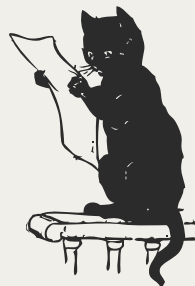


The Reader



at Literary Leftovers Bookstore

Issue 6

May/June 2025

New Seasons

Heather Erwin, proprietress



This has been a year of firsts for our little bookstore: our first after-hours baby shower, our first poetry night, our first release party, our first time hosting a local literary group. And our first year of *The Reader*. This issue is the final issue in our first year of our newsletter experiment! I must admit, it's been a lot of fun, a little bit challenging, and highly rewarding to watch our community engage with us in this new way. Teachers have offered credit to students for submitting book reports, stories, and poems. Our circulation has steadily increased throughout the year, and people are coming to the store for the first time in years, only to discover the store looks nothing like they remember!

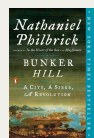
Speaking of firsts, Corrie continuously reminds me that we've added so much in our time. Weekly story time, a second weekly Lego Club session, free one-on-one tutoring, monthly book clubs, local author events, poetry night, release parties, pre-orders for new releases, a shelf of the hottest new books, and dozens of donations to local nonprofits and community organizations.

And it's our first year bucking all current economic trends...by lowering prices. A scary idea for a small business, but we've just started hitting some sales goals we've had since 2021. Our community appreciates us and supports us. You provide us with so many DVDs, puzzles, and more books than we can even get out onto shelves. To keep this wonderful literature flowing, we've decided to lower our prices. All children's books have been impacted, including JV Fiction. We're returning to \$3 mass market paperbacks, and keeping trade paperbacks and hardcovers at their already-low prices. We hope to see long-term stability, and to do even more to make books accessible for anyone's personal library.

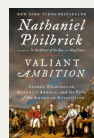
We're vocal about our community, and these "firsts" are all efforts to walk our talk. While some business decisions take courage, our core values must align with our practices. We want a strong community full of people who actively participate, and recognize that life is a team sport. We're in this together. Thank you for loving us, sharing your lives with us, and supporting us with your patronage. We're honored to be your local independent bookstore.

COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Stan's Picks for History Enthusiasts



Bunker Hill: *A City, A Siege, A Revolution*
by Nathaniel Philbrick



Valiant Ambition: *George Washington, Benedict Arnold, & the Fate of the American Revolution*
by Nathaniel Philbrick



In the Hurricane's Eye: *The Genius of George Washington & the Victory at Yorktown*
by Nathaniel Philbrick

The First Conspiracy
by Brad Meltzer



Washington's Spies
by Alexander Rose



BOOKSELLER'S REVIEW

West with the Night by Beryl Markham

reviewed by Eily McIlvain, bookseller

A friend and regular at the shop recommended *West with the Night*. This is one of bookselling's primary boons: over time a network of discerning readers have assembled who share their thoughts with me, essentially selling me our own books. In the case of *West with the Night*, I don't think I've ever been so grateful for a recommendation, or felt so stupid for dragging my feet to act on it—though ultimately it found me at the right time, as books usually do.

I could tell you many things about Beryl Markham and her book that might entice you to read it (most famously that Markham was the first person to fly solo and non-stop from Britain to North America; but also that she has hunted with Murani warriors in Kenya; was married three separate times in an age when that was not so acceptable; or that Ernest Hemingway, the primary champion of her book, said it shamed him as a writer). But nothing could recommend the book more than a single excerpt of Markham's inimitable, fantastic prose:

There is a feeling of absolute finality about the end of a flight through darkness. The whole scheme of things with which you have lived acutely, during hours of roaring sound in an element altogether detached from the world, ceases abruptly. The plane noses groundward, the wings strain to the firmer cushion of earthbound air, wheels touch, and the engine sighs into silence. The dream of flight is suddenly gone...Freedom escapes you again, and wings that were a moment ago no less than an eagle's, and swifter, are metal and wood once more, inert and heavy.

Reader, if this passage hasn't seduced you, if you don't need more of this precise and absolutely evocative voice in your head, then there is nothing more I can say to tempt you.

BOOKSELLER'S COLUMN

Narrative Animals

Eily McIlvain, bookseller

Animals, as they pass through the landscape, leave tracks behind. Stories are the tracks we leave.

—Salman Rushdie

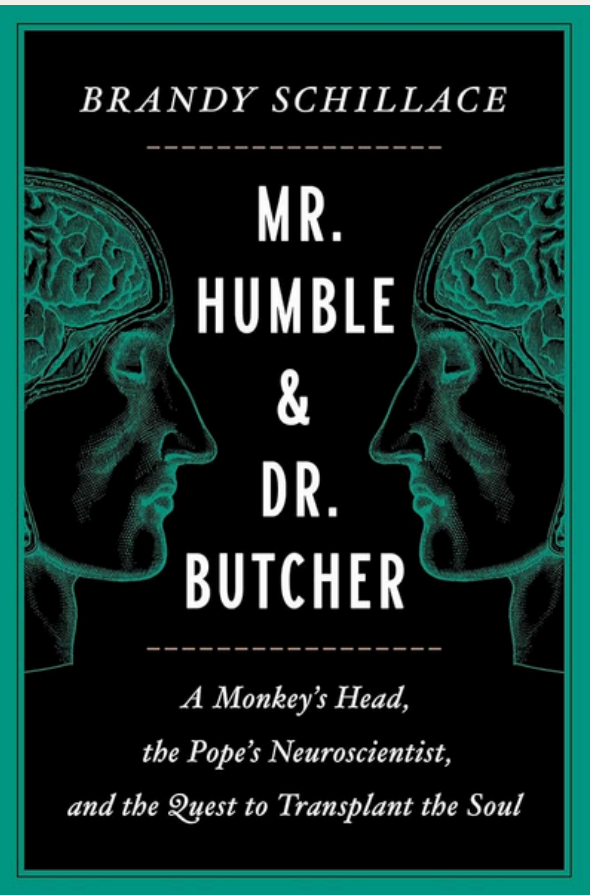
The daffodils are in bloom, and the dogwoods, and the Jane magnolias. The sun is now just slinking down when we close the shop at 6. It's really spring. The sun is warm. The rain is clean. What's new is growing. Much of what was missing is coming back.

But not all of it. In early March, there was a death in my family. There have been deaths in my family before, but this was different. The arrival of spring threw me; the flowering and bursting and shining were abstract in my daily life, which was a lot of hospital and crying and driving home in the dark. And after, a lot of wondering why it had to happen now. How beautiful it's becoming was almost insulting. Now, walking on sidewalks pasted with cherry blossoms, surrounded by technicolor gardens, it is like an alien planet. It's probably normal that I feel this way. It's never the right time—to die, or to grieve.

Spring and autumn are the two most fitting times to reckon with the balance of life and death, comedy and tragedy. And the best way for me to reckon that balance has always been with a book. The story always demands some amount of tragedy for meaning, and promises some amount of triumph or dignity in the face of suffering. I'm not above falling to my knees in front of my shelves. I'm a narrative animal. Art and literature give me evergreen consolation. They give profound context to the suffering. They prove that things overlap. An ending does not preclude a beginning.

In the middle of March, a baby was born. A boy. At the shop we'd been looking forward to his birth. He's the son of one of our friends. We had the baby shower here in the shop. On the morning he was born, I lit a tealight and drank a cup of black tea. While I drank, I tried to think of nothing but new life. Undeniably bound for suffering, but also for spirit and love and books, if his parents are going to have their way. Whatever I felt in that moment, and whatever his parents must have felt as he was born, is the opposite of grief, though the two were so balanced in me at that time it was hard to distinguish them.

On that day in March, for as long as it took me to finish my cup of tea, springtime felt not only appropriate but astonishingly infinite, and familiar. Almost painfully so. I knew that the awareness of what was missing would return, was already returning, and would magnify and not diminish the feeling I had then: the clear, bright pain of the story continuing.



COMMUNITY REVIEW

Mr. Humble & Dr. Butcher

by Brandy Schillace

reviewed by Kristina Roshchevskaya



Mr. Humble and Dr. Butcher by Brandy Schillace is a biography grappling with difficult issues such as bioethics, transplant science, political dissent, international tensions, and most fundamentally, the question of wherein the soul lies. Schillace animates the life and groundbreaking accomplishments of the great Dr. Robert White, an internationally renowned surgeon whose presence was not only tolerated, but specifically requested behind the notorious Iron Curtain.

The title alludes to the literary classic, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. While his patients and coworkers held him in high regard, calling him Humble Bob supporters of PETA vilified

him. Despite his good intentions and common humanity, the doctor and his research were often met with violence and persecution, because of his experimentation on monkeys.

The story demands the constant attention of even a book juggler. Historical, political, and religious aspects—such as the Iron Curtain and Cold War scientists, the Pope and Catholicism, and the U.S. government and PETA—create a kaleidoscopic view of the issue at hand. Schillace continuously dangles the question: Where is our soul? And, Can this knowledge be ethically used to preserve the body?

As a biology major, I deeply connected with this book and its exploration of the intersections among science, faith, and philosophy. I highly recommend it to anyone who has an interest in medicine, an interest in the Cold War, or someone who finds themselves wrestling with questions about identity and what constitutes existence.



The Little Reader

Sometimes you never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.
Dr. Seuss

LETTER FROM THE CHILDREN'S EDITOR

The Smell Tour

Corrie Albertson, children's program manager

As parents, there's a long list of things we don't want to smell: dirty diapers, old milk in lost bottles, watermelon dropped in the car that has rolled under the driver's seat (if you know, you know), and throw-up—just to name a few. Sometimes we forget the good smells. The new baby smell, the sunscreen-and-seawater smell, the fresh-earth-and-strawberries-on-sticky-hands smell.

I just finished *Once Upon a Tome* by Oliver Darkshire, and an excerpt struck a chord with me.

I'm taking my grandson,' she said, 'on a smell tour of London.' We had to stop there while she explained to me what a smell tour was. The way she characterized it, a smell tour relies on the fact that the brain interprets and stores scent memories in a different, longer-term way to sight or sound, and she'd been taking her grandson to lots of different places in London with intense 'smell profiles' so that if he ever encountered those smells again as a grown man, it would bring back memories of her after she was gone.

I know this to be true. I still remember vividly what my parents' room smelled like when I was growing up (my mother's perfume, and dust). Just the other day I made my sister smell my spice drawer to see if she too thought it smelled like our childhood playhouse, because my mother had given us spice tins to play with.

I can't even begin to tell you how many people come into our store and comment on the strong smell of books (which has recently been coined as *bibliosmia*, taken from the Greek for "book" and "smell"). This spring and summer, I thought it might be fun to take your kids on a "smell tour" of Battle Ground. Drop by Al & Ernie's to smell the cinnamon rolls, visit Founder's Mercantile and smell the coffee, tour the other shops with their lotions and candles—and, of course, come see us at Literary Leftovers and smell the wonderful scent of books. We'd love to be one of the good memories you make.

CHILDREN'S EVENTS

J.V. Summer Book Club

Once a month during the months of June, July, and August, we are offering a J.V. Summer Book Club. Each 30-minute meeting will be a discussion about one chapter book. (Parents are expected to remain in the shop.)

The goal of this club is to bring young readers into contact outside of a strictly academic setting, and to facilitate fun, productive conversation about children's literature.

The ideal age for this club is around 8-12 years old. Limited number of book club books are available in the shop for purchase.

June 19th, Thursday, 3-3:30pm

CAREER INVESTIGATIONS

Andre Ney, Photographer

interviewed by A.J. Richards, age 8



Every Tuesday, Miss Corrie leads Storytime with Corrie from 11-11:30am, right after Lego Club. Once a month, Storytime hosts a special guest; a local professional or experienced enthusiast to talk to the children about their work and read a related story. In the past, this has included firefighters, floral designers, pilots, and more. In this issue, we present an interview with March's special guest, Andre Ney, a photographer, interviewed by A.J. Richards, age 8.

When did you become interested in photography?

When I joined the high school newspaper.

How long have you been a photographer?

For 60 years.

What is the hardest thing about being a photographer?

Constantly having to be aware of everything around you, and having to know your equipment.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to be a photographer?

Don't give up, keep trying, and keep taking pictures.



LETTER TO A YOUNGER STUDENT

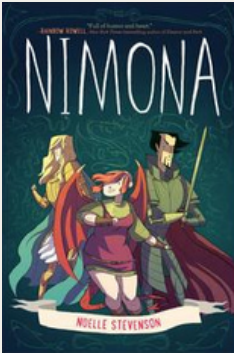
Go Win the Battle of Life

An anonymous student at Prairie High School

I'm a kid, just like you. These days, everyone expects everyone's life to be perfect. When people look at me, they think I've had a wonderful, perfect life. But the truth is, I've been knocked down a lot. More than people know. The thing I do differently from other people is I know how to get back up. Everyone gets hit, whether it's a little boy or Mike Tyson. But it's not about how hard you hit back, it's about get hit, get back up, and get moving. By looking at me, you might think I'm a kid with a perfect family and perfect life. What they don't know is my sister died, my parents split up, I've been to juvie, my friends left, and I've dealt with addictions and situations teenagers shouldn't have. Instead of fighting the impossible war with life however, I let it hit me. But I always get up. I always better myself. Now, I'm going to college on a D1 scholarship for track. Your life will be rough. No one's isn't. But instead of fighting it, fix it. Let the lessons teach, and listen. Those lessons will bring you further than you think.

Summer Reading June 1st - August 30th (readers age -12)

YOUNG READER'S NOTES



Nimona by Noelle Stevenson

Leo, age 12, says that Nimona is the perfect teen graphic

novel. He highly recommends it, giving it 5 stars, a thumbs-up, and 3 hearts. Leo likes to read because it's time consuming and also good for people with ADHD.

Schedule

LEGO CLUB
at 10am Tuesdays & 4pm Thursdays.

STORYTIME WITH CORRIE
at 11am Tuesdays, right after Lego Club.

SUMMER READING
starts June 1 and ends August 30

SUMMER J.V. BOOK CLUB
at 3-3:30pm Thursday, June 19

All children's programs are free.

Upcoming

BOTTLED BOOK CLUB at EMANAR CELLARS

May 8, 6pm, \$5
June 12, 6pm, \$5

OVERSTACKED BOOK CLUB
May 22, 6pm at the shop, \$5
June 26, 6pm at the shop, \$5

Accepting submissions!

Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5
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