

Nonfiction Book Recommendations Kris Wiley for The News-Review

As much as I love to escape when I read, there is something extra special about a well-crafted nonfiction book.

Whether the book provides new information or a different way at examining a topic, great nonfiction captures my attention in a way a novel rarely does.

These true stories showcase writers at the top of their game, and they all get my seal of approval.

"The Barn: The Secret History of a Murder in Mississippi" is a highly readable social history of the people and places central to the murder of Emmett Till in 1955.

Author Wright Thompson grew up in a prominent white family in the Mississippi Delta a generation after Till's death, and he knew nothing about the event that played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement until he was an adult.

In "The Barn," Thompson investigates Till's kidnapping and brutal murder, then examines the decades of silence that followed until a group of people came together to honor and keep alive Till's memory.

"Some People Need Killing: A Memoir of Murder in My Country" is Rappler journalist Patricia Evangelista's account of extrajudicial killings that occurred in the Philippines during President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs between 2016 and 2022.

Evangelista's job as a reporter was to document the deaths of thousands of people, and she weaves the narratives of survivors, families, vigilantes and police officers into a beautifully written book about brutality and loss. I was awed by her perseverance and humanity.

"Bite by Bite: Nourishments and Jamborees" is a delightful collection of brief, personal essays about the food that has nourished author Aimee Nezhukumatathil, a professor at the University of Mississippi.

Nezhukumatathil invokes memories of her father's family in India, her mother's family in the Philippines and her husband and two sons through the food they eat together in celebration, joy and grief. Fumi Nakamura's illustrations perfectly complement the text.

"Bite by Bite" is the follow-up to Nezhukumatathil's award-winning essay collection "World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments," which combines the personal with amazing information about the natural world.

Free Books to Keep

All items in the Friends Book Store are free through Dec. 7. There is a wide selection of fiction and nonfiction books that have been donated or withdrawn from the library. Most of the inventory is for adult readers. A Roseburg Public Library card is not required to shop.

Donations always are welcome with funding used to support the library's programs and projects.

Next week's library events

Wednesday, November 6, 10:15 a.m. – Storytime with Aurora

Wednesday, November 6, 3-4:30 p.m. – Teen program

Thursday, November 7, 10 a.m. – Americans and the Holocaust exhibition opens

Thursday, November 7, 10:15 a.m. – Storytime with Aurora

Thursday, November 7, 4-5 p.m. – Art exploration for K-5th graders