

2014-2015 Texas Library Association Lariat Adult Fiction Reading List Task Force Committee

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 2015

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TITLE:

Top 25 Adult Fiction Books 2014 from the 2014-2015 TLA Lariat Adult Fiction Reading List Task Force Committee

December 2014

The Texas Library Association announces the final list for the 2014 Lariat Top 25 books. This annual list calls attention to outstanding fiction published during 2013-2014 that merits special attention from readers. Please join us at <http://www.txla.org/Lariat> for lists from previous years and other Lariat materials.

1. ***After I'm Gone***~ Lippman, Laura; William Morrow/ HarperCollins Publishers.
Twenty six years ago, wealthy Felix Brewer disappeared to avoid prison and left the five women in his life, but it didn't go as planned: someone died; money disappeared. What really happened? Detective Sandy Sanchez works the cold case to find out.
2. ***All the Light We Cannot See***~ Doerr, Anthony; Scribner.
During World War II, blind Marie-Laure Leblanc is forced to journey from Paris to Saint-Malo with her father. Werner Pfenning, a gifted orphan seeking to improve life for himself and his sister, becomes part of the Hitler Youth Academy and then a soldier in Hitler's army. Doerr's stunning prose immerses the reader into a journey of love, courage, and the beauty of nature along with the power of science that will haunt the reader.
3. ***Archetype***~ Waters, M.D.; Dutton.
Emma wakes in a hospital, with no memory of her life prior to her accident. She soon begins having dreams that contradict what Declan, her husband, tells her about her life. Just as she's beginning to believe his stories, Emma runs into Noah, the man from her dreams. Who should she trust?
4. ***The Book of Unknown Americans***~ Henriquez, Cristina; Knopf.

The author takes a look at the deeply felt and sympathetic lives of immigrants from Latin America in the United States. Multiple narrators portray the strengths of a community in Delaware that must deal with economic adversity and culture shock.

5. ***The Enchanted***~ Denfeld, Rene; Harper/ HarperCollins Publishers.
Rene Denfeld's debut crafts brutal and disturbing subject matter into an extraordinary story. A nameless death row inmate provides the tour through the prison and introduces its inhabitants. The strength and beauty of the writing compels the reader to set aside his/her discomfort and consider identity, redemption, forgiveness, and imagination in new ways.
6. ***Everything I Never Told You***~ Ng, Celeste; The Penguin Press/ Penguin.
Fifteen year old Lydia, the favorite child of Marilyn and James Lee, is found dead in the local lake. Her parents, younger sister, and older brother are thrown into chaos as all of the dreams they had wrapped up in Lydia vanish in an instant. This is a beautifully written story of a family coping with devastating grief while navigating long held secrets, regrets, and fears. This heavy hearted yet moving story has worthy things to say about family.
7. ***The Girl with All the Gifts***~ Carey, M.R; Hachette Book Group/ Orbit.
Melanie is special. Just why and what that means to the people who "take care" of her is worth exploring. This apocalyptic thriller examines the depths to which we will go to survive and the prices we pay.
8. ***A Guide for the Perplexed***~ Horn, Dara; W. W. Norton & Company.
In this inventive novel based on the Biblical story of Joseph, Josephine, brilliant entrepreneur and inventor of software called Geniza, which creates a perfect record of a person's life, goes to Egypt on a business trip. She ends up imprisoned and believed dead by her family. The life and thoughts of Maimonides, provide a parallel and counter-point to the modern story.
9. ***The Husband's Secret***~ Moriarty, Liane; Putnam/ Penguin.
What would you do if you accidentally stumbled across a letter from your husband meant to be opened after his death? Cecilia has worked hard to be a respected member of her community and to have what others view as the perfect family. How will she deal with the contents of the letter?
10. ***I Am Pilgrim***~ Hayes, Terry; Atria/Emily Bestler Books.
A legendary agent of a secret espionage unit for US intelligence, code name PILGRIM, is called out of retirement to track down and stop a terrorist mastermind known only as Saracen. What begins as an unusual murder investigation in New York City turns into a terrifying race-against-time to save America from oblivion that takes Pilgrim on a thrilling international manhunt.
11. ***The Invention of Wings***~ Kidd, Sue Monk; Viking Adult/ Penguin.
Set in pre-Civil War Charleston and told in the alternating voices of real-life abolitionist and women's rights advocate Sarah Grimke and that of her slave Hetty "Handful", the story brings the characters and era to life as it explores race and cultural relationships among us all.
12. ***Life After Life*** ~ Atkinson, Kate, Reagan; Hachette Book Group/ Reagan Arthur Books.

One snowy night in 1910, Ursula Todd is born. Minutes later Ursula Todd dies. On that same balmy evening, Ursula Todd is born again. Each time she dies, Ursula is born again into a recurrence of her former lives. Follow Ursula as she endures joy, heartache, tragedy and unspeakable evil. Be reminded that the smallest thing can change the entire trajectory of one's life.

13. ***Lock In***~ Scalzi, John; Tor Books/ Macmillan.

In this mystery hidden in a sci-fi novel, wealthy Agent Chris of the FBI is a Haden, a person who has suffered a disease that kills many and "locks-in" others. The author creates a story of people who are stuck inside of their bodies, unable to move, see, hear, touch or experience anything physically. Right away there is a strange suicide that sparks an investigation that takes the reader on twists and turns in this near-future mystery.

14. ***The Martian***~ Weir, Andy; Random House.

Mark Watney is one of the first people to walk on Mars, but he also might be the first person to die on Mars. Will Mark be able to survive through the obstacles that lie ahead—food, water, shelter?

15. ***Neverhome***~ Hunt, Laird; Hachette Book Group/ Little, Brown & Company.

Ash Thompson is a Union soldier struggling to survive the bloody battles and grotesque hardships in the South during the Civil War. Through displays of gallantry and bravery, Ash becomes a hero and a folk legend among the fighting men. Ash has a secret, though. Ash is a woman. Go with this rebellious young heroine as she fights her way through bloodshed, hysteria, and heartbreak on her journey home.

16. ***Night Film***~ Pessl, Marisha; Random House.

When 24-year-old Ashley Cordova--the beautiful daughter of reclusive night film director Stanislas Cordova--is found dead, disgraced reporter Scott McGrath becomes obsessed with uncovering the truth of her mysterious death. In his quest for truth, McGrath must question reality and push the limits of his own mind.

17. ***The Pearl that Broke Its Shell***~ Hashimi, Nadia; William Morrow/ HarperCollins Publishers.

Afghanistan women showcase their powerlessness to powerful knowledge as they weave through their quest for equality and education by adopting an ancient Afghanistan custom. The reader is transported to themes about social movements and cultural acceptance in family, Bacha Posh customs from over a century ago, to the present state of global issues in the Middle East. The author takes the reader on a journey from changing gender's cultural norms to freedom and fate.

18. ***The Queen of the Tearling***~ Johansen, Erika; Harper/ HarperCollins Publishers.

Kelsea was a princess raised in secret, her life always in danger from her Regent Uncle and the country of Mort. Kelsea grew up with a strong sense of justice and a love of books. When she turns 19, the Queen's guard comes to take her to the capital city and to the palace. Her journey is perilous, but not compared to navigating right from wrong in situations that seem unfairly stacked against her and those loyal to her. This excellent start to a great fantasy series wraps up the first installment while leaving readers hungry for more.

19. ***The Sea of Tranquility***~ Millay, Katja; Simon and Schuster.

Nastya and Josh have faced tragedy and death which forced them to emotionally isolate themselves from the rest of the world. As they are drawn to each other, they soon realize that there might be happiness in second chances.

20. ***The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing***~ Jacob, Mira; Random House.

The Easpen family span three generations from India to America on a quest for connecting their past, present and future. From vivid descriptions of cultural foods to dysfunctional characters, the novel brings together the importance of family values and valor.

21. ***Stars Go Blue***~ Pritchett, Laura; Counterpoint/ Perseus.

This heart-wrenching, touching story of a family struggling to deal with Alzheimer's is told partly from the patient's point of view. Rancher Ben Cross is frustratingly aware of his mind going and is trying to make some decisions about his family's future.

22. ***Station Eleven***~ St. John Mandel, Emily; Knopf.

Moving backwards and forwards in time, to the before and after of a pandemic that wipes out much of the human race, follow The Travelling Symphony, a nomadic Shakespearean theatre company, as they journey through an altered post-apocalyptic North America. Discover the unexpected twists of fate that connect six people in this poetic and suspenseful story of the relationships that sustain us through the most trying of times.

23. ***The Steady Running of the Hour***~ Go, Justin; Simon & Schuster.

Carrying the reader over time and across the globe, this debut title features Tristan Campbell's quest to claim his inheritance.

24. ***Terms & Conditions***~ Glancy, Robert; Bloomsbury USA./ Macmillan.

Frank, a lawyer who writes the tiny fine print in contracts that no one ever reads, finds his life shattered by a car accident that impairs his memory. As he tries to put his life back together, he starts to find his lost past and his lost sense of self in his own "fine print." This is a fun story about seeing what matters most in life, especially the things that are hidden in plain sight.

25. ***To Rise Again at a Decent Hour***~ Ferris, Joshua; Hachette Book Group/ Little Brown & Company.

Paul C. Rourke, is a Manhattan dentist, but a Boston Red Sox fan. That's the least of his contradictions. He's an avowed Luddite but needs his Sox online community. He's an atheist, but with an odd attachment to the religions of the two great loves of his life. When mysterious websites and internet posts made in his name start appearing, he seems to uncover the solution to his dilemma, of belonging to a religion of doubt.

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