



WSIRN Episode 212: Book gifts for your hardest-to-buy-for loved ones
Hosted by Anne Bogel, with guest Traci Thomas

[CHEERFUL INTRO MUSIC]

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ANNE: Hey readers. I'm Anne Bogel, and this is What Should I Read Next? Episode **212**.

Welcome to the show that's dedicated to answering the question that plagues every reader: What should I read next?

We don't get bossy on this show: What we WILL do here is give you the information you need to choose your next read. Every week we'll talk all things books and reading and do a little literary matchmaking with one guest.

Readers, today we are doing ALL the literary matchmaking. We had a glorious gift recommendation episode two weeks ago with The Novel Neighbor owner Holland Saltsman, a What Should I Read Next favorite guest, but I hope you haven't put that wrapping paper away... because today we're bringing you even MORE bookish gift-giving ideas, geared toward the people many What Should I Read Next listeners consider the hardest to buy for... the nonfiction readers, the true crime lovers, the political thriller fanatics, and the doorstep history book deep-divers.

Sometimes these are called "dad book", sometimes they're called "dude books", and our inbox was definitely FULL of people desperate for recommendations for their dads, brothers, grandpas... but really, genre knows no gender, and around here the expert we trust for nonfiction, crime, and intrigue is none other than Traci Thomas from The Stacks podcast. Traci first joined us for episode 162, called "the best bad ending you'll ever read," definitely go back and listen if you haven't yet. Or listen again we won't object. Then Traci came back for our 200th episode celebration and when she did, she joked that we could start a new podcast and call it "Read Like A Dad"... so, Readers, here we are, making it happen for the holidays.

We're recommending a BOATLOAD of titles in this episode, but just like every week, we've got the full list of books we talk about today, ready and waiting for you in show notes: visit whatshouldireadnextpodcast.com/212 that's 2-1-2 for the full list. Let's get to it!

Traci, welcome to the show.

[00:02:01]

TRACI: Hi, thank you for having me back.

ANNE: It's actually been longer than I realized since we talked last for the podcast.

TRACI: Yeah. It's been like a year.

ANNE: It has been. [TRACI LAUGHS] Episode 162: "The best bad ending you'll ever read," where we talked about reading like a dad.

TRACI: My signature. Lots of people after listening to that episode, like, I read like a dad too! So I feel like we have to rebrand it. It just has to be like reading not like everybody else. [BOTH LAUGH]

ANNE: But there's so many people who read like this.

TRACI: Yeah, like, it's not really like a dad I guess. It's just reading different than a lot of women on bookstagram I think is more accurate.

ANNE: Okay. So many people assume that they're the only who does something else in their reading lives or that everybody else, heavy air quotes there, does a certain thing, and really, they're just looking around in their environment and seeing how it seems everybody else does it, and if you are bookstagram, what would you think?

TRACI: You would think that nobody reads like you. Because I think it might be kinda sexist almost. [LAUGHS] Like I think I might have pigeon holed myself in a weird, sexist way as if women can't read the way that I read but I do, and I'm a woman, so therefore I read like a woman. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: And you know, I was just talking about this with my husband how when I go on book tour and when I do public literary events, people ask me in every city, I have a guy in my life who doesn't read. What can I do? Or, they'll hear me say something like, like Will, last year, he had his best reading year ever according to his own description and I mentioned this in a blog post or a podcast somewhere, and I got so many messages and emails that said, you have to tell me what books he is reading 'cause I have a guy in my life who doesn't read. And part of me is like, I love your enthusiasm! And part of me is like, that's not [LAUGHS] that's not how it works. And

so I feel that tension between like my husband created a bookshelf for himself that he calls his dude bookshelf, and yet plenty of women would enjoy those books.

[00:03:52]

TRACI: I'm sure all the books on his dude shelf I've probably read and loved. [BOTH LAUGH] But yeah, it's tricky because it's not exactly ... Reading isn't gendered, but there are things that I think we're told we're supposed to, like, you know, just like if a man wears nail polish. Nail polish isn't gendered, but some men prefer it and some men don't. Or you know, anything like that.

ANNE: To clear our path...

TRACI: Yes.

ANNE: Why don't you tell us in your own words what's your taste in books?

TRACI: I love nonfiction. I love true crime, but narrative, less about individual crimes and more about systemic crime or large crime. So for example, I think, when I was on the show I talked about *A Thousand Lives* by Julie Scheeres which is a book about Jonestown. So I like a true crime book that's got a bigger social implication. I love reading about race, sex, gender, all sorts of culture criticism. If I'm going to read fiction, I love a plot. I love a short fiction. I just read the *Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead and I think it's pretty much a perfect book. It's 210 pages, which helps. So yeah, and I like dark stuff. You're going to be hard pressed to get me to read a romance, though I did read my first romance this year.

ANNE: Milestone. What did you read?

TRACI: *The Hating Game* by Sally Thorne.

ANNE: And what did you think?

TRACI: It was cute. I don't know. I love a rom-com film. I don't know if my reading life has space for that. I want to just chill out if I'm going to be doing something fun, and I feel like I would rather be on my couch eating popcorn and watching a romantic movie 'cause I feel like reading is a learning time for me. I don't use reading to escape from the world. I feel like I use reading to go deeper into the world and TV is much more, let's just hang out and chill and I can be on my Twitter and I can just, you know, paint my nails and veg out.

ANNE: So for those who read like you like to read, or who have people in their lives that do, we are here to help with your literary matchmaking dilemma requests.

TRACI: I'm so excited!

[00:05:53]

ANNE: So what we did is we solicited requests from What Should I Read Next listeners for people in their lives who are impossible to buy for, mostly because like you were saying, Traci, they want to read the latest literary novel or the newest rom-com. Or any rom-com I suppose. And so when they look at their father who only reads presidential biographies, if there's not a new one on the shelves at their local bookstore, they just have no idea what to get.

TRACI: And if their dad really likes to read those and there is a new one, chances are he's probably read it already, right?

ANNE: Oh, very true.

TRACI: That's always a problem.

ANNE: Yeah, and if you are a reader, it doesn't take long to knock out one of those you know, even if it a new hefty like Ron Chernow kind of book.

TRACI: Yeah.

ANNE: So, we're trying to keep all in books, the best way we know how. This episode goes great alongside our most recent holiday gift recommendation episode with Holland Saltsman of The Novel Neighbor, 'cause we usually do one, and we did two this year because, Traci, we wanted to have you back to talk about all the non-fiction everything.

TRACI: Yes!

ANNE: So thank you. There's also a gift guide for book lovers on Modern Mrs Darcy. It's modernmrsdarcy.com as there always is and we have a gift guide for kids this year, also on modernmrsdarcy.com. And, Traci, I believe you have something exciting going on for the holidays over on The Stacks. Can you tell us more?

TRACI: At The Stacks, which is my podcast where we talk about books, we are doing our first ever holiday book drive. There is a school in Northern California called Rocketship Delta Prep where 85% of the students live in poverty. 10% of the students live in what they call double-up housing which means two families live in the same home. And the kids read books at school that are photocopies and stapled together. That's how they're learning to read.

So we at The Stacks decided we're doing a book drive. There are 474 students at that school. I reached out to the teachers. I got a booklist. It is up at our Amazon. If you go to @thestackspod on Instagram or thestackspodcast.com you can find a link to that Amazon booklist. We're donating 474 books to this school so every kid gets to go home on December 20th with a brand new book just for them that's not photocopied.

And for everyone who participates, there are 15 days of giveaway, so starting December 1st through December 15th, if you donate a book and send us a screenshot, you're entered to win. That's all you have to do. And you get to know that you did something nice for someone else's holiday season. So that starts December 1st, so it's already started when you're listening. We would really appreciate all the help you can give.

[00:08:19]

ANNE: Listeners, you know what to do. And we will put all the links in show notes too, so if you're driving, you don't need to pull over. We've got you covered. All right, are you ready to dive in?

TRACI: I'm so ready.

ANNE: Okay. Our first request comes from Liz. She says: "My dad is near impossible to buy books for. He loves Tim Dorsey and Carl Hiasson and buys their books as soon as they're released. I gave him *Go Like Hell* after hearing about it on What Should I Read Next and he really loved this one. He collects vinyl records, especially from the '60s to '80s. He loves cars, and one of his favorite TV shows is The X-Files." What did you do think, Traci?

TRACI: Okay, so, what popped into my head based on the records and the TV show was Chuck Klosterman. He is a cultural critic. He's been writing for a long time. His, I think most famous book, is *Sex, Drugs, and Cocoa Puffs*. But he also has a book called *I Wear The Black Hat* and *What If We're Wrong?* And he just talks about the world and pop culture and music and all that stuff in a really fun and interesting way and so I thought, Liz, your dad might really like him.

ANNE: I got to say that my brother who collects vinyl, he introduced me to Chuck Klosterman.

TRACI: Oh yeah?

ANNE: Yeah. We don't overlap a ton, but we both really like Chuck Klosterman. Also *But What If We're Wrong* has the most amazing acknowledgements at the end of like any book I have ever read.

TRACI: [LAUGHS] Yeah, yes, tell your dad to read to the end.

ANNE: Well what came to mind for me is *Go Like Hell* is by A.J. Baime, who has also written a lot of historical nonfiction. Since he did like a narrative by that author, the *Accidental President: Harry S. Truman and the Four Months that Changed the World* is a nonfiction history book that reads like a thrilling novel by the same author.

Also for the cars, this one's a little weird 'cause you can't go into your bookstore and buy it. But there is a new book out by Chris Lennon, he's an auto racer. His new book is called *The Peak of Racing* and it is specifically about his experience racing and the history of the Pikes Peak

International Hill Climb, which is this insane - this is the only auto race I could speak about with any intelligence at all [TRACI LAUGHS] 'cause I don't know anything. This is not my world. But we have family in Colorado. When we were out there a couple summers ago, we went to the Penrose Heritage Museum, right by the Broadmoor, and half of it is dedicated to the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb. And I don't care about cars at all, and this whole thing is amazing. So, Liz, I don't know where you are, but if you're near Colorado Springs, take your dad there. This book is, I don't believe available through, like, traditional retail outlets. You can get it online. I mean, they're driving cars up a mountain really, really fast. This does not sound like a good idea to me, Traci.

[00:10:50]

TRACI: Nuh-huh. It sounds terrifying. I hated it. [BOTH LAUGH]

ANNE: But your dad may like the book. This one's from Steph: "I would like to get a book for my friend Rebecca for Christmas, but she has very different book tastes from me. She is a Buddhist minimalist who lives by the ocean with her two dogs and does yoga daily. Her favorite author is Henry David Thoreau. She has also liked *The Year of Less* by Cait Flanders and *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi."

Okay, Traci, when I saw this, the first thing that came to mind was a new book just out September that is prominent on many indie's gift guides, it's *Revolution of the Soul: Awakened to Love Through Raw Truth, Radical Healing, and Conscious Action*. It's by Seane Corn. It's a really beautiful book, and she is a long-time yoga teacher and activist who's talking about pivotal moments in her life and how spirituality and yoga have been so significant there and how they work together.

TRACI: Ooh.

ANNE: And the other book I wondered about was *The Bright Hour*, a beautiful memoir about death and dying, so it's not easy, but it's so good. It's by Nina Riggs who also loved Thoreau and lived near where he lived, and there's so much Thoreau woven into this narrative about what makes life worth living and what makes it hard to leave behind.

TRACI: Okay, so I took both of the kind of prompts, or two of the kind of prompts. One is for *When Breath Becomes Air*, books that are similar. *The Unwinding of Miracles* by Julie Yip-Williams. It is her what I call death memoir, I don't know if that's actually the genre, but that's what I call it. We covered this on The Stacks with author Lori Gottlieb, who wrote *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone*. She's a therapist, so we did *The Unwinding of Miracles*, and it's about Julie Yip-Williams who is ... She was a lawyer, a mother. She immigrated from Vietnam and was born legally blind. She got married, had children, become a very successful lawyer, and then was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer, which about 88% of people die from within five years.

As I mentioned, it's a death memoir, so it's not a spoiler, the book starts with this information. But she does end up dying and it's very similar to *When Breath Becomes Air*. But it's a little bit, not humours, but she approaches death a little bit more of this sucks. This is a crappy hand I've been dealt in the situation and also this is a beautiful thing that I'm able to see, so she really ... She encompasses the whole scope of death and dying in a way that feels very human.

The other book in that same vein is *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande, who is a doctor. This book is more about the healthcare system and the way that dying works in America and also how we think about dying. And then the last book I have for your friend, Rebecca, is *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo. I know it was a Netflix show. I know people like are over her. It doesn't bring your joy, whatever. I read the book. It brought me so much joy. It changed my life. I read it three years ago. I still do it. My house still doesn't have a bunch of junk in it, so if that's something that Rebecca's really interested in, I wholeheartedly believe in the book. So take that for what you will.

[00:13:43]

ANNE: Our producer, Brenna, also wanted to recommend a graphic memoir for Rebecca. It is *The Initiates* by Etienne Davodeau. She says it's meditative and gently purposeful. That is a truly unique book that I think Rebecca would appreciate. And truly unique books make amazing gifts.

TRACI: Yeah.

ANNE: Next up, we have an audio message from Lindsay.

LINDSAY: Hi, everybody. I was calling because I would love to hear your recommendations for my husband. He loves to read biographies and history. His favorites lately have been *The Destiny of the Republic* by Candice Miller and he really enjoyed - or he's still enjoying *The Story of Britain* by Roy Strong. He doesn't have a lot of time to read because he's a student. He works full-time as an archives assistant. And so it's just a really busy time. So I would love to find a historical fiction pick for him that has that biographical historical element, but with a story that really grabs him and draws him in because he doesn't seek out that genre. He really gravitates toward nonfiction, but I would love for him to have a fun reading experience like that over Christmas break. I would love to hear what you think.

ANNE: Talk to me about fun, Traci.

TRACI: Okay, Lindsay, listen, I love you so much, but, Lindsay, reading nonfiction is fun for some of us. Some of us love reading nonfiction. [LAUGHS] We're having a great time and I think - I think I could speak for your husband, he probably really has a fun when he's reading nonfiction. That being said, I did listen to you and I have one nonfiction and one fiction recommendation for your husband, both are fun.

So the nonfiction recommendation is *In The Garden of Beast* by Erik Larson. Pre-1940s Germany, an American ambassador is in Berlin. He's meeting nazis. He's schmoozing with them. He's trying to figure out what is going on in Germany and it's told through letters and through real historical documentation and it's riveting. It's so good. I listened to it on audiobook on my cross country drive from New York to California in 2012 and my husband and I still talk about the names of the people because they're just so German. It's unbelievable.

And then the other one more on track is a *Plot Against America* by Philip Roth. I guess I got on a nazi kick for you, Lindsay, I don't know why. [ANNE LAUGHS] That's where we are. It's *The Plot Against America*. It's about what if the nazis, they won. And then what happens next? But reading nonfiction is fun. I promise.

[00:16:24]

ANNE: [LAUGHS] I love it. Traci, you can keep saying that all day. [TRACI LAUGHS] Okay, Lindsay, there's two books I'm wondering about for your husband. The first is *Resistance Women* by Jennifer Chiaverini. This came out last May and it's a new historical novel inspired by the untold story, really of an actual real life woman with - oh it's been awhile since I've read this. I think she was a Wisconsin native and she moved to Germany with her husband. But her story was previously untold because the U.S. government deliberately buried it after the war. And these documents were only released years later, after the cold war was over and these documents were declassified.

The bulk of the action takes place between the wars, beginning in 1929 and coming into World War II, but it centers on Mildred Harnack and her husband and friends who were members of the network of American and German resistance fighters, the Gestapo called the Rote Kapelle which is the Red Orchestra. So there are some fictional elements in here and don't miss the author's note in any books like this because the author will tell you exactly what is real and what is invented and really, truth is stranger than fiction in some ways when you see whose diplomatic daughters are doing what, it's so surprising. I think it has the history and the narrative I think you're looking for.

And the second book is speculative fiction by Ben H. Winters, it's called *Underground Airlines* in which reimagines what might have happened. Traci, do you have thoughts about this book?

TRACI: I haven't read it, but I own it. It's been on my shelf for a long time.

ANNE: The Civil War never happened and slavery remains legal in four states. The person telling the story is a former slave who has paid a price that might almost be too high for the right to live free. It's got that history, sci-fi mix. Really interesting.

TRACI: I want to read that now too. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: Readers, this is the time of year where we're sitting down and planning out our cooking way in advance. Whether that's Thanksgiving dishes, Christmas cookies, or a special breakfast for the first day of holiday break.

It's sooo much easier when you plan ahead—and there's no reason you can't plan your regular weekday dinners that way. That's exactly what PrepDish does for you: you get all the benefit of advance planning and prep, without all the work, because PrepDish is the whole-food based meal planning service that sends you a week's worth of great tasting meals by email.

PrepDish's shop once, prep once philosophy is a LIFESAVER.

Just print out your plan, do all of your shopping, and then in one go you do your chopping, marinating, and prepping for all the meals at once. Because the meals are planned out carefully ingredients overlap, making both shopping and prepping easier, and saving you time on prep day. And not only do you save time on prep day, but prep day saves you time every day as you start dinner several steps ahead.

PrepDish helps you get fully prepared dinners on the table in just about 30 minutes.

Dinners like slow cooker beef in red wine with carrots, celery and potatoes, garlic shrimp zoodles with butternut squash and kale, and Asian salmon pouches with spinach, mushroom and bell pepper

Right now you can take care of all of your meal planning for the rest of the year with a premium PrepDish subscription. Prep Dish offers a variety of meal plans to fit any lifestyle including Paleo, Gluten Free, which is what my family's using right now, and Keto.

PrepDish makes it really easy to give it a try for yourself. Just check out PrepDish.com/readnext for a free 2-week trial. That's PrepDish.com/readnext. Prepdish.com/readnext.

ANNE: Here's what Victoria says: "I am looking for a recommendation for my husband, who usually reads a few books a year for work. He's a Chief Development Officer, so he focuses a lot of reading on team building and team leading, but I'd love to gift him something in a different genre. He's a big fan of - wait for it - wrestling biographies and history, so he loves the behind the scenes looks. His top favorites are: *Hitman: My Real Life in the Cartoon World of Wrestling* by Bret Hart, and *It's True! It's True!* by Kurt Angle. He also enjoys murder mysteries. He read the whole series of Dexter books by Jeff Lindsay." Traci?

[00:20:20]

TRACI: Okay. [LAUGHS] This one I actually struggled with because I love sports, but wrestling is just truly the sport that I am the least into. But lucky for you, Victoria, my dear best friend from college is this actor. His name is Josh Segerra. He is fantastic. He was on Arrow. It's just really great, and he loves wrestling, and I make so much fun about him for it. [ANNE LAUGHS] When I saw your request, I text Josh, and I said: Okay, favorite wrestling book? And he responded in like 30 seconds and said *The Squared Circle* by David Shoemaker, aka the Masked Man. It's all about life, death, and the world inside the ring. Apparently, it's amazing. I then went and looked it up - it's supposed to be great. I don't know your husband, Victoria, maybe he's already read it. It seems like kinda an obvious one because I've actually heard of The Masked Man, but if he hasn't read it, Josh Segerra cosigns this one. So that was - I outsourced this one. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: So smart. Because readers finding the right book recommendations means knowing where to look. [LAUGHS] So Traci, something funny is you do dark, and I, like, visit there sometimes.

TRACI: Okay.

ANNE: But Brenna, our producer, she loves dark and she wants to recommend that her husband read the graphic novel series *Chew*. She says if he can do Dexter and he likes wrestling, he should be able to handle the comedic gore in it. It's got a main character he should be able to relate to and lots of mystery and hijinks. It's about a police detective with a [LAUGHS] Brenna calls it a totally gross, superhuman ability. He can sense of past of objects and people by chewing them. It's a useful skill in his line of work, but tasting clues and suspects comes with a lot of awkward paperwork. Okay, you all, the human mind is boundlessly creative. 'Cause who comes up with this stuff?

TRACI: Who? [LAUGHS]

ANNE: This one's from Monica: "My son is nearly 16 and currently reading *The General* by Robert Muchamore. He enjoyed *Lorien Legacies* and *Nethergrim* series when he was younger, *Salt Line* by Heather Goddard Jones, and he likes Tom Clancy books, although they are a bit technical for him still. *Shipbreaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi was also good. Basically, adventure, especially if they're trains, ships, and military involved because he's a sailor, model train kind of guy who likes history in school." What do you think, Traci?

TRACI: I'm going to be honest with you, Anne. I kinda took some of these and just went with what popped into my heart. [LAUGHS] And I don't know if this is spot-on for your son, Monica, but this is what I do know: Every younger man between the ages of 18 and 22 I know that have read this book has loved it. I read it. I loved it. I still think about it. So, that being said, it is about history. It's called *City of Thieves*. It's a novel. Shocker. I read a novel. It's by David Benioff, who's one of the writers of the television program, *Game of Thrones*. Again, nazis. [LAUGHS] It's during the nazi siege of Leningrad. A guy is arrested for looting and another guy is a

deserter, and they're paired up, and they have to go secure a dozen eggs for a Colonel or something to help make the Soviet Colonels wedding cake for his daughter.

And so it's kinda an adventure story about two guys, younger guys, going through this lawless time in nazi-occupied Leningrad, or nazi-trying to occupy Leningrad. It's funny. It's thrilling. It's so good. It's right on for someone in a younger age group who reads older. I don't know if it's right on for someone who is older, 25, 28. This book might not resonate as much, but I know for younger folks, which is also when I read it, I just remember loving, loving, loving this book.

[00:24:07]

ANNE: This book was actually a favorite of Georgia Hunter's, who wrote *We Were The Lucky Ones*, back on episode 157 of What Should I Read Next. Come to think of it, *We Were The Lucky Ones* would be a great book to read for any reader who's looking for a book that combines history, just a touch of fictional narrative really, really well. So I love that you brought that up. [TRACI LAUGHS]

Monica's request reminded me of a lot of a young reader in my life, so I wanted to recommend a book that was pressed into my hands at Square Books in Oxford, Mississippi. Actually Square Junior, which is an amazing store, and their booksellers were so great at taking all the time in the world to send me books for all the young people in my life. But the book I want to recommend is one that I didn't know existed and might not have been drawn to, it's called *Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dimitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad* and it's by National Book Award winner M.T. Anderson.

Now, ostensibly, this is a book about Shostakovich's 7th symphony, but it's about so much ... I mean, the music is fascinating, and the author assumes that you don't know anything which is great because I certainly did not and neither did my young reader. But what it does is it puts the creation of that symphony in the historical context and so you get to see the history leading up to and including the siege of Leningrad, which is something that so many readers including myself, know so little about and this is not dry history at all. It reads like a thrilling novel. I hear from readers that this is amazing on audio because of the music and just because of the narrative rhythm that it just sounds really beautiful. This is a YA book, so while it can certainly be enjoyed by adults, it's not going to be over the head for a 16-year-old reader.

And then the second one I'd recommend is the, I believe, the only historical fiction novel written by Michael Crichton. It's called *The Great Train Robbery* and this is the story of a heist. This charming, apparently well-to-do man wants to steal a whole bunch of gold off a moving train in Victorian London. If you think he's not here for Victorian London, including the slaying and the mores of the day, then skip right over it. But if he loves trains and the history of trains, this might be a good one.

Okay, next, we have an audio request from Stacy.

[00:26:19]

STACY: Hi Anne, my name is Stacy, and I'm looking for the perfect book for my husband of ten years. He's been a lifelong reader. And I think it was one of his goals to turn me into the same. It took him nine years, but he succeeded and now he's trying to keep up with me. So my husband is an outdoorsman. He's also a pastor so he's always reading theology books while I'm immersed in a gripping novel. But I want to get him something that's a real page-turner outside what he leans towards. The three main categories he loves are history, so he loved *Undaunted Courage* by Steven Ambrose; the second is behavioral psychology, sociology or economics and the third is gripping biographies like *Malcolm X*.

ANNE: All right, Traci, what do you think for Stacy's request?

TRACI: Okay, Stacy, here we go. First of all, like your husband, the *Autobiography of Malcolm X* is one of my all-time faves ever hands down, top five books of my life. So, that being said, I was very excited in 2011 when *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* by Manning Marable came out. It is a phenomenal book, unlike the autobiography, it is more of a history of Malcolm X. But it unveils and uncovers some things about him and especially his murder that we didn't have obviously at the time of his autobiography. It's a fantastic book, so if your husband is still interested in Malcolm X, I would send him there in a heartbeat.

The other book is if your husband is, you know, psychology, sociology, economics, history, all kind of in one, it's called *Icarus Syndrome* by Peter Beinart. It's nonfiction. It's about three presidents and Hubris. So it's why Hubris does or doesn't work out for the American people. So, part one is Woodrow Wilson. It's all about World War I. Part two is about JFK and then also Johnson and the Vietnam War. And then part three is about George Bush and Iraq and Afghanistan, but what's really interesting is that the author has shaped it all around Hubris. So you're getting a lot of psychology and sociology. It's just a super interesting smart book. Both my recommendations are backlists I read awhile back and they still stick with me and I think about them all the time.

ANNE: Traci, I love the sound of that. This one's from Tricia: "My husband likes legal thrillers, mysteries and biographies. He has read all of Grisham and Cornwell (but thinks that their earlier work is stronger). He likes presidential biographies but has read many of them. He loved the six volume *Churchill* series, and liked *The Blind Assassin* by Atwood." Traci, what should he read next?

TRACI: I had to ask my husband for help on this one because I do read biographies, but I don't read thrillers and mysteries, and I'm not a huge biography person. But my husband said *Einstein* by Walter Isaacson is one of his favorite books ever and my husband loves a biography. He has read a ton of them. He's so into it, so that would be my recommendation, but I can't cosign it but I love and trust my husband. [BOTH LAUGH] If you're listening, honey, I love you a lot. Thanks for helping.

[00:29:26]

ANNE: Going from Grisham and Cornwell, I'm wondering about the novels of Daniel Silva. There are a ton of them. They are a obstential spy thrillers, but however, Silva has an act for pulling contemporary news events like pulled from the news lines and working them into his stories. Also, something he's done - he had to write a little description, in the front of his book, I think it's called *Black Widow* where he had to say, hey, when I wrote this and turned this in, I had no idea that the terrorist events that I described in these pages were about to become frighteningly real like any resemblance is purely coincidental. I'm sharing that because I think it goes to show that he's writing books that feel very realistic. They're more spy and political thrillers than legal thrillers, though you do get the rogue lawyer in there and I think if you love Grisham and Cornwell, these books are going to nestle in nicely there.

This is from Laura: "My daughter is a big reader!" Laura, we're always happy to hear that. "She has an interest in public health and science, but also reads about social justice. I think she would be up for trying fiction or nonfiction, but nothing too sappy or romance-y. She really likes essays by Rebecca Solnit, and she has recommended *The New Jim Crow* to me. She re-reads *Ella Enchanted* at least annually, and reads everything in between." What do you think, Traci?

TRACI: Well I think I love your daughter, Laura. [ANNE LAUGHS] It sounds like my kind of gal. Okay, somethings just popped right into my head. First of all, *Medical Apartheid* by Harriet A. Washington. It's public health. It's science and it's social justice. Harriet Washington is an ethicist. She's a fellow at Harvard Medical School. She has worked in public health. She's a bioethicist. She's just a very smart woman. She wrote a book called *Medical Apartheid*. It is about racism in the medical system, specifically anti-black racism.

So she's talking about one of the things that is the most obvious I think case of medical racism that we often think of is the Tuskegee syphilis study, so that's in the book. But she's also talking about how the modern day cesarean section was practiced on slaves without any form of painkillers, even though they existed at the time. How those were experiments. She's talking about all the different ways that racism has played into the American health system. It's a fantastic book. And if your daughter likes *Medical Apartheid*, Harriet Washington has actually written three other books.

I could honestly, Laura, I could recommend books to your daughter for years. [ANNE LAUGHS] I'm like trying to talk really fast so I can get them all in. On the other side, closer to Rebecca Solnit, but still social justice-y, would be *Thick* by Tressy McMillan Cottom. She is fantastic. I have to brag a little bit. I was able to interview her on *The Stacks* and it's one of my favorite, favorite episodes. Tressy writes essays all about and centering Black women. These essays are phenomenal. She's short-listed for the National Book Award.

And then also in the same line of Rebecca Solnit, *Good and Mad* by Rebecca Traister, who is a pretty well known opinion writer. She writes for the *New York Times*. She just wrote a great piece for *The Cut* about female political candidates and it's all about women's angry and how

transformative it is. And in that same line, *Eloquent Rage* by Brittney Cooper who is a Black woman who wrote an amazing book. It's a memoir meets nonfiction all about her own personal rage and how and where that comes from and how it's useful. Those would be my first recommendations for your daughter [ANNE LAUGHS] but like call me, slide into my DMs, I could go for years on this one.

[00:32:56]

ANNE: I love it. [TRACI LAUGHS] Books that came to mind for me, it's *The Body Keeps The Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. It's by Bessel van der Kolk. It's about overcoming trauma in the fascinating, unexpected, sometimes vexing ways that mind and body are connected. This is a book about overcoming trauma, which means there are hard things in the pages of these books, but Laura, it sounds like your daughter is a mature reader, a sophisticated reader, and I wanna give readers a head's up that there's not easy stuff in these pages, but I don't think it's too far field of what she's currently reading.

I read this book because I thought I should and because I was researching a project, but oh my goodness, it's so fascinating and something that van der Kolk points out explicitly is that trauma affects so many of us that it changes the fabric of society that we live in. When you have people who have endured trauma walking around living lives, bumping up against other people who have also lived trauma, that is a public health issue and so he says that one of his callings and one of the most important things he does in his clinic is create healthier communities by creating healthier people.

And the second book is very different, squarely in that public health and science space, it is *Ghost Map: the Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World* by Steven Johnson. And I know it sounds like a bold claim, but seriously, this book is about the 1854 Broad Street cholera breakout that took place in London and it's arguably the deadliest in London's history.

Johnson says that many people are probably familiar with the broad outlines of the story because it is a classic, public health story that even people who aren't in the field know. But what he said and something that really inspired him to write this book is that the story we've all been told gets many of the facts wrong and it ignores a whole lot of the most interesting things. Specifically said in his words, so many of the issues that define the modern world today, the runaway growth of megacities, environmental crises, fears of apocalyptic epidemics, digital mapping, the need for clean water, urban terror, the rise of amateur expertise, are all there in embryo in the Broad Street outbreak. Readers, if you don't have a public health interest but just love a good piece of narrative nonfiction, this is the book for you.

ANNE: Readers, sometimes we get way too comfortable in our old habits. But if you're still wearing the same old, uncomfortable socks you got years ago, maybe it's time to upgrade to

Bombas... We're all huge Bombas fans at my house and I'm excited to share their socks with you.

Bombas socks are soft...like, "made-with-the-softest-cotton-in-the-world" soft, and they're built with extra cushioning, so you'll be extra comfortable. They also provide support in places you didn't even know you needed it, like your arches—each sock is built with a special arch-support system that's not too tight. It's more like a nice hug for your foot.

I love that my Bombas don't slide down while I'm running and that I can really feel how cushiony they are when I slip off my shoes.

Not only do I love these socks, but I love Bombas as a company. This time of year many of us are thinking about ways we can give back. Bombas does this year-round. Socks are the number one most requested item in homeless shelters so Bombas built that into their business. For every pair you buy, Bombas donates a pair to someone in need. Every pair, all year long.

So whether you're restocking your own sock drawer or buying a gift for that person who is completely impossible to shop for you can feel good knowing you're a part of giving back to your community.

Go to Bombas.com/READNEXT, and get 20% any purchase during their big holiday sale, November 18th through December 5th. That's [Bombas B-O-M-B-A-S.com/READNEXT](https://Bombas.com/READNEXT) for 20% off.

Bombas.com/READNEXT

Readers, Here's a harsh reality: just because it's not warm out, doesn't mean you don't sweat. So even though you might be making changes to your beauty routine this winter—like for me that means a lot more moisturizer and a little less sunscreen—there are some things you need year-round.

For me, that's aluminum-free coconut deodorant from Kopari!

Kopari's Coconut Deodorant is a cleaner alternative to traditional deodorants. It's aluminum-free, vegan, and does not contain silicones, sulfates, parabens, GMOs, or baking soda. Instead of using a bunch of questionable ingredients you probably don't want on your body, Kopari's deodorant keeps you fresh with plant-based actives like sage oil and coconut oil. Kopari doesn't irritate my sensitive skin and I LOVE the subtle smell.

And since you're never going to not need deodorant, Kopari's made it so you never have to run out! You can subscribe and get deodorant automatically shipped to your door, as often as you choose, and for free!

Kopari offers a money-back guarantee, so if you've been thinking about switching to a cleaner deodorant, this is the best way to do it!

Go to KopariBeauty.com/READNEXT to get 15% off your monthly subscription orders! That's KOPARI, K-O-P-A-R-I, KopariBeauty.com/READNEXT

KopariBeauty.com/READNEXT.

ANNE: Okay, this one's from Erin: "I'd love a book gift recommendation for my husband, who is not a big reader. His favorite book is *To Kill A Mockingbird* and he liked *Becoming* by Michelle Obama, and *The Band*. He still loves Marvel Comics, has read several graphic novels but isn't only interested in that. He is a video game artist and has an hour train commute, so I have recently gotten him into audiobooks (which he still considers cheating)." Okay, I'll take that first. It's not cheating.

[00:38:15]

TRACI: Yeah. It's not cheating.

ANNE: It's really not cheating. You can read with your ears or read with your eyes and your brain thinks it's the same. Stepping off my soapbox, what would you recommend to this reader, Traci?

TRACI: I haven't read this book, but I've heard great things. *Furious Hours: Murder, Fraud, and The Last Trial of Harper Lee*. I've heard really good things from people who I know love nonfiction. I'm also recommending it because you said that your husband's favorite book is *To Kill A Mockingbird*. I don't know if you don't love Harper Lee going in that you'll love it, but from what I understand, it's really great reporting and it's super interesting. But again, I've not read it, but I've heard such great things, so I feel comfortable recommending it. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: I've also heard it's an amazing book for generating discussion.

TRACI: Yes. Yes, yes, yes, yes, totally. I think that's also what I've heard mostly, like that it's very thought provoking, which I like. And then the other book I'm recommending is called *Good Talk* by Mira Jacobs. It's her graphic memoir told through conversations. It's about being American. It's about an American identity. It's about interracial families. It's about what divides us. What brings us together. It's been on sorts of lists already this year. I believe it was one Time's Best Books of the Year. Their top 10, not their top 100. Maybe he hasn't read it yet

because it just came out this year. It's not like a Marvel comic though. It's a serious memoir, but told in this really beautiful way.

[00:39:37]

ANNE: Brenna wants to chime in with a graphic novel recommendation because this is her favorite thing. She says, *I Kill Giants* by Joe Kelly would be a great pick. Erin, she also suggested that you give him that book and then watch the extremely good movie adaptation together because it could make for a great conversation.

Next up is from Jamie: "My dad loves political thrillers and historical narrative nonfiction. A year or two ago, I gave him *Killers of the Flower Moon* for his birthday, and he STILL talks about what a great book it was! I'd love to give him another book he can't stop talking about for Christmas this year!"

TRACI: Jamie, I read like your dad. [LAUGHS] I don't read like all dads, but Jamie, I read like your dad. Okay, here we go. I feel very confident in these, Jamie. *Bad Blood* by John Carreyrou. It's about Theranos, which is if you don't know, a story of Theranos and Elizabeth Holmes who is the founder/CEO of the company that was supposed to be able to take one drop of your blood and do all this testing and it was a total scam. The book is fantastic. Carreyrou is actually these journalist from The Wall Street Journal who exposed the story, so he writes the book, and it's great.

Under The Banner of Heaven is by John Krakauer. It is about fundamental and also generally the Mormon religion. If you're not familiar with John Krakauer, he usually takes one small story, very personal small, and then also takes the history of where that story fits into the world and combines them. He's one of my favorite authors so I feel comfortable recommending everything or anything that he's written because I've read it all. But *Under The Banner of Heaven* is particularly true crime meets history in the same way *Killers of the Flower Moon*.

And then the last one, one of my favorite books, I couldn't do a recommendation show without recommending it at least once is *A Thousand Lives* by Julia Scheeres. It's about Jonestown. Julia does just the most incredible job of telling this story about Jim Jones, but making it about all of the victims of his ultimate murder of almost a thousand humans, which just had its 44th anniversary a few weeks back. So those would be my recommendations, but, Jamie, you could also slide into my DMs and I could give you a couple hundred more. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: Those recommendations sound perfect, Traci. Okay, next we have a request from Nicole. She says: "I'm all about doing the Icelandic Jolabokaflokkur or Book Flood for Christmas Eve this year (every bookworm's dream right?). It's hard to surprise my husband with books because we read so differently until more recently. I surprised him with *The River* by Peter Heller and he loved it (so did I). He enjoys science fiction, but reads a lot of non-fiction from Malcolm Gladwell and Bill Bryson. Long books are not a problem for him." Traci, what would you recommend for Nicole's husband?

TRACI: *The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead. It came out this year. It's based in ... a true story based in true reporting about a reform school for boys in Florida and it follows these two boys, and it's just so beautifully written. It's super short. It's 212 pages, which is I think the perfect length for any novel. But it's really, it's just great. I mean, he is someone who knows how to write really well.

And then more along the nonfiction lines, *Mountains Beyond Mountains* by Tracy Kidder which is about Paul Farmer. Paul Farmer is a doctor who specializes in infectious disease. He's based out of Boston, or at least he was during the writing of this book. And it's all about his journey, mostly in Haiti, mostly dealing with the AIDS crisis, but also just about medicine and infectious disease and kinda how we're all connected and it's just a beautiful story. This book is definitely on the longer side.

And then my last suggestion is anything by Jon Ronson. it kinda writes in a similar role as Malcom Gladwell and Bill Bryson. it's kinda pop psychology. One of his books that's really popular, it's called *The Psychopath Test*. It's super interesting, and then his other book that people really love is *So You've Been Publicly Shamed* and it's all about how instead of putting people in the stalks now, we put people on social media stalks and we call people out. And it's about how this functions in society and how public shaming functions and it's a really interesting look at the psychology of having a scapegoat.

ANNE: I loved that book. *So You've Been Publicly Shamed*. And also I found it as a person who lives in the 21st century who uses the Internet, completely terrifying

TRACI: It's scary.

ANNE: But so absorbing.

TRACI: Yeah, 'cause he finds a way to get both the reason why and also to terrify you with anecdotal stories of people [LAUGHS] in their lives have made mistakes.

ANNE: Well I have a novel for Nicole's husband and it is pivoting off *The River*, not at all the same, but definitely in the same vein. These books could be cousins, and that is *The Current* by Tim Johnston. This is another 2019 release. Another book set on a river, but the way the stories unfold and just the feel of them is different even though they're both dark, broody, and suspenseful. This one is set in the frigid cold. It begins with two college women who have very different backgrounds, but thanks to bad luck and one impulsive offer, they set out on a road trip that is doomed and their car plunges in a Minnesota river and only one of them survives. But the thing here is that the circumstances and they're definitely suspicious, they bear an uncanny resemblance to the death of another young girl in the same river, almost the same spot a decade before.

So you have a survivor struggling to come to terms with her friend's death and for reasons she can't quite grasp her own safety remains precarious, and that has everything to do with what happened in this community years before. It's so atmospheric and broody in the same way *The River* was, but this novel is almost twice as long. So, Traci, you would say it's not the perfect novel, [TRACI LAUGHS] but I hope for Nicole's husband it might be.

This is from Cate: "I'm hoping you can help me choose a gift for my soon-to-be sister-in-law, Amanda. She works in historical restoration in Savannah, GA, is extremely handy and works on her car and motorcycles herself. Literally she's the coolest. [TRACI LAUGHS] We both love to read, so I really want to prime her for our kick butt sisters-in-law friendship! She loved *Einstein: His Life and Universe* by Walter Isaacson; *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* by Robert Pirsig; and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey." Traci, what do you think?

TRACI: Okay, Cate, listen. You're going to be in the very cool club because I have two sister-in-law and they're both amazing. One from my husband, and one from my brother, and it's the best when your sister-in-law is awesome and reads, so shout out to Sarah and Robin, my girls. I have actually recommended both of these books to both of my sisters-in-laws. So the first is *The Reckonings* by Lacy M. Johnson. This book is a book of essays. It is probably one of my favorite reads from 2018.

Basically the backstory is that Lacy Johnson was a victim of rape by her ex-boyfriend, and she wrote a book about this. Her memoir called *The Other Side*. And it's a fantastic book. Obviously, given what I just said, this book can be very dark. It is very triggering for people, so if you're thinking about it and that feels like something that might make you upset, it definitely will. So I'm just giving you that warning. But *The Reckonings* came out of her book tour. When she went on book tour for *The Other Side*, people would ask her what do you want to see happen to the man who did this to you? And she thought about this question and she ended up writing a series of essays all about justice, joy, revenge.

And she does it through a bunch of different current events. So she lives in Houston. One of the essays is about Hurricane Harvey, and what justice looks like for people whose homes were flooded. There is an essay about art and its relationship to money, given that in Houston a lot of the art is funded by oil companies. That's kinda how they give back, especially after the oil spill. So she takes these current events and she juxtaposes them with the ideas of justice. And this book will give you so much to talk about with your sister-in-law, You guys could both read it and it's just a [SIGHS] a beautiful, beautiful book. She is another professional writer. She has a ph.d in poetry, so the writing is just so juicy and good, but she's tackling these really tricky topics, and if you are reading this book, read the notes. Trust me, the notes are as good as the book itself.

And then my other recommendation is *The Faraway Brothers* by Lauren Markham. This is a book all about two brothers who come from either El Salvador or Honduras [ANNE LAUGHS] and I can't remember, but they come up through Mexico to America. They are undocumented,

unaccompanied minors and it's about their life once they get to America where one of their other brothers is. it's about their journey coming here. Again, it will give you a lot to talk about given current events and the way that migration and immigration has become such a hot topic. It's a great thing for you and your sister to reflect on. And then the last thing I'll say is that I learned this from my aunt who was dear friends with my father and she always called him her brother, and so I just want to impart that on to you, Cate, that I actually call my sister-in-laws my sisters.

[00:49:00]

ANNE: Oh. I love that.

TRACI: It makes me happy.

ANNE: And I love that you get to share the reading life with them as well.

TRACI: Yeah. It's so good.

ANNE: Traci, this is our last one.

TRACI: [LAUGHS] Okay.

ANNE: This one is from Megan: "I am looking for recommendations for my dad for Christmas. My dad loves to be outdoors (we live in a small Northern Ontario town) and whenever he took me ice fishing, canoeing or out to cut wood I always had a book with me. My dad, on the other hand, was late to discover reading. At first I think he was reading to make me happy, but now, 30 years later, he is a regular reader! Megan's dad loved *The Century Trilogy* by Ken Follett, *The Book of Negroes* by Lawrence Hill, and *the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* by Stieg Larsson. He hates going to the library by himself, and relies on my mom to find him a book or for my husband or I to pass something on to him. The lunchroom at the lumber mill where he works also has a bookshelf, so he has discovered a few authors this way (like Clive Cussler).

Recently he was in the bookstore and picked up a Danielle Steel book, not because he is a fan but because he recognizes her name. I can picture my mom rolling her eyes at this when he came home!

I think a series or an author with many similar books is best for him, as he tends to find something he likes and stick with it. A historical element is also important. He recently read a non-fiction about the Vietnam War and he loved it. The whole family learned many facts during that month!" What do you think, Traci?

TRACI: Okay, Megan, love your dad. [ANNE LAUGHS] Feel like he and I are definitely on the same page. Okay, so, historical books. The first one that I'm going to start with, it's called *Hue* by it's spelled H-U-E. It's by Mark Bowden. It's about a moment in the Vietnam War. it was a turning point. It's a ... Hue is a village and the United States army went in, etc. etc. And it's all

about this. It's a huge, massive book, but the best part about Mark Bowden is Mark Bowden has only casually written a ton of books, so he is the author of *Black Hawk Down*. He wrote a book about killing Pablo, which is about Pablo Escobar. He wrote a book about killing Osama bin Laden. So he's got a ton of books about historical events. He writes in these great ways ... If you've ever seen or read *Black Hawk Down*, you kinda get a sense of how he is a storyteller in that way. So that's someone that if your dad likes, he's got a ton of content to read.

And then the other option also historical, one of my all-time faves is called *Blood In The Water* by Heather Ann Thomas. It's about the Attica Prison uprising in 1971. It's kinda in that same Vietnam/history space which I feel like I can't speak for your dad, but I know a lot of men of a certain age really love being able to go back and visit a time when they were younger that they remember, but kinda seeing it in a new light. I actually think that's probably true for a lot of people of all different ages, but I think when you get to be older, you're excited to look back at the life that you lived and the events that you remember. So, *Blood in the Water* is about Attica. It won the Pulitzer, so I'm not saying anything new about this book. it's fantastic. Everybody agrees. It's a big book. It's a little intimidating because you think how could there possibly be 500 pages? And then you start reading it and I mean, I read it in four days. I could not put it down. I had dreams about being in Attica. It's just fantastic.

And then the last one which I have not read, but I've heard amazing things about is called *Say Nothing* by Patrick Radden Keefe. It's about Northern Ireland and that time in the 1980s when there was the IRA and they were fighting, kinda another - another war type situation that it was long listed for the National Book Award this year.

[00:52:35]

ANNE: Those all sound amazing, especially *Say Nothing* which I knew nothing about.

TRACI: I can't wait to read it. It's on my list, I just, I haven't been able to get to it and I am just chomping at the bit.

ANNE: Well, for Megan's dad, I like the sound of the books by Richard Russo, especially his earlier ones which seem to be about people dealing with crushing life events while living ordinary lives in working class towns, primarily in New England. He writes very few that are sequential, but they cluster together and they have a familiar feel to them, and Russo is a professional writer if ever there was one. The man knows how to string his words together. And then also, there's an old book by Tim O'Brien I like and he's written several great books about war and its lasting effects.

TRACI: *The Things They Carried*.

ANNE: So good! And I'm tempted to go that direction, but because of what she said, I'm really tempted to point him first toward *Going After Pacciato*.

[00:53:31]

TRACI: Oh.

ANNE: It's not for everyone. It requires a serious suspension of disbelief and like, an acknowledgement that okay, like O'Brien is going to take you to some weird places, so you have to feel like you're in good hands or you're just not going to want to go there. [TRACI LAUGHS] Because he really blurs the lines between reality and imagination. It unfolds in a very dreamlike way, but there's a soldier in Vietnam who decides like, this is enough of that. He begins hiking to Paris, but some of his fellow soldiers are told to go bring him back, thus the title. So that's the basic setup. You have a soldier who wants to leave the war. Over this basic plot, O'Brien overlays *Alice in Wonderland*-

TRACI: Ooh.

ANNE: And there are all these incredible dreamy, unbelievable is what I really mean by incredible, references and literary allusions and they literally fall down a rabbit hole, and if you don't understand the one book, you cannot understand the other. But if you take them both together, it is probably not a stretch to say it will not be like anything you have ever read before.

TRACI: That sounds so good. I'm going to read that.

ANNE: So, Traci, you may not read like everybody's dads.

TRACI: No.

ANNE: But you read like some people's dads, and I hope we brought those people some good book recommendations today.

TRACI: Yeah. I hope so. Do people come back to you and tell you what they think?

ANNE: They do!

TRACI: Okay.

ANNE: They do. But even if they didn't, I came away from our conversation with so many books for my list. And also if I want to give them to my father and my father-in-law, well, that's just bonus.

TRACI: Well let me know if you do. I'm excited. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: Oh, I will. And we will report back.

TRACI: Yeah.

[00:55:11]

ANNE: Thank you so much for not only talking books with me today, but for functioning as like the literary recommendation dispensing machine.

TRACI: And thank you guys for writing in. This is so awesome.

ANNE: Yeah, listeners, we loved your requests. Even if we may have been temporarily baffled.

TRACI: Yeah. [LAUGHS]

ANNE: I hope we delivered, and we want to hear. Please leave comments or write us. You can send it to Brenna at Brenna B-R-E-N-N-A at modernmrsdarcy.com and let us know what you chose for the giftees on your wishlist. And if you get to hear what they thought about what they read next after you gave them their present, well, we want to hear about that too.

Traci, it's been a pleasure. Thank you so much for talking books with me.

TRACI: Thank you, Anne.

[CHEERFUL OUTRO MUSIC]

ANNE: Hey readers, I hope you enjoyed our gift suggestions for your hard-to-buy-for loved ones — and honestly, for yourself. I'd love to hear what YOU are giving this holiday — and if you quote identify with Traci and other readers who joke that they “read like a dad,” we'd love to hear some of *your* top picks in the comment section! That page is at whatshouldireadnextpodcast.com/212 (that's 2-1-2) and it's where you'll find the full list of titles we talked about today. If you enjoyed today's episode, you're going to want to subscribe to Traci's show as well. You can find Traci on Twitter @stackspodcast and The Stacks is on Instagram @thestackspod.

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Thanks to the people who make this show happen! What Should I Read Next is produced by Brenna Frederick, with sound design by Kellen Pechacek.

Readers, that's it for this episode. Thanks so much for listening. And as Rainer Maria Rilke said, "ah, how good it is to be among people who are reading." Happy reading, everyone.