



News Release

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Library of Michigan Announces 2019 Michigan Notable Book Awards

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LANSING – Hockey, music, and mermaids are some of the themes in the list of Michigan Notable Books for 2019, released by the Library of Michigan.

This year's list of 20 titles are as diverse as the communities throughout the state.

The celebrated books encompass the entire Great Lakes basin from the 1970s Detroit music scene, to wild rice harvesting in Northern Michigan, to the history of Michigan's own beloved soft drink, Faygo.

"This intriguing collection of books represents a spectrum of Michigan's people, places and the history that makes our state unique," Interim State Superintendent Sheila Alles said about this year's list. "I'm continuously impressed by the ever-increasing strength and popularity of the Library of Michigan's Michigan Notable Book list. The abundance of quality writing generates more interest every year among bookstores, writers, libraries, and readers from all walks of life.

"The more we can instill a love of reading in our communities, the greater our efforts to become a Top 10 education state in 10 years," Alles said.

Each year, the Michigan Notable Book (MNB) list features 20 books, published during the previous calendar year, which are about, or set in, Michigan or the Great Lakes region, or written by a Michigan author. Selections include a variety of genres, both fiction and nonfiction, that appeal to many audiences and explore topics and issues close to the hearts of Michigan residents.

Two past selections have found even greater notoriety after being named. The 2015 Michigan Notable Book, *Bird Box* by Josh Malerman, has been made into a Netflix original movie starring Sandra Bullock. The 2010 Michigan Notable Book, *The Leisure Seeker* by Michael Zadoorian, was made into a 2017 film, starring Helen Mirren and Donald Sutherland.

MNB is a statewide program that began as part of the 1991 Michigan Week celebration, designed to pay tribute and draw attention to the many people, places, and things that make Michigan life unique and vibrant.

“The MNB selections clearly demonstrate the rich subject matter Michigan offers to writers,” said State Librarian Randy Riley. “Everyone will find something of interest that speaks to their lives or experiences in our great state.”

This year’s MNB selection committee includes representatives from the Library of Michigan; the Library of Michigan Foundation; Muskegon Area District Library; Capital Area District Library; Clinton-Macomb District Library; Cooley Law School; Lansing City Pulse newspaper; Michigan’s State Historic Preservation Office; Wayne State University; Michigan Department of Education; Michigan Center for the Book; and the Michigan Humanities Council.

For more information or questions about the Michigan Notable Book program, contact the Library of Michigan at 517-335-1454, visit www.michigan.gov/notablebooks , or email librarian@michigan.gov.

2019 Michigan Notable Books

***Abbott* by Saladin Ahmed - Boom Studios**

While investigating police brutality and corruption in 1970s Detroit, journalist Elena Abbott uncovers supernatural forces being controlled by a secret society of the city’s elite. The hard-nosed, chain-smoking tabloid reporter Abbott investigates a series of grisly crimes that the police have ignored. Crimes she knows to be the work of dark occult forces. Forces that took her husband from her. Forces she has sworn to destroy. Saladin Ahmed presents one woman's search for the truth that destroyed her family amidst the systemic societal constructs that haunt our country to this day.

***Across the Great Lake* by Lee Zacharias - University of Wisconsin Press**

85-year-old Fern Halvorsen reflects back upon her five-year-old self traveling with her father on a huge and powerful ship with a tall, handsome pilothouse and big smoking stacks. It’s 1936 and he captains a great coal-fired vessel, *the Manitou*, transporting railroad cars across Lake Michigan. The girl revels in the freedom of the ferry, making friends with a stowaway cat and a gentle young deckhand. The sighting of a ghost ship, though, presages danger for all aboard.

***Beautiful Music* by Michael Zadoorian - Akashic Books**

Set in early 1970s Detroit, a divided city still reeling from its violent summer of 1967, *Beautiful Music* is the story of one young man's transformation through music. Danny is a husky, pop radio-loving loner balancing a dysfunctional home life with the harsh realities of freshman year at a high school marked by racial turbulence. *Beautiful Music* is a funny and poignant story about the power of music and its ability to save one's soul.

***Betty Ford: First Lady, Women's Advocate, Survivor, Trailblazer* by Lisa McCubbin - Gallery Books/Simon & Schuster, Inc**

Betty Ford: First Lady, Women's Advocate, Survivor, Trailblazer is the story of a lady thrust onto the world stage. Setting precedents, she refused to be silenced by her critics as she publicly championed equal rights for women and spoke out about issues that had previously been taboo—breast cancer, depression, abortion, and sexuality. Her decision to speak out publicly about her own struggle with addiction sparked a national dialogue and helped to revolutionize treatment and inspired the modern concept of recovery.

***Building the Modern World: Albert Kahn in Detroit* by Michael H. Hodges - Painted Turtle/Wayne State University Press**

Building the Modern World: Albert Kahn in Detroit tells the story of the German-Jewish immigrant who rose from poverty to become one of the most influential architects of the 20th century. Kahn's work ethic and approach to his craft spurred his influence on both industry and architecture. His willingness to design factories for the Soviets and munition facilities for the U.S government placed the Allied Powers on stronger footing at the outbreak of the Second World War. His proximity to epochal world events makes his life story a tableau of America's rise to power. Albert Kahn's designs are reflected in modern buildings today.

***Drum Roll, Please* by Lisa Jenn Bigelow - Harper/HarperCollins Publishers**

A fresh take on the awkwardness of being a teenager, *Drum Roll Please* is a story about a girl who finds that music makes her a stronger person. Melly only joined the school band because her best friend, Olivia, begged her to. She finds that with playing music, she doesn't feel like a mouse. Summer band camp brings on big changes for Melly: her parents split up, her best friend ditches her, and Melly finds herself unexpectedly falling for another girl at camp. While her rock-and-roll future is in question, she finds her path forward.

***Elemental: A Collection of Michigan Creative Nonfiction* by Anne-Marie Oomen, Editor - Wayne State University Press**

Elemental: A Collection of Michigan Creative Nonfiction comes to us from 23 of Michigan's most well-known essayists. The writings approach Michigan at the atomic level. This is a place where weather patterns and ecology matter. A celebration of the elements, this collection is both the storm and the shelter. Contributors include: Jerry Dennis, Jessica Mesman, Toi Dericotte, Mardi Jo Link, and Keith Taylor amongst many of Michigan's finest writers.

***Faygo Book* by Joe Grimm - Painted Turtle/Wayne State University Press**

Starting with little more than pots, pails, hoses, and a one-horse wagon, Ben and Perry Feigenson reformulated cake frosting recipes into carbonated beverage recipes and launched their business in the middle of the 1907 global financial meltdown. Out of more than 40 bottlers in Detroit's "pop alley," Faygo remains the last one standing. *The Faygo Book* is the story of a pop, a people, and a place. *The Faygo Book* is the social history of a company that has forged a bond with a city and its residents for more than a century.

***Hard Stuff: Dope, Crime, the MC5 & My Life of Impossibilities* by Wayne Kramer - Da Capo Press**

The MC5 reflected the late 60s and early 70s: exciting, sexy, violent, chaotic, and out of control. *Hard Stuff: Dope, Crime, the MC5, and My Life of Impossibilities*, is a story of the personal struggle of an addict and an artist. From the glory days of Detroit to the junk-sick streets of the East Village, from Key West to Nashville and sunny L.A., in and out of prison and on and off drugs, his is the classic journeyman narrative, but with a twist: he's here to remind us that revolution is always an option.

***Lake Michigan Mermaid: A Tale in Poems* by Linda Nemec Foster and Anne-Marie Oomen - Wayne State University Press**

Raised in a ramshackle cottage on the shores of Lake Michigan, a girl takes refuge in her beloved lake in the face of her disrupted homelife. One day she spots a creature in the water, something beautiful and inexplicable. Thus, begins a telepathic conversation between a lost young girl and the mermaid who saves her in more ways than one. Accompanied by powerful illustrations, *The Lake Michigan Mermaid* offers a tender tale of friendship, redemption, and the life-giving power of water.

***Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan* by Barbara J. Barton - Michigan State University Press**

Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan focuses on the history, culture, biology, and economics surrounding the wild rice plant. The story travels through time from the days before European expansion and winds its way forward in and out of the logging and industrialization eras. It weaves between the worlds of the Anishinaabek and Euro-American immigrants. Barton discusses rice beds that once existed in Michigan, why many disappeared, and the efforts to restore and protect the plant.

***Nature's Friend: The Gwen Frostic Story* by Lindsey McDivitt - Sleeping Bear Press**

Sara Gwendolen Frostic was born in Sandusky, Michigan in 1906. When she was eight months old, she suffered from an unknown illness that left her with lifelong symptoms similar to cerebral palsy. She went on to attend college, contribute to the war effort in Detroit, and started her own printmaking business. *Nature's Friend: The Gwen Frostic Story* tells the story behind Gwen's life and art. She dedicated her work and her life to reminding people of the wonder and beauty in nature.

***Notes from a Public Typewriter* by Michael Gustafson, Editor and Oliver Uberti, Designer - Grand Central Publishing**

In the beginning, there were no editors, agents, or audiences. Book browsers were provided a blank page, an old-fashioned typewriter and the opportunity to express themselves. From such a streamlined foundation sprang the work *Notes from A Public Typewriter*. Editor and designer have combined their favorite left behind notes with essays and photos to create an ode to community and the written word that will surprise, delight, and inspire.

***The Page Fence Giants: A History of Black Baseball's Pioneering Champions* by Mitch Lutzke - McFarland & Company, Inc**

The Page Fence Giants were an all-star black baseball team based in Adrian, Michigan. From 1895-98, they played teams from local communities, along with games against minor and major league squads and other black baseball nines. In 1896, the Giants won the Black Baseball Championship series. Despite their winning ways, a championship, and a roster that includes one member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, this is the first book written about this all-star team.

***The Poisoned City: Flint's Water and the American Urban Tragedy* by Anna Clark - Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company**

When the people of Flint, Michigan, turned on their faucets in April 2014, the water pouring out was poisoned with lead and other toxins. It took 18 months of activism by city residents and a band of dogged outsiders to force the state to admit that the water was poisonous. Anna Clark's *The Poisoned City* recounts the gripping story of Flint's poisoned water through the people who caused it, suffered from it, and exposed it. It is a chronicle of one town but could also be about any American city.

***The Russian Five: A Story of Espionage, Defection, Bribery and Courage*, by Keith Gave - Gold Star Publishing**

When the Detroit Red Wings were rebooting their franchise after more than two decades of relative futility, they knew the best place to find world-class players who could help turn things around were players from the Soviet Union. What ensued was a series of secret meetings to help enable the players to exit their homeland. This is their story from the day Detroit drafted its first two Soviets in 1989 until they raised the Stanley Cup in 1997, then took it to Moscow for a victory lap.

***Sister Pie: The Recipes & Stories of a Big-Hearted Bakery in Detroit* by Lisa Ludwinski - Lorena Jones Books/Ten Speed Press**

With 75 recipes the Sister Pie cookbook pays homage to Motor City ingenuity and all-American spirit. The granddaughter of two Detroit natives created a little corner pie shop in a former beauty salon on the city's east side where no one leaves empty handed. Those who don't have money in their pockets can simply cash in a prepaid slice from the "pie it forward" clothesline strung across the window. This unique and fruitful business model is detailed beside tasty recipes.

***So Tall Within: Sojourner Truth's Long Walk Toward Freedom* by Gary D. Schmidt - Roaring Brook Press**

Originally from Ulster County, New York, Sojourner Truth was born into slavery and was sold several times during the course of her life. Yet she possessed a mind and a vision that knew no bounds. *So Tall Within* traces her life from her painful childhood through her remarkable emancipation to her incredible leadership in the movement for rights for both women and African Americans.

***The Truth Lies Here* by Lindsey Klingele - HarperTeen/HarperCollins Publishers**

An aspiring journalist, Penelope, teams up with the nerdy boy next door to find her conspiracy theorist father after he goes missing and several other townspeople turn up dead in the woods. Things get weird with townspeople repeating the same phrases verbatim and men in black suits strolling around the main street of a very small northern Michigan town. With help from her parents and friends, she learns that the truth is not always simple.

***What the Eyes Don't See: A Story of Crisis, Resistance, and Hope in an American City* by
Mona Hanna-Attisha - One World/Random House**

“The eyes don’t see what the mind doesn’t know” is a quote from D. H. Lawrence that guided Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha’s medical training and inspired her medical practice in Flint. This is a book about how the right doctor was in place to discover the elevated lead levels in the children of Flint. The result is a story of how doctors, along with parents and community leaders, discovered the medical crisis in the city’s most vulnerable citizens. Flint was a city on the ropes that came together to fight for justice, self-determination, and the right to build a better world for its children.

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The Library of Michigan – Michigan’s official state library agency for more than 185 years – is part of the Michigan Department of Education. To learn more, visit www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan.