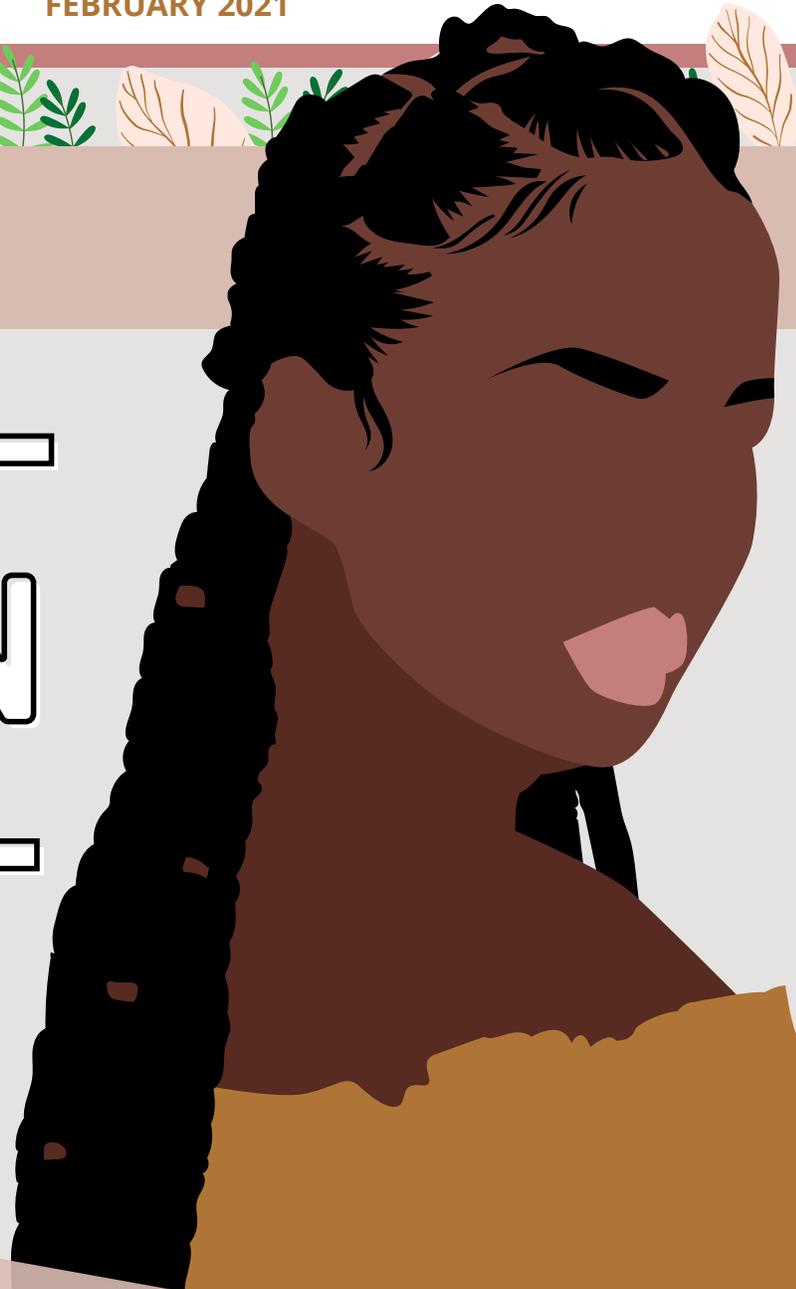




the ORLA
newsletter.

FEBRUARY 2021

BLACK EXCELL- ENCE IN LITERA- TURE



The Importance of Supporting Black Creators & Black-Owned Businesses

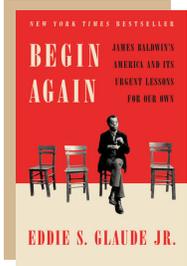


Support Your Library Next Month in the 2021 Week of Giving



Celebrating Black History Month with 10 Excellent Black Authors of the 21st Century

ADULT



BEGIN AGAIN: JAMES BALDWIN'S AMERICA AND ITS URGENT LESSONS FOR OUR OWN

EDDIE S. GLAUDE JR.

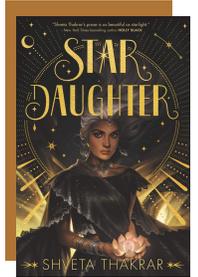
"*Begin Again* is a trip down two memory lanes. One route leads to the 'good old days' filled with racial violence, protest, oppression & anger. The other leads to a reassessment of the racial, cultural & literary work & words of James Baldwin. The two roads quickly meet & look very much like the intersection where America sits today. Glaude's lively & needling prose apply Baldwin's critique to our current crises & concerns. *Begin Again* helps us see through Baldwin's eyes today's cultural tensions, from Black Lives Matter to white supremacy. A good read for today, *Begin Again* sent me back to the library shelves to read & reread Baldwin's many stories, essays & plays. Always a good read & a great roadmap to find our way through the new year." -- David Mayer, ORLA Board Chair



YOUNG ADULT

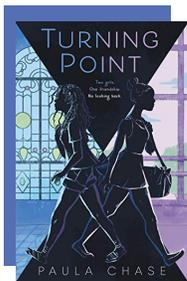
STAR DAUGHTER

SHVETA THAKRAR



"In Thakrar's debut novel, she has managed to deliver us the stars. Literally. As in her main character, Sheetal, is a half-mortal/half-luminous sphere of plasma... The beginning of this story has the protagonist struggling with problems any typical teenager might face. However, when Sheetal accidentally burns her father with her starfire & is forced to compete in a muse's competition at the Kingdom of the Stars to save him, it takes on a much more fantastical turn. Pair all these elements with Thakrar's rich description of Indian culture, & it makes for a riveting coming of age story where finding your place in the world has turned into a more verbatim problem. The only downside to this story is Thakrar's perfectly gift-wrapped ending. It almost leaves one with the feeling of being rushed for a conclusion. However, if she wanted to deliver us a cheerful & magical read, then she has definitely hit her mark. Overall, I enjoyed this book & think fans of Laini Taylor or Leigh Bardugo would as well." -- Daidre Green, Oil City Library

JUVENILE



TURNING POINT

PAULA CHASE

"Best friends Mo & Sheeda are going in different directions the summer before their freshman year. Mo is spending three weeks at a ballet intensive, where she is aiming for a full year scholarship, & Sheeda is faced with a summer alone, worried that her relationship with Mo will deteriorate. Both girls experience different kinds of pressure - Mo is one of the only Black girls at Ballet America, & doesn't have the same experience of ballet culture the others do. She feels that she doesn't fit in, & maybe her talent is going unrecognized because of the color of her skin. Sheeda is consumed with church activities her aunt pushes her into, & spends her time out of church wallowing alone, or chatting online with Mo's brother Lennie. As her relationship with both church & Lennie deepens, an unsettling event happens, leaving her to wonder what is truly important. The story is told from alternating viewpoints of the two girls, & captures each distinct voice with empathy & truthfulness. The emotions the girls go through while trying to figure out their place are realistically rendered & believable, & I was left with hope for each of the characters in the book, even those whose stories weren't front & center. For readers who like realistic fiction & friendship stories." -- Annie Welsh, Oil Region Library Association

Want more?

Check out our Bite Size Book Reviews on  **YouTube**



March 15-19

Next month, the giving is on.

Bridge Builders Community Foundations encourages philanthropy and supports community development by inviting local non-profits to participate in the annual Week of Giving to help raise awareness and provide financial support to important local causes! We are appreciative of their efforts and excited to participate. Stay tuned to our website, newsletter and social media in March for more information on how and when to donate!

Annual Appeal Sees Outstanding Support

ORLA's 2nd Annual Appeal, which was launched in mid-December of 2020, has now raised over \$30,000 and counting! We want to sincerely thank YOU for supporting your library and spreading the word about the value of libraries to others. Financial support helps us to provide more materials and resources for the communities we serve. Missed the Annual Appeal? You can still support your library by donating during BBCF's annual Week of Giving next month (March 15-19). We are so grateful and thank you for your continued support!



The Importance of Supporting

BLACK CREATORS

The racial wealth gap still exists.

Today, the median household income for white families is almost 6.5 times that of Black families. By 2053, the median wealth for Black families is projected to fall to zero. Supporting Black creators and Black-owned businesses helps to close the racial wealth gap and creates more opportunities for property ownership, generational wealth, credit building and meaningful savings for Black individuals.

Holding companies accountable.

Many large companies are still guilty of racial discrimination and continuing to implement policies that result in racial injustice. By supporting Black creators and Black-owned companies over companies who are discriminatory, you are voting for diversity and fair policies and practices with your dollar. It can also empower successful minority-owned businesses to create more equitable standards and policies.

Visibility and representation.

There are currently over 19 million white-owned businesses in the United States, and only about 2.6 million Black-owned businesses. According to the State of Working America, "*Black people spend 4% more money annually than any other race although they are the least represented race and the race that lives in poverty at the highest rate*". When we choose to support Black creators and Black-owned businesses, young Black children grow up to see successful and thriving communities that they feel confident being a part of.

BLACK EXCELLENCE IN LITERATURE

OF THE 21ST CENTURY



Colson Whitehead

is an American novelist. His work is described by many as literary, cultural & often historical. He received the National Book Award For Fiction in 2016 & the Pulitzer Prize For Fiction in both 2017 & 2020. **Read:** *The Underground Railroad*, *The Intuitionist*, & *The Nickel Boys*



Jason Reynolds

is an American author of novels and poetry for young adult & middle-grade audiences. His work is heavily influenced by rap & antiracism. Reynolds' works always feature minority characters. **Read:** *Stamped*, *Long Way Down*, *All American Boys*, *Ghost* & more!



Yaa Gyasi

is an American-Ghanaian novelist whose debut novel won the American Book Award. Her work is inspired by her childhood in Ghana & her immigration & acclamation to America. **Read:** *Transcendent Kingdom* or *Homegoing* on Overdrive or Libby



Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

is a Nigerian writer of nonfiction & novels. Her work primarily focuses on African culture & feminism. She has received the Orange Prize for Fiction & the O. Henry Award. **Read:** *Dear Ijeawele* or *We Should All Be Feminists* on OverDrive or Libby



Ta-Nehisi Coates

is an American author & journalist. He has received both the National Book Award & the Kirkus Prize for nonfiction. His work explores racism & white supremacy in America. **Read:** *Between the World and Me*, *The Water Dancer*, *We Were Eight Years in Power*, & more!



Jacqueline Woodson

is an American novelist for child, teen & adult audiences. Her work often explores gender, sexual identity, African-American society & history, & economic status. **Read:** *Brown Girl Dreaming*, *Before the Ever After*, *Harbor Me* & more!



Roxane Gay

is an American professor, writer, editor & social commentator. Gay's work analyzes & deconstructs issues of sexism & racism through the lens of her personal experiences with gender identity, sexuality & race. **Read:** *Not That Bad* or *Hunger*



Angie Thomas

is an American young adult novelist. Her work sheds light on the the controversial issue of police brutality, the treatment of minorities & the Black Lives Matter movement. **Read:** *The Hate U Give* or *On the Come Up*



Walter Mosley

is an American novelist, most well-known for his many works of crime fiction. He was the first African American man to receive the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. **Read:** *The Awkward Black Man*, *A Little Yellow Dog* & more!



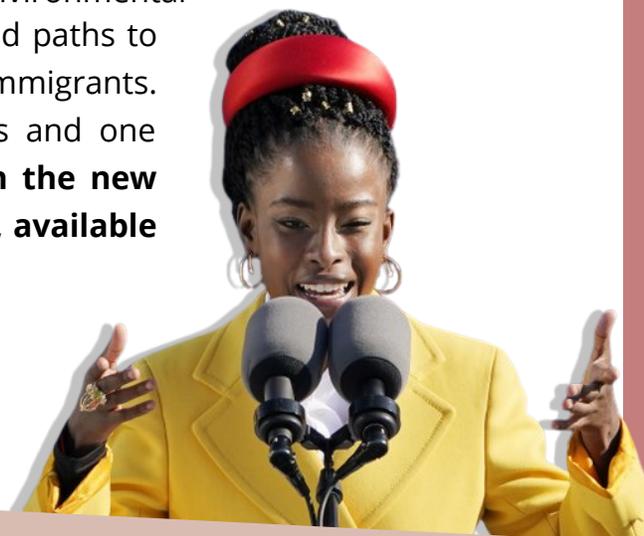
Isabel Wilkerson

is an American journalist & author. She was the first African American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize in journalism. Her work focuses on racism & its history in America. **Read:** *The Warmth of Other Suns* or *Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents*

KAMALA HARRIS

First Black Vice President of the United States

She's also the first female and the first South Asian American to hold this office. On January 20th, 2021 she was officially inaugurated as all of these things, making waves and breaking barriers as the highest-ranking female elected official in U.S. history. She has served the public as the District Attorney of San Francisco, the Attorney General of the State of California and a U.S. Senator for the State of California. Harris was named as one of the "100 Most Influential People in the World" by *Time* in 2013 and was featured in *Newsweek's* "20 of America's Most Powerful Women" in 2005. Harris also received the Bipartisan Justice Award in 2016 and the Thurgood Marshall Award in 2005. She continually advocates for LGBT rights, feminism, criminal justice reform, environmental protection, consumer protection and paths to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. She's written two nonfiction books and one children's book. **Read her story in the new title *Kamala's Way* by Dan Morain, available at any ORLA location.**



AMANDA GORMON

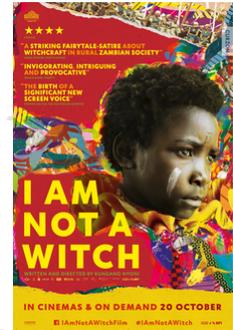
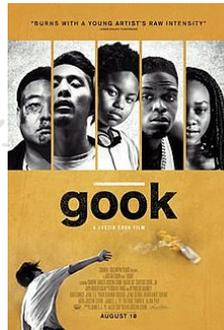
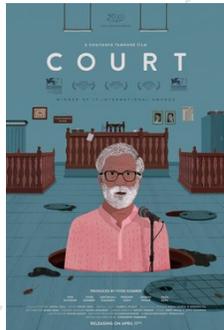
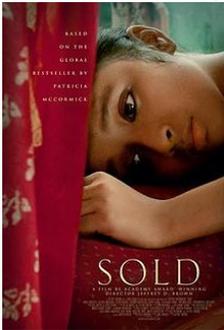
First National Youth Poet Laureate

Amanda Gorman is the 22-year-old National Youth Poet Laureate who delivered her poem *The Hill We Climb* at the United States Presidential Inauguration of Joe Biden. She is the youngest person to ever deliver the Inaugural Poem and gave an outstanding performance, despite her lifelong struggle with a speech impediment. The National Youth Poet Laureate is a title held in the United States by a young person who demonstrates skill in the arts, particularly poetry and/or spoken word, is a strong leader, is committed to social justice, and is active in civic discourse and advocacy (as described by the Poetry Foundation). She published her first book of poetry, *The One for Whom Food Is Not Enough*, in 2015. She writes about gender politics, feminism, oppression, marginalization, race, her childhood and the African diaspora.

FEATURED DIGITAL RESOURCES

Available at www.oilregionlibraries.org

'Powerful Voices' films available on **kanopy**



Stream these & more for free with your library card.

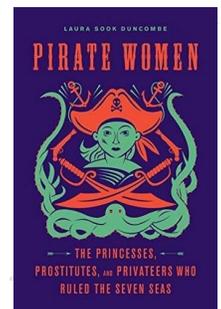
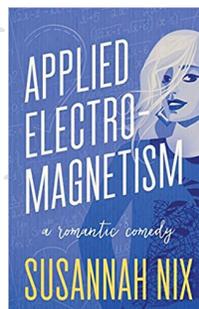
NEW VIRTUAL PROGRAMS EVERY WEEK



Take advantage of the many virtual programs ORLA has to offer! An optional Take-and-Make activity to complete at home is always included & new programs are posted every week. Check our website for **Storytimes**, **Library Bobbins**, **Crafting with Ms. Terrie**, & call the Oil City Library for information about **LIVE Zoom Storytime** with Annie!




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