

CUMC annual book list 2019

A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II by [Sonia Purnell](#) August 27, 2019

In 1942, the Gestapo sent out an urgent transmission: “She is the most dangerous of all Allied spies. We must find and destroy her.” The target in their sights was Virginia Hall, a Baltimore socialite who talked her way into Special Operations Executive, the spy organization dubbed Winston Churchill’s “Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare.” She became the first

Allied woman deployed behind enemy lines and—despite her prosthetic leg—helped to light the flame of the French Resistance, revolutionizing secret warfare as we know it. Virginia established vast spy networks throughout France, called weapons and explosives down from the skies, and became a linchpin for the Resistance. Based on new and extensive research, Sonia Purnell has for the first time uncovered the full secret life of Virginia Hall—an astounding and inspiring story of heroism, spy craft, resistance, and personal triumph over shocking adversity. *A Woman of No Importance* is the breathtaking story of how one woman’s fierce persistence helped win the war.

368 pgs

Angels All Around Us: A sightseeing guide to the Invisible World, by Anthony DeStefano September 24, 2019

In *Angels All Around Us*, the international bestselling author of *A Travel Guide to Heaven* and *Ten Prayers God Always Says Yes To* explains the awesome and mysterious reality of the spiritual dimension that surrounds and permeates our very existence. All aspects of the spiritual realm are discussed, including the existence of angels and demons, the whereabouts of loved ones who have passed, the gift of grace, heaven, hell, and even the presence and activity of God in our lives.

Completely consistent with traditional Christian teaching, *Angels All Around Us* will help readers embrace a certitude that makes it easier to act according to their moral beliefs, give them a greater sense of the richness of life, and show them that no amount of suffering—physical, mental, or emotional—will ever be able to destroy the profound sense of inner peace that they can experience on a daily basis. 4.3 stars 227 pages

The Girls of Atomic City: The Untold Story of the Women Who Helped Win World War II by Denise Kiernan October 29, 2019

The incredible story of the young women of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, who unwittingly played a crucial role in one of the most significant moments in U.S. history. The Tennessee town of Oak Ridge was created from scratch in 1942. One of the Manhattan Project’s secret cities, it didn’t appear on any maps until 1949, and yet at the height of World War II it was using more electricity than New York City and was home to more than 75,000 people, many of them young women recruited from small towns across the South. Their jobs were shrouded in mystery, but they were buoyed by a sense of shared purpose, close friendships—and a surplus of handsome scientists and Army men!

But against this vibrant wartime backdrop, a darker story was unfolding. The penalty for talking about their work—even the most innocuous details—was job loss and eviction. One woman was recruited to spy on her coworkers. They all knew *something* big was happening at Oak Ridge, but few could piece together the true nature of their work until the bomb "Little Boy" was dropped over Hiroshima, Japan, and the secret was out. The shocking revelation: the residents of Oak Ridge were enriching uranium for the atomic bomb.

Though the young women originally believed they would leave Oak Ridge after the war, many met husbands there, made lifelong friends, and still call the seventy-year-old town home. The reverberations from their work there—work they didn't fully understand at the time—are still being felt today. In *The Girls of Atomic City*, Denise Kiernan traces the astonishing story of these unsung WWII workers through interviews with dozens of surviving women and other Oak Ridge residents. Like *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, this is history and science made fresh and vibrant—a beautifully told, deeply researched story that unfolds in a suspenseful and exciting way. 402 pages
4.2 stars

Walking with Henry: Big Lessons from a Little Donkey on Faith, Friendship, and Finding Your Path by Rachel Anne ridge (wrote Flash the Homeless Donkey) **November** 26, 2019

Just when you think it's the end of your story . . . grace shows up.

Sometimes it arrives as a moment of joy in the middle of despair. Sometimes you find it next to a trusted friend along an old, well-trodden path. And sometimes, grace has fuzzy ears, a bristled mane, and hope for a new start.

Join Rachel Anne Ridge, author of the beloved memoir *Flash*, in a journey back to the pasture. As she adopts a second rescue donkey as a little brother for Flash—a miniature named Henry—she finds that walking with donkeys has surprising lessons to teach us about prayer, renewing our faith, and connecting to God in fresh ways.

Readers all over the world fell in love with Flash and with Rachel's thoughtful, funny, and poignant stories about what life with a donkey can teach you. Now, meet Henry and join him on a walk that could change everything about how you hope, trust, and move forward from past regrets. 235 pages. 4.9 stars

The Lilac Girls lilac by Martha Hall Kelly **January** 28, 2020

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • For readers of *The Nightingale* and *Sarah's Key*, inspired by the life of a real World War II heroine, this remarkable debut novel reveals the power of unsung women to change history in their quest for love, freedom, and second chances.

New York socialite Caroline Ferriday has her hands full with her post at the French consulate and a new love on the horizon. But Caroline's world is forever changed when Hitler's army invades Poland in September 1939—and then sets its sights on France.

An ocean away from Caroline, Kasia Kuzmerick, a Polish teenager, senses her carefree youth

disappearing as she is drawn deeper into her role as courier for the underground resistance movement. In a tense atmosphere of watchful eyes and suspecting neighbors, one false move can have dire consequences.

For the ambitious young German doctor, Herta Oberheuser, an ad for a government medical position seems her ticket out of a desolate life. Once hired, though, she finds herself trapped in a male-dominated realm of Nazi secrets and power.

The lives of these three women are set on a collision course when the unthinkable happens and Kasia is sent to Ravensbrück, the notorious Nazi concentration camp for women. Their stories cross continents—from New York to Paris, Germany, and Poland—as Caroline and Kasia strive to bring justice to those whom history has forgotten. 497 pages 4.6 stars.

ELEANOR: A SPIRITUAL BIOGRAPHY February 25, 2020

The Faith of the 20th Century's Most Influential Woman Harold Ivan Smith Westminster John Knox Press, 2017 239 pages \$20.00 Stock #RP1923

More than fifty years after her death, Eleanor Roosevelt is re-membered as a formidable First Lady and tireless social activist. Often overlooked, however, is her deep and inclusive spirituality. Her personal faith was focused on Jesus and fueled her commitment to civil rights, women's rights and the rights of all people marginalized in American society. *Eleanor: A Spiritual Biography* provides insight into one of America's most famous women, particularly the spiritual influences that made her so active in social justice issues. **(Education for Mission)** 239 pgs

Fly Girl – How five Daring Women Defied All Odds and Made Aviation History by Keith O'Brien March 31, 2020

“Keith O'Brien has brought these women—mostly long-hidden and forgotten—back into the light where they belong. And he's done it with grace, sensitivity and a cinematic eye for detail that makes *Fly Girls* both exhilarating and heartbreaking.” —USA Today

Between the world wars, no sport was more popular, or more dangerous, than airplane racing. Thousands of fans flocked to multi-day events, and cities vied with one another to host them. The pilots themselves were hailed as dashing heroes who cheerfully stared death in the face. Well, the men were hailed. Female pilots were more often ridiculed than praised for what the press portrayed as silly efforts to horn in on a manly, and deadly, pursuit. *Fly Girls* recounts how a cadre of women banded together to break the original glass ceiling: the entrenched prejudice that conspired to keep them out of the sky.

O'Brien weaves together the stories of five remarkable women: Florence Klingensmith, a high-school dropout who worked for a dry cleaner in Fargo, North Dakota; Ruth Elder, an Alabama divorcee; Amelia Earhart, the most famous, but not necessarily the most skilled; Ruth Nichols, who chafed at the constraints of her blue-blood family's expectations; and Louise Thaden, the mother of two young kids who got her start selling coal in Wichita. Together, they fought for the chance to race against the men — and in 1936 one of them would triumph in the toughest race of all.

Like *Hidden Figures* and *Girls of Atomic City*, *Fly Girls* celebrates a little-known slice of history in which tenacious, trail-blazing women braved all obstacles to achieve greatness. 4.4 stars 352 pgs

The Day the World Came to Town by Jim Defede April 28, 2020

The True Story Behind the Events on 9/11 that Inspired Broadway's Smash Hit Musical *Come from Away*

When 38 jetliners bound for the United States were forced to land at Gander International Airport in Canada by the closing of U.S. airspace on September 11, the population of this small town on Newfoundland Island swelled from 10,300 to nearly 17,000. The citizens of Gander met the stranded passengers with an overwhelming display of friendship and goodwill.

As the passengers stepped from the airplanes, exhausted, hungry and distraught after being held on board for nearly 24 hours while security checked all the baggage, they were greeted with a feast prepared by the townspeople. Local bus drivers who had been on strike came off the picket lines to transport the passengers to the various shelters set up in local schools and churches. Linens and toiletries were bought and donated. A middle school provided showers, as well as access to computers, email, and televisions, allowing the passengers to stay in touch with family and follow the news.

Over the course of those four days, many of the passengers developed friendships with Gander residents that they expect to last a lifetime. As a show of thanks, scholarship funds for the children of Gander have been formed and donations have been made to provide new computers for the schools. This book recounts the inspiring story of the residents of Gander, Canada, whose acts of kindness have touched the lives of thousands of people and been an example of humanity and goodwill. 4.6 stars 260 pages

The Dutch Girl Audrey Hepburn and World War II May 26, 2020

Twenty-five years after her passing, Audrey Hepburn remains the most beloved of all Hollywood stars, known as much for her role as UNICEF ambassador as for films like *Roman Holiday* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Several biographies have chronicled her stardom, but none has covered her intense experiences through five years of Nazi occupation in the Netherlands. According to her son, Luca Dotti, "The war made my mother who she was." Audrey Hepburn's war included participation in the Dutch Resistance, working as a doctor's assistant during the "Bridge Too Far" battle of Arnhem, the brutal execution of her uncle, and the ordeal of the Hunger Winter of 1944. She also had to contend with the fact that her father was a Nazi agent and her mother was pro-Nazi for the first two years of the occupation. But the war years also brought triumphs as Audrey became Arnhem's most famous young ballerina. Audrey's own reminiscences, new interviews with people who knew her in the war, wartime diaries, and research in classified Dutch archives shed light on the riveting, untold story of Audrey Hepburn under fire in World War II. Also included is a section of color and black-and-white photos. Many of these images are from Audrey's personal collection and are published here for the first time. 416 pages 4.1 stars

I Still Dream About You: A Novel June 30, 2020

By Fannie Flagg (mystery) Author of *Fried Green Tomatoes* is back at her irresistible and hilarious best. A comic mystery romp through the streets of Birmingham, Alabama. Past, present, future. 4.1 stars 352 pages

Meet Maggie Fortenberry, a still beautiful former Miss Alabama. To others, Maggie's life seems practically perfect—she's lovely, charming, and a successful agent at Red Mountain Realty. Still, Maggie can't help but wonder how she wound up living a life so different from the one she dreamed of as a child. But just when things seem completely hopeless, and the secrets of Maggie's past drive her to a radical plan to solve it all, Maggie discovers, quite by accident, that everybody, it seems, has at least one little secret.

I Still Dream About You is a wonderful novel that is equal parts southern charm, murder mystery, and that perfect combination of comedy and old-fashioned wisdom that can be served up only by America's own remarkable Fannie Flagg.