their very ideas of home.

### **IN THE COUNTRY OF WOMEN** BY SUSAN STRAIGHT

A Pakistani word, *biraderi*, is one Susan Straight uses to define a complex system of kinship and clan—those who become your family. In inland Southern California, Straight, a self-proclaimed book nerd, and Dwayne Sims, an African-American basketball player, started dating in high school. At driveway barbecues and fish fries with the large, close-knit Sims family, Straight heard for decades the stories of Dwayne's female ancestors. Some women escaped violence in post-slavery Tennessee, some escaped murder in Jim Crow Mississippi, and some fled abusive men.



Straight's mother-in-law, Alberta Sims, is the descendant at the heart of this memoir. Susan's family, too, reflects the hardship and resilience of women pushing onward—from Switzerland, Canada, and the Colorado Rockies to California.

### **WITH OR WITHOUT YOU** BY CAROLINE LEAVITT

After almost twenty years together, Stella and Simon are starting to run into problems. An up-and-coming rock musician when they first met, Simon has been clinging to dreams of fame even as the possibility of it has grown dimmer, and now that his band might finally be on the brink again, he wants to go on the road, leaving Stella behind. But when she falls into a coma on the eve of his departure, he has to make a choice between stardom and his wife—and when she wakes a different person, with an incredible artistic talent of her own, the two of them must examine what it is that they really want.

### **MIRACLE COUNTRY** BY KENDRA ATLEWORK

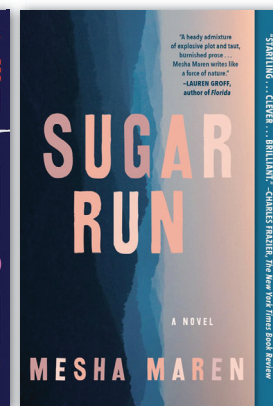
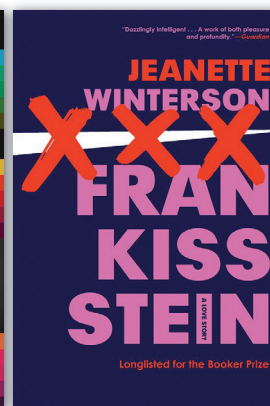
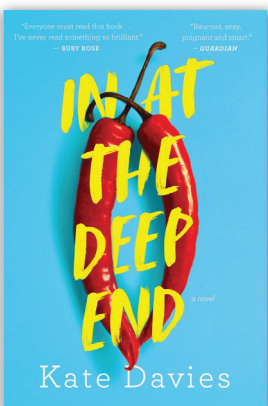
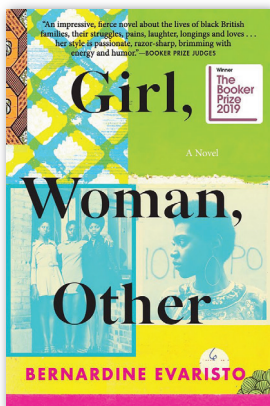
Kendra Atleework grew up in the Owens Valley of the Eastern Sierra Nevada, where annual rainfall averages five inches and in drought years measures closer to zero. Kendra's family raised her to thrive in this harsh landscape, forever at the mercy of wildfires, blizzards, and gale-force winds. But it came at a price. When Kendra was six, her mother was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease, and she died when Kendra was sixteen. Kendra took flight from her bereft family, escaping to the enemy city of Los Angeles, and then Minneapolis. But after years of avoiding the pain of her hometown, she realized that she had to go back, that the desert was the only place she could live. Like *Wild*, *Miracle Country* is a story of flight and return, bounty and emptiness, and the true meaning of home.

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## LGBTQ+ READS: FICTION

These fictional reads from LGBTQ+ authors feature clever, compelling characters, coming out stories, and homecomings.



### **GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER** BY BERNADINE EVARISTO

The twelve central characters of this multi-voiced novel lead vastly different lives. From a nonbinary social media influencer to a 93-year-old woman living on a farm in Northern England, these unforgettable characters also intersect in shared aspects of their identities, from age to race to sexuality to class. Sparklingly witty and filled with emotion, centering voices we often see othered, and written in an innovative, fast-moving form that borrows technique from poetry, *Girl, Woman, Other* shows a side of Britain we rarely see, one that reminds us of all that connects us to our neighbors, even in times when we are encouraged to be split apart.

### **IN AT THE DEEP END** BY KATE DAVIES

When Julia gets invited to a warehouse party in a part of town where trendy people go on a Friday night, she readily accepts. And when she meets someone—a figurative artist who also happens to be a woman—Julia's awakening begins. Guided by her new lover Sam, she soon discovers London's gay bars and clubs...and the complexities of polyamory. Soon it becomes clear that Sam needs to call the shots, and Julia's newfound liberation comes to bear a suspicious resemblance to entrapment. *In at the Deep End* is an unforgettable and audacious odyssey through the pitfalls and seductions we encounter on the treacherous path to love and self.

### **THE PRETTIEST STAR** BY CARTER SICKELS

At eighteen, Brian, like so many other promising young gay men, arrived in New York City without much more than a love for the freedom and release from his past that it promised. But within six short years, AIDS would claim his lover, his friends, and his future. With nothing left in New York but memories of death, Brian writes his mother a letter asking to come back to the place, and family, he was once so desperate to escape.

Set in 1986, a year after Rock Hudson's death shifted the public consciousness of the epidemic and brought the news of AIDS into living rooms and kitchens across America, *The Prettiest Star* is an urgent story now: it a novel about the politics and fragility

of the body; it is a novel about sex and shame. And it is a novel that speaks to the question of what home and family mean when we try to forge a life for ourselves in a world that can be harsh and unpredictable.

### **FRANKISSSTEIN** BY JEANETTE WINTERSON

Lake Geneva, 1816. Nineteen-year-old Mary Shelley is inspired to write a story about a scientist who creates a new life-form. In Brexit Britain, a young transgender doctor called Ry is falling in love with Victor Stein, a celebrated professor leading the public debate around AI and carrying out some experiments of his own. Meanwhile, Ron Lord, just divorced and living with his mom again, is set to make his fortune launching dolls for lonely men everywhere. Across the Atlantic, in Phoenix, a cryogenics facility houses dozens of bodies of men and women who are medically and legally dead...but waiting to return to life. What will happen when homo sapiens is no longer the smartest being on the planet? In fiercely intelligent prose, Jeanette Winterson shows us how much closer we are to that future than we realize.

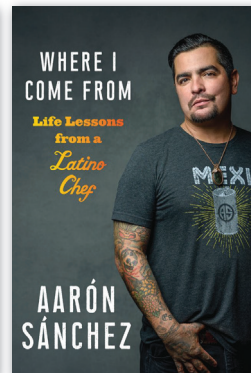
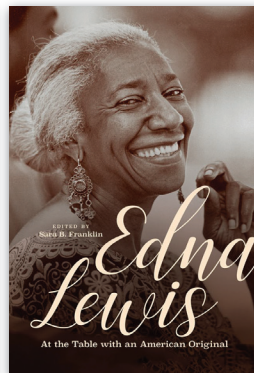
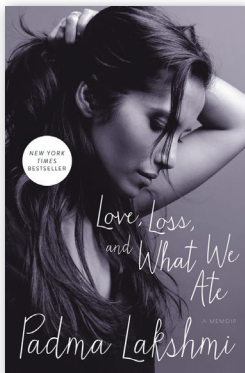
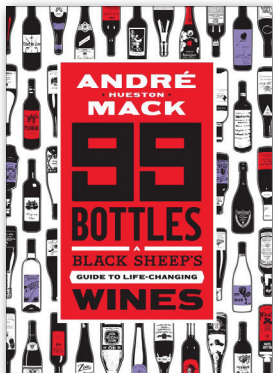
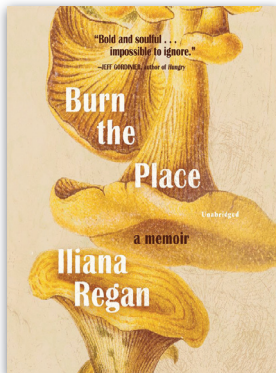
### **SUGAR RUN** BY MESHA MAREN

In 1989, Jodi McCarty is seventeen years old when she's sentenced to life in prison for manslaughter. She's released eighteen years later and finds herself at a Greyhound bus stop, reeling from the shock of unexpected freedom. Not yet able to return to her lost home in the Appalachian Mountains, she goes searching for someone she left behind, but on the way, she meets and falls in love with Miranda, a troubled young mother. Together, they try to make a fresh start, but is that even possible in a town that refuses to change? Set within the charged insularity of rural West Virginia, *Sugar Run* is a searing and gritty debut about making a run for another life.

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## KITCHEN TALES

*Delancey*—Molly's second book—was a *New York Times* bestseller, and with good reason. People love kitchen stories. If you're one of them, tuck into this collection of our favorite chefs' chronicles.



### **BURN THE PLACE** BY ILIANA REGAN

Regan has always had an intense, almost otherworldly connection with food and earth. Connecting with people, however, has always been harder. As she learned to cook, got her first job in a professional kitchen at age fifteen, taught herself cutting-edge cuisine while running her "new forager" underground supper club, and worked her way from front-of-house staff to running her own kitchen, Regan often felt that she "wasn't made for this world." She was a little girl who longed to be a boy, gay in an intolerant community, an alcoholic before she turned twenty, a woman in an industry dominated by men. *Burn the Place* will introduce listeners to an important new voice from the American culinary scene, an underrepresented perspective from the professional kitchen, and a young star chef whose prose is as memorable and deserving of praise as her food.

### **99 BOTTLES** BY ANDRE HUESTON MACK

In this entertaining, informative, and thoroughly unconventional wine guide, award-winning sommelier, winemaker, and wine educator Andre Mack presents readers with the 99 bottles that have most impacted his life. Instead of just pairing wines with foods, Mack pairs practical information with personal stories, offering up recommendations alongside reflections on being one of the only African Americans to ever work at the top level of the American wine industry. The 99 bottles range from highly accessible commercial wines to the most rarefied Bordeaux on the wine list at the French Laundry, and each bottle offers readers something to learn about wine.

### **LOVE, LOSS, AND WHAT WE ATE** BY PADMA LAKSHMI

Long before Padma Lakshmi ever stepped onto a television set, she learned that how we eat is an extension of how we love, how we comfort, how we forge a sense of home—and how we taste the world as we navigate our way through it. Shuttling between continents as a child, she lived a life of dislocation that would become habit as an adult, never quite at home in the world. And yet, through all her travels, her favorite food remained the simple rice she first ate sitting on the cool floor of her grandmother's

kitchen in South India. Poignant and surprising, *Love, Loss, and What We Ate* is Lakshmi's extraordinary account of her journey from that humble kitchen, ruled by ferocious and unforgettable women, to the judges' table of *Top Chef* and beyond.

### **EDNA LEWIS** BY VARIOUS AUTHORS

Edna Lewis (1916-2006) wrote some of America's most resonant, lyrical, and significant cookbooks, including the now classic *The Taste of Country Cooking*. Lewis cooked and wrote as a means to explore her memories of childhood on a farm in Freetown, Virginia, a community first founded by Black families freed from slavery. After living many years in New York City, where she became a chef and a political activist, she returned to the South and continued to write. Her reputation as a trailblazer in the revival of regional cooking and as a progenitor of the farm-to-table movement continues to grow. In this first-ever critical appreciation of Lewis's work, food world stars gather to reveal their own encounters with her.

### **WHERE I COME FROM** BY AARON SANCHEZ

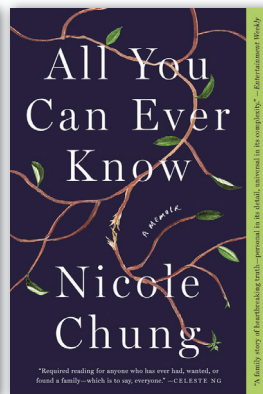
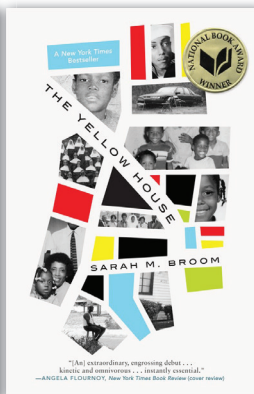
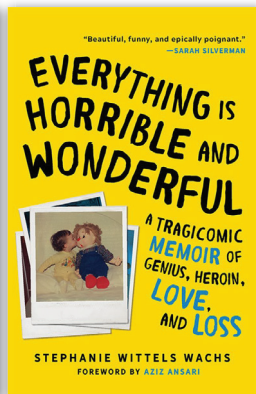
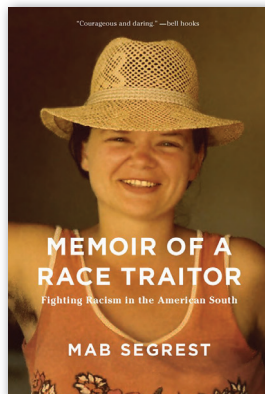
Before Chef Aaron Sanchez rose to fame on shows like *MasterChef* and *Chopped*, he was a restless Mexican-American son, raised by a fiercely determined and talented woman who was a successful chef and restaurateur in her own right. In this memoir, Sanchez delves into his formative years with remarkable candor, injecting his story with adrenaline and revealing how he fell in love with cooking and started a career in the fast-paced culinary world. It is Sanchez's highly personal account of a fatherless Latino kid whose talent and passion took him to the top of his profession.

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## MOVING MEMOIRS

Molly Wizenberg writes so relatably in *The Fixed Stars* that we feel as if we are getting to know her as she gets to know herself. Here are a handful of memoirs to dig into next on hoopla that will give you the very same feeling.



### **MEMOIR OF A RACE TRAITOR** BY MAB SEGREST

In 1994, Mab Segrest first explained how she "had become a woman haunted by the dead." Against a backdrop of nine generations of her family's history, Segrest explored her experiences in the 1980s as a white lesbian organizing against a virulent far-right movement in North Carolina. *Memoir of a Race Traitor* became a classic text of white antiracist practice. Now, amid our current national crisis driven by an increasingly apocalyptic white supremacist movement, Segrest returns with an updated edition of her classic book. With brand new power and relevance, this is a book that far transcends its genre.

### **EVERYTHING IS HORRIBLE AND WONDERFUL**

#### BY STEPHANIE WITTELS WACHS

One phone call. That's all it took to change Stephanie Wittels Wachs's life forever. Her younger brother Harris, a star in the comedy world, had died of a heroin overdose. How do you make sense of such a tragic end to a life of so much hilarious brilliance? In beautiful, unsentimental, and surprisingly funny prose, Stephanie Wittels Wachs alternates between her brother's struggle with addiction, which she learned about three days before her wedding, and the first year after his death, in all its emotional devastation.

### **THE YELLOW HOUSE** BY SARAH M. BROOM

A book of great ambition, Sarah M. Broom's *The Yellow House* tells a hundred years of her family and their relationship to home in a neglected area of New Orleans, one of America's most mythologized cities. This is the story of a mother's struggle against a house's entropy, and that of a prodigal daughter who left home only to reckon with the pull that home exerts, even after the Yellow House was wiped off the map after Hurricane Katrina. Located in the gap between the "Big Easy" of tourist guides and the New Orleans in which Broom was raised, *The Yellow House* is a brilliant memoir of place, class, race, the seeping rot of inequality, and the internalized shame that often follows.

### **NINE MOONS** BY GABRIELA WIENER

Gabriela Wiener is not one to shy away from unpleasant truths or to balk at a challenge. So at 30, when she gets unexpectedly pregnant, she looks forward to the experience the way a mountain climber approaches a precipitous peak. With a scientist's curiosity and a libertine's unbridled imagination, Wiener hungrily devours every scrap of information and misinformation she encounters during the nine months of her pregnancy. With unguarded humor and breathtaking directness, *Nine Moons* questions the dogmas, upends the stereotypes, and embraces all the terror, beauty, and paradoxes of the propagation of the species.

### **ALL YOU CAN EVER KNOW** BY NICOLE CHUNG

Nicole Chung was born prematurely, placed for adoption by her Korean parents, and raised by a white family in a sheltered Oregon town. From childhood, she heard the story of her adoption as a comforting, prepackaged myth. She believed that her biological parents had made the ultimate sacrifice in the hope of giving her a better life, that forever feeling slightly out of place was her fate as a transracial adoptee. But as Nicole grew up—facing prejudice her adoptive family couldn't see, finding her identity as an Asian American and as a writer, becoming ever more curious about where she came from—she wondered if the story she'd been told was the whole truth.