FICTION

All the Ugly and Wonderful Things by Bryn Greenwood: A little girl growing up in a world of drugs and neglect, manages to find one friend that makes all the difference. The excellent writing draws you into a world that is dangerous, shocking and unexpectedly touching. Read with an open mind. Linda

American War by Omar El Akkad
An account of the second Civil War in a near future where the oceans have risen, fossil fuels are gone, and extreme weather has ravaged the southern United States. We follow Sarat Chestnut as her family flees from the fighting into a refugee camp where she then grows up into a woman shaped by her experiences and desperate to protect her family. This book spells out a possibility of a not so distant future and draws real world parallels to things that are happening today. The world building is excellent and makes you want to learn more about this bleak future. Talia

The Circle by David Eggers: What begins as the captivating story of one woman’s ambition and idealism soon becomes a heart-racing story of suspense, raising many questions. I read this in anticipation of the movie, and found it quite interesting, engaging, and pertinent to our current technological situations. Davonne

Gilded Cage by Vic James: In a parallel fantasy universe, there are two kinds of people – aristocrats with magical gifts and commoners with no magic. In England, an agreement has commoners serving as slaves for 10 years. Gilded Cage follows one family as they begin their slave years, as well as the beginnings of a revolution between the aristocrats and common people. Vic James’ world building in this book is fantastic and creates a realistic alternate reality. While based in England, the people with magic and those without exist all over the world and some mention is made as to how other countries deal with the inequality of it all. I am looking forward to the next books in the series. Talia

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas (Teen): A riveting and thoughtful story from the perspective of teen protagonist, Starr, who witnesses a police officer fatally shoot her childhood friend, Khalil, during a traffic stop. Starr’s narrative provides a deeply personal exploration of life during and after a devastating experience, providing understanding of events that most of us only hear about briefly on the news. This book is worthy of a re-read. Davonne

House at the Edge of Night by Catherine Banner: A family saga set on a small island called Castellamare, off the shore of Sicily, which covers 90 years in a family history. Beginning in 1917 with a young doctor coming to the island to start a practice, find a wife and raise a family, and ending with the 2008 Great Recession, this is a pleasant, easy read with excellent character development, a captivating story, and a beautiful cover as icing on the cake. Audrey

Keeper of Lost Things by Ruth Hogan: Have you ever found something lying about in an odd place? Do you wonder, how it got there? Ruth Hogan has written the story of these seemingly insignificant objects and the curiosity they provoke. In this debut novel, Hogan has woven a dream catcher of love and endless possibilities. She asks of us, what is possible? Love lost or gained, opportunity taken or left unattained, dreams achieved or abandoned? Do we fly or fall? A genuinely heartwarming story of love, life and the ties that bind us. Janice

The Little Paris Bookshop by Nina George: While not a new book (2015), this is a story that transports the reader into the world of books and France and rivers and seeking. Jean Perdu (John Lost), a bookseller whose shop is on board a barge anchored on the Seine River in Paris, has been stuck in a world of grief for 21 years after being discarded by the woman he loved. It is the story of his reawakening to life, and his impulsive decision to cast off the barge and travel the Seine in search of his lost love. Beautiful prose created a lovely way to take an imaginary trip to France, filled with all the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and intriguing characters of that country. Judith
**My (Not So) Perfect Life by Sophie Kinsella:** Katie is trying to make it in the London marketing scene. Everyone around her seems so perfect and to have perfect lives. This book shows that even if someone has the perfect life on the outside, everyone is still dealing with things that might not be so perfect. What’s even better? It’s laugh-out-loud funny. The dialogue and situations are great and fun to read. *Talia*

**This Is How It Always Is by Laurie Frankel:** Penn and his wife Rosie are parents of 4 lively sons. They are hoping their next child will be a girl, but baby number 5 is another boy they name Claude. When Claude is three, he announces that he wants to be a girl when he grows up. Although his parents and older brothers unconditionally love and support the little one, now called Poppy, troubles arise in the wider world, and the family moves from Wisconsin to Seattle where they hope to raise their transgendered daughter in a more liberal environment. This novel, based on the author’s own experiences as a mother of a transgendered child, is in turns funny, poignant, and thought-provoking. A great character study of a family full of secrets. *Beth*

**Vinegar Girl by Anne Tyler:** A fast, fun read with quirky characters: Kate, Bunny, Louis, and Pyotr. Part of Hogarth’s Shakespeare project, the story is a modernized re-telling of Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew*, incorporating Tyler’s familial, domestic touches. *Davonne*

**The Woman Next Door by Yewande Omotoso:** Marion and Hortensia have lived next door to each other in an upscale community in Cape Town, South Africa, for 20 years, but the two octogenarians have never gotten along. Both are successful women with impressive careers, both have recently been widowed, and are living with questions, disappointments, and secrets. And each has something that the other deeply desires. When circumstances force the two women to depend on one another, we see subtle changes in their interactions and relationship. This is a warm and witty story of neighbors, a community and a country still grappling with the repercussions of apartheid. *Beth*

**X: A Novel by Ilyasah Shabazz and Kekla Magoon (Great Michigan Read):** This fictionalized version of the classic *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, co-written by his daughter Ilyasah Shabazz, flows quickly and offers insight into the mind of young Malcolm. *Davonne*

**NON-FICTION**

**Fast Into the Night by Debbie Clarke Moderow:** I love “man! That girl is one tough cookie!” books, and this is one of them. It chronicles a woman in her 50’s who takes on her second attempt at the Iditarod trail in a 1000 mile race with her sled dogs. Fatigue, sickness, frostbite and much more don’t stop this awesome athlete nor the 16 dogs she calls family. *Rebecca*

**No One Cares About Crazy People by Ron Powers:** The title says everything. If the civilization of society is measured by how it treats its most vulnerable citizens, then the United States has a long way to go. Powers had two sons – both diagnosed with schizophrenia. One killed himself, the other has survived. His research into the history of how societies have treated the mentally ill is thorough. The measured telling of his family’s experience is heart-breaking. The struggles those suffering from the disease face, as well as the families like his, to get help for their loved ones due to outmoded laws based on outmoded theories, is discouraging. This is a courageous and important book. *Judith*

**The Possibility Dogs: What I Learned from Second-Chance Rescues About Service, Hope, and Healing by Susannah Charleson:** Charleson owns a search and rescue golden retriever named Puzzle. After working a search that turned into a grizzly nightmare, she began to feel the symptoms of PTSD, and found that Puzzle helped her through them. This is a memoir of how the author learned to identify abandoned dogs with service potential, plucking them from shelters and training them to work with disabled human partners. I knew about therapy dogs, but I had no idea how they were trained or how to differentiate which dogs would be best for specific psychological disorders. I found the book enlightening and fascinating. *Judith*

**Solitude of Self: Thinking About Elizabeth Cady Stanton by Vivian Gornick:** A library patron returned this book to the Circulation Desk indicating that she found it an interesting read, and I quite agree. The progressive speeches and writings of Elizabeth Cady Stanton confirm that she was a strong, independent and intellectual woman well ahead of her time. Notably, as both an abolitionist and feminist proponent of Women’s Suffrage, she rejected the idea that women’s rights should wait until abolitionist ideas were realized. So many of these ideas remain relevant in 2017. *Davonne*