

Aguon, Julian. *No Country for Eight-Spot Butterflies: A Lyric Essay*. Astra House. ISBN 9781662601637.

Climate activist Aguon expertly intersects environmental justice with Indigenous rights in this heartfelt, cogent collection of prose and poetry. In only 128 pages, readers are informed, inspired, and hopefully ignited to boldly do their part to improve the world.

Bush, Cori. *The Forerunner: A Story of Pain and Perseverance in America*. Knopf. ISBN 9780593320587.

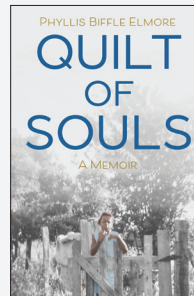
This memoir from the first Black woman from Missouri elected to represent her state in Congress is the epitome of what can happen if one follows their desire to actually do something about injustices in the United States. It's a call to action, told in first person, that openly displays the reality and struggles many Black people face daily.

Chaudry, Rabia. *Fatty Fatty Boom Boom: A Memoir of Food, Fat, and Family*. Algonquin. ISBN 9781643750385.

Chaudry's book is highly relatable to anyone who has ever thought about their relationship with food and the power its consumption has on one's self-image and others' perceptions of one's intake and body image. Intimate and honest, this memoir compels readers to root for the author—and maybe even for themselves.

Elmore, Phyllis Biffle. *Quilt of Souls*. Imagine. ISBN 9781623545161.

Elmore, in vivid portrayals of extraordinary Black women born shortly before and after the Civil War, pays dazzling tribute to the storytellers, quilters, and healers in her family. This book doesn't stop at examining racism and sexism; it



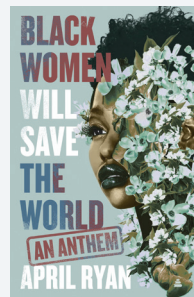
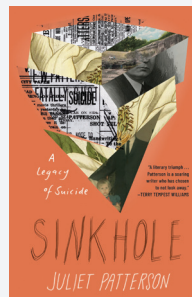
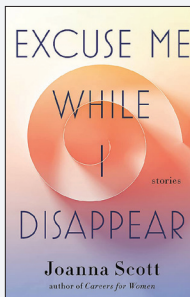
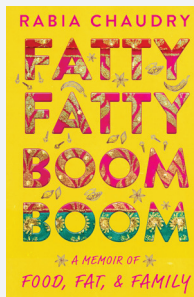
MEMOIRS

BY JILL COX-CORDOVA

also paints accounts of strength and pride in an exquisite big picture of history and its relation to the present.

Notaro, Laurie. *Excuse Me While I Disappear: Tales of Midlife Mayhem*. Little A. ISBN 9781542033503.

disturbing pattern in her family, many of whose men (her father and both of her grandfathers) die by suicide. She makes a heartbreaking, haunting, and tremendously touching argument for openly discussing the painful realities that few want to talk about or remember.



A great pick for readers seeking a laugh. Notaro has a fascinating perspective on why gray hair should be viewed as a superpower; after all, everyone must age, and this book offers laugh-out-loud reasons why society should welcome that.

Patterson, Juliet. *Sinkhole: A Legacy of Suicide*. Milkweed. ISBN 9781571311764.

Patterson looks head-on at the

Ryan, April. *Black Women Will Save the World: An Anthem*. Amistad. ISBN 9780063210196.

It's fitting that journalist Ryan, a trailblazer herself, is the author of this book that provides numerous examples of the Black women—sheroes, as she calls them—who, like her, have refused to stay in the boxes that society tries to keep them in. Instead, they've risked much to use their tal-

ents, voices, and grit to make the world better—and not just for themselves. This is a remarkable tribute and history lesson for all audiences.

Samuels, Robert & Toluse Olorunnipa. *His Name Is George Floyd: One Man's Life and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. Viking. ISBN 9780593490617.

All the world knows about George Floyd's murder. Samuels and Olorunnipa conducted hundreds of interviews with Floyd's family and friends to show readers Floyd as a three-dimensional man. This landmark biography also puts the systemic racism Floyd endured his entire life on full, unflinching display.

Shakur, Prince. *When They Tell You To Be Good*. Tin House. ISBN 9781953534422.

Shakur explores the depths of the Black experience in this riveting exploration of what it means to live in a society that envisions so little for

its oppressed. Young, Black, and queer, Shakur puts his self-realization, his reckoning about identity, and his observations about immigration on the page for all to see. What a wonderful and bold voice.

Walker, Alice. *Gathering Blossoms Under Fire: The Journals of Alice Walker*. S. & S. ed. by Valerie Boyd. ISBN 9781476773155.

In this unprecedented work, readers are given the rare treat of significant insight into literary legend Walker. The journal entries are a dynamic blend of Walker's thoughts, dreams, experiences, and work as a Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, civil rights activist, wife, lover, mother, daughter, and observer of the world. The result is a stunning picture of a complex, vibrant woman.

