

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO  
TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY AMERICAN FICTION

Reading lists, course syllabi, and prizes include the phrase “twenty-first-century American literature,” but no critical consensus exists regarding when the period began, which works typify it, how to conceptualize its aesthetic priorities, and where its geographical boundaries lie. Considerable criticism has been published on this extraordinary era, but little programmatic analysis has assessed comprehensively the literary and critical/theoretical output to help readers navigate the labyrinth of critical pathways. In addition to ensuring broad coverage of many essential texts, *The Cambridge Companion to Twenty-First-Century American Fiction* offers state-of-the-field analyses of contemporary narrative studies that set the terms of current and future research and teaching. Individual chapters illuminate critical engagements with emergent genres and concepts, including flash fiction, speculative fiction, digital fiction, alternative temporalities, Afro-Futurism, ecocriticism, transgender/queer studies, anti-carceral fiction, precarity, and post-9/11 fiction.

JOSHUA L. MILLER is Associate Professor of English at the University of Michigan. He is the author of *Accented America: The Cultural Politics of Multilingual Modernism* (2011), editor of *The Cambridge Companion to the American Modernist Novel* (2015), and coeditor of *Languages of Modern Jewish Cultures: Comparative Perspectives* (2016).

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-83827-6 — The Cambridge Companion to Twenty-First Century American Fiction  
Edited by Joshua Miller  
Frontmatter  
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FICTION

EDITED BY  
JOSHUA L. MILLER  
*University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*



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**CAMBRIDGE**  
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge. It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108838276](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108838276)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108974288

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First published 2021

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ Books Limited, Padstow Cornwall.

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

NAMES: Miller, Joshua L., 1971– editor.

TITLE: The Cambridge companion to twenty-first century American fiction / edited by Joshua L. Miller.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2021027178 (print) | LCCN 2021027179 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108838276 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108974288 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: American fiction—21st century—History and criticism. | BISAC: LITERARY CRITICISM / American / General | LCGFT: Literary criticism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PS380 .C36 2021 (print) | LCC PS380 (ebook) | DDC 813/.609—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021027178>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021027179>

ISBN 978-1-108-83827-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-97870-5 Paperback

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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MARY PAT BRADY teaches at Cornell University and is the author of *Extinct Lands, Temporal Geographies: Chicana Literature and the Urgency of Space* (2002), which was awarded the Modern Language Association's Prize for the Best Work of Latina/o and Chicana/o Literary and Cultural Criticism. She is an associate editor of the seventh edition of the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* (2013) and editor of the *Gale Guide to Twentieth and Twenty-First Century American Literature* (2017). She is currently completing a new study of Latinx literature, *Traffic*.

HAMILTON CARROLL is Professor of American Studies at the University of Leeds. He is the author of *Affirmative Reaction: New Formations of White Masculinity* (2011). He has published widely on topics in contemporary American literature and culture in numerous edited collections and in journals such as *Comparative American Studies*, *Genre*, the *Journal of American Studies*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Studies in American Fiction*, and *Television and New Media*.

DENNIS CHILDS is Associate Professor of African American Literature and an affiliate faculty member of the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California (UC), San Diego. He is the author of *Slaves of the State: Black Incarceration from the Chain Gang to the Penitentiary* (2015), a work that deals with the connections between chattel slavery and prison slavery from the late nineteenth century through the prison industrial complex. As a scholar-activist, he has worked with various social justice organizations including the Malcolm

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X Grassroots Movement, All of Us or None, Critical Resistance, and the Chicano Mexicano Prison Project. He currently serves as faculty advisor for Students Against Mass Incarceration (SAMI UCSD) – a student-run prison abolitionist organization. In 2015, he was a member of the first ever prisoner solidarity delegation from the United States to Palestine.

MARK GOBLE is Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley and the author of *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (2010). His essays, articles, and reviews have appeared in *Early Literary History*, *Modern Language Quarterly*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *American Literature*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. He is currently at work on a book entitled *Downtime: The Twentieth Century in Slow Motion*, which explores the relation between the experience of slowness and the limits of high technology across a range of film, literature, and new media art.

HEATHER HOUSER is Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas (UT) at Austin. She is the author of the books *Infowhelm: Environmental Art and Literature in an Age of Data* (2020) and *Ecosickness in Contemporary U.S. Fiction: Environment and Affect* (2014), as well as many articles. She codirects Planet Texas 2050, an interdisciplinary climate research program at UT Austin, and is an associate editor at the journal *Contemporary Literature*.

DAVID JAMES is Professor of English at the University of Birmingham, before which he was Reader in Modern and Contemporary Literature at Queen Mary, University of London. His recent books include *Modernist Futures* (2012) and *Discrepant Solace* (2019), along with edited volumes such as *The Legacies of Modernism* (2012), *The Cambridge Companion to British Fiction since 1945* (2015), and *Modernism and Close Reading* (2020). He is an associated editor at *Contemporary Literature*, and for Columbia University Press he coedits the book series Literature Now. He is currently completing *Sentimental Activism* (forthcoming), a book about the political dynamics of solicitation both in contemporary writing and in the contours of cultural criticism.

CANDICE M. JENKINS is Professor of English and African American Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign. She earned her BA from Spelman College and her PhD from Duke University, both in English. Jenkins's research and teaching use a critical black feminist lens to consider how a variety of African American cultural texts address evolving questions of racial subjectivity, sexual politics, and class in the United States. Her first book, *Private Lives, Proper Relations: Regulating Black Intimacy* (2007), was awarded the William Sanders Scarborough Prize by the Modern Language Association. That project examined how twentieth-century black women writers articulated the political consequences of intimacy for the already-vulnerable black subject. Her new book, *Black Bourgeois: Class and Sex in the Flesh* (2019), explores the dilemma



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of black middle-class embodiment in recent African American fiction. Jenkins is now at work on another manuscript, extending her interests in embodiment and racialized vulnerability to contemporary black science fiction and fantasy. Tentatively entitled *Speculative Pessimisms*, the project places Afro-Futurist and black speculative cultural production in conversation with Afro-Pessimist thought.

JULIA H. LEE is Associate Professor of Asian American Studies at UC, Irvine. She is the author of *Reciprocal Representations in African- and Asian American Literatures, 1896–1937* (2010) and *Understanding Maxine Hong Kingston* (2018). She is also a coeditor of *Asian American Literature in Transition*, vol. 1, which is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press. Her book-in-progress is *The Racial Railroad*, which explores the prevalence of the train as a setting for narratives of racial formation and conflict in American culture.

ANGELA NAIMOU is Associate Professor of English at Clemson University and coeditor of *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*. Her book *Salvage Work: U.S. and Caribbean Literatures amid the Debris of Legal Personhood* (2015) won the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present Book Prize and received Honorable Mention for the William Sanders Scarborough Award by the Modern Language Association. Her current book project is about contemporary literature and international migration regimes. She is also at work on a critical volume, *Diaspora and Literary Studies*, as part of the Cambridge University Press Critical Concepts Series.

KATALIN ORBÁN holds a PhD from Rutgers University. She is Associate Professor at the Institute of Art Theory and Media Studies at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, with prior positions at Harvard University, National University of Singapore, and Central European University. Her work on graphic narrative has appeared in *Representations*, *Critical Inquiry*, *The Edinburgh Companion to Narrative Theories*, the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, and most recently in *Documenting Trauma in Comics* (2020) and *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma* (2020). Her work on cultural memory and narrative includes *Ethical Diversions: The Post-Holocaust Narratives of Pynchon, Abish, DeLillo, and Spiegelman* (2005, 2013).

CRYSTAL PARIKH is Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis and English at New York University, where she specializes in twentieth-century and contemporary American literature and culture. In addition to numerous essays and articles, Parikh has published *Writing Human Rights: The Political Imaginaries of Writers of Color* (2017) and *An Ethics of Betrayal: The Politics of Otherness in Emergent U.S. Literature and Culture* (2009). She is also the editor of the recently published *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights and Literature* (2019) and coeditor, with Daniel Y. Kim, of *The Cambridge Companion to Asian*

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

*American Literature* (2015). Parikh is the director of the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at NYU.

SCOTT RETTBERG is Professor of Digital Culture in the Department of Linguistic, Literary, and Aesthetic Studies at the University of Bergen, Norway. Rettberg is the author or coauthor of novel-length works of electronic literature, combinatory poetry, and films including *The Unknown*, *Kind of Blue*, *Implementation*, *Frequency*, *The Catastrophe Trilogy*, *Three Rails Live*, *Toxi\*City*, *Hearts and Minds: The Interrogations Project*, and others. His creative work has been exhibited both online and at art venues including the Venice Biennale, Inova Gallery, Rom 8, the Chemical Heritage Foundation Museum, Palazzo dell Arti Napoli, and elsewhere. Rettberg is the author of *Electronic Literature* (2019), a comprehensive study of the histories and genres of electronic literature and winner of the 2019 N. Katherine Award for Criticism of Electronic Literature.

TRISH SALAH is the author of *Wanting in Arabic* and *Lyric Sexology*, vol. 1 (2014) and coeditor of special issues of *Transgender Studies Quarterly* on “Trans Cultural Production” and of *Arc Poetry Magazine* on work by trans, Two-Spirit, non-binary, and gender non-conforming writers. She is Associate Professor of Gender Studies at Queen’s University.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Editing this volume has been a unique privilege and pleasure. First and foremost, I want to thank the extraordinary contributors, all of whom have brought astonishing storehouses of knowledge and expertise to their chapters. Ray Ryan has been the essential and encouraging voice at every stage, from this project's first glimmerings to its conclusion, while Edgar Mendez wisely and patiently accompanied me through the volume's final stages and emergence, and Victoria Parrin tirelessly oversaw its production.

My colleagues and students at the University of Michigan have been pivotal interlocutors for the conceptual frameworks that have informed how I think, teach, and write about twenty-first-century US fiction. Participants in the Critical Contemporary Studies Workshop have been an ongoing source of inspiration and insight. I am very grateful to Hayley O'Malley and Emily Na for their brilliant and scrupulous research assistance. I would also like to acknowledge the crucial support of the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan.

I am completing this manuscript at what I hope will be the apex of the COVID-19 global health emergency. The fact that this volume does not contain a discussion of pandemic fiction merely demonstrates, as if we need reminding, the always-unfinished business of critical contemporary cultural studies.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act  
 Ted Nelson, “A File Structure for the Complex, the Changing, and the Indeterminate”
- 1966 *Star Trek: Original Series* (series, –1969)  
 Tom Phillips, *A Humument* (–present)
- 1968 John Barth, “Frame Tale”
- 1969 Creation of ARPANET, forerunner of the Internet
- 1970 George Jackson, *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson*
- 1971 World Economic Forum founded
- 1973 Arthur C. Clarke, *Rendezvous with Rama*  
 Donald Goines, *White Man’s Law, Black Man’s Injustice*  
 Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity’s Rainbow*  
 Kurt Vonnegut, *Breakfast of Champions*
- 1974 James Baldwin, *If Beale Street Could Talk*  
 Angela Davis, *Angela Davis: An Autobiography*  
 Theodor Holm Nelson, *Computer Lib/Dream Machines*  
 Robert Stone, *Dog Soldiers*  
 Thomas William, *The Hair of Harold Roux*
- 1976 Don DeLillo, *Ratner’s Star*  
 Maxine Hong Kingston, *Woman Warrior*
- 1977 Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*
- 1980 Marilyn Robinson, *Housekeeping*  
 Art Spiegelman, *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale* (series in *Raw* –1991)
- 1981 Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography*
- 1982 Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee*  
 Gilbert, Jaime, and Mario Hernandez, *Love and Rockets* (series, –1996)  
 John McPhee, *Basin and Range*

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- 1983 *Invisible Seattle* novel project (published 1987)  
 Toni Morrison, “Recitatif”
- 1984 Apple Macintosh released  
 William Gibson, *Neuromancer*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Icehenge*
- 1986 US Space Shuttle *Challenger* explodes  
 Judy Malloy, *Uncle Roger*  
 Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, *Watchmen* (series, –1987)
- 1987 “Black Monday,” stock market crash  
 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*  
 Jay David Bolter, John Brown, and Michael Joyce, *Storyspace*  
 software  
 Octavia Butler, *Dawn* (*Xenogenesis* trilogy)  
 Michael Joyce, *afternoon, a story*  
 Toni Morrison, *Beloved*  
 William T. Vollmann, *You Bright and Risen Angels*
- 1988 Kathy Acker, *Empire of the Senseless*  
 Nicholson Baker, *The Mezzanine*  
 Octavia Butler, *Adulthood Rites* (*Xenogenesis* trilogy)  
 NWA, “Fuck the Police” (song)  
 Peter Straub, *Koko*  
 Public Enemy, “Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos” (song)
- 1989 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation founded  
 Berlin Wall falls; end of Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe  
 Tiananmen Square protest and massacre  
 Tim Berners-Lee, “Information Management: A Proposal”  
 Octavia Butler, *Imago* (*Xenogenesis* trilogy)  
 John Langley and Malcolm Barbour, *COPS*  
 (TV program, –2020)
- 1990 Iraq invades Kuwait, Persian Gulf War  
 Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters*  
 Tim O’Brien, *The Things They Carried*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Pacific Edge*  
 Karen Tei Yamashita, *Through the Arc of the Rainforest*
- 1991 Tim Berners-Lee designs first World Wide Web server  
 Martin Amis, *Time’s Arrow*  
 Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto”  
 Main Source, “More Than Just a Friendly Game  
 of Baseball” (song)  
 Stuart Moulthrop, *Victory Garden*  
 Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*

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- 1992 Poppy Z. Brite, *Lost Souls*  
 Patrick Chamoiseau, *Texaco*  
 Robert Coover, “The End of Books”  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Red Mars* (Mars trilogy)
- 1993 Bombing of the World Trade Center  
 Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Sower*  
 KRS, “Sound of Da Police” (song)  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Green Mars* (Mars trilogy)
- 1994 Netscape Navigator web browser released  
 North American Free Trade Agreement  
 Samuel Ace, *Normal Sex*  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*  
 Don DeLillo, “Videotape”
- 1995 World Trade Organization (WTO) established  
 Oklahoma City bombing  
 Askari X, “Gotta Go” (song)  
 Charles Burns, *Black Hole* (series, –2005)  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Krik? Krak!*  
 Rosario Ferré, *The House on the Lagoon*  
 Shelley Jackson, *Patchwork Girl*  
 Stuart Moulthrop, *Hegirascope*  
 Adrian Tomine, *Optic Nerve* (series, –2016)  
 Chris Ware, *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth* (series, –2000)
- 1996 Robert Arellano, *Sunshine '69*  
 Linda Hogan, *Dwellings: A Spiritual History of the Living World*  
 Jamaica Kinkaid, *Autobiography of My Mother*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Blue Mars* (Mars trilogy)  
 Caitlin Sullivan, *Nearly Roadkill*
- 1997 Mark Amerika, *Grammatron*  
 Don DeLillo, *Underworld*  
 Francisco Goldman, *The Ordinary Seaman*  
 Shelley Jackson, *My Body & a Wunderkammer*  
 Toni Morrison, *Paradise*
- 1998 Google founded  
 Tony Burgess, *Pontypool Changes Everything*  
 Octavia Butler, *The Parable of the Talents*  
 Nalo Hopkinson, *Brown Girl in the Ring*  
 Peter Howitt, *Sliding Doors* (film)  
 Gayl Jones, *The Healing*  
 Monifa Love, *Freedom in the Dismal*  
 Curtis White, *Memories of My Father Watching TV*

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- 1999 Electronic Literature Organization founded  
 William Gillespie, Frank Marquardt, Scott Rettberg, and Dirk Stratton, *The Unknown*  
 Gayl Jones, *Mosquito*  
 Jonathan Lethem, *Motherless Brooklyn*  
 Stuart Moulthrop, *Reagan Library*  
 Neal Stephenson, *Cryptonomicon*  
 Rob Wittig, *The Fall of the Site of Marsha*  
 Colson Whitehead, *The Intuitionist*
- 2000 George W. Bush elected president after Florida recount  
 Michael Chabon, *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*  
 Mark Z. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*  
 Dead Prez, *Let's Get Free* (song)  
 Dave Eggers, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*  
 Nalo Hopkinson, *Midnight Robber*  
 Evelina Zuni Lucero, *Night Sky, Morning Star*  
 Talan Memmott, *Lexia to Perplexia*  
 Emily Short, *Galatea*
- 2001 Al-Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon  
 Apple releases the iPod  
 USA Patriot Act passed and Global War on Terror declared  
 Wikipedia launched  
 Jessica Abel, *La Perdida* (series, –2005)  
 Percival Everett, *Erasure*  
 Jonathan Franzen, *The Corrections*  
 Neil Gaiman, *American Gods*  
 Shelley and Pamela Jackson, *The Doll Games*
- 2002 Sandra Cisneros, *Caramelo*  
 T. Cooper, *Some of the Parts*  
 Lydia Davis, *Samuel Johnson Is Indignant*  
 Jeffrey Eugenides, *Middlesex*  
 Phoebe Gloeckner, *The Diary of a Teenage Girl: An Account in Words and Pictures*  
 Nelly Rosario, *Song of the Water Saints*  
 Emily Short, *Savoir-Faire*  
 Adrian Tomine, *Summer Blonde*
- 2003 Human Genome Project completed  
 US invasion of Iraq  
 Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (*MaddAddam* trilogy)  
 J. Michael Bailey, *The Man Who Would Be Queen*

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- Susan Choi, *American Woman*  
 Don DeLillo, *Cosmopolis*  
 Nalo Hopkinson, *The Salt Roads*  
 Edward P. Jones, *The Known World*  
 Robert Kirkman, Tony Moore and Charlie Adlard, *The Walking Dead* (series, –present)  
 Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake*  
 Jonathan Lethem, *The Fortress of Solitude*  
 Christine Schutt, *Florida*  
 Craig Thompson, *Blankets*
- 2004 Facebook launched  
 Invincible, aka Ill Weaver, “The Door,” on *The We That Sets Us Free: Building a World without Prisons*  
 Edwidge Danticat, *The Dew Breaker*  
 Don Lee, *Country of Origin*  
 Aimee Phan, *We Should Never Meet*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Forty Signs of Rain* (*Science in the Capital* trilogy)  
 Marilynne Robinson, *Gilead*  
 Philip Roth, *The Plot against America*  
 Art Spiegelman, *In the Shadow of No Towers*
- 2005 Hurricane Katrina  
 Irish Republican Army declares end to military actions against Britain  
 Kyoto Protocol implemented  
 YouTube launched  
 Charlie Anders, *Choirboy*  
 Octavia Butler, *Fledgling*  
 Jonathan Safran Foer, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*  
 Sesshu Foster, *Atomik Aztex*  
 Matthew Kaopio, *Written in the Sky*  
 Cormac McCarthy, *No Country for Old Men*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *Zahrah the Windseeker*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Fifty Degrees Below* (*Science in the Capital* trilogy)
- 2006 Twitter launched  
 Julia Alvarez, *Saving the World*  
 Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*  
 Max Brooks, *World War Z*  
 Dave Eggers, *What Is the What: The Autobiography of Valentino*



## CHRONOLOGY

- Achak Deng*  
 Alicia Goranson, *Supervillainz*  
 Reyna Grande, *Across a Hundred Mountains*  
 Andrea Hairston, *Mindscape*  
 Ann Jaramillo, *La Línea*  
 Ana-Maurine Lara, *Erzulie's Skirt*  
 Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*  
 Jay McInerney, *The Good Life*  
 Claire Messud, *The Emperor's Children*  
 Jason Nelson, *Game, Game, Game and Again Game*  
 Thomas Pynchon, *Against the Day*  
 Gary Shteyngart, *Absurdistan*
- 2007 Great Recession/Global financial crisis  
 Apple iPhone released  
 Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*  
 Michael Chabon, *The Yiddish Policeman's Union*  
 Susan Choi, *A Person of Interest*  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying*  
 Don DeLillo, *Falling Man*  
 Junot Díaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*  
 Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*  
 Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism"  
 Judd Morrissey, *The Last Performance*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *The Shadow Speaker*  
 Joseph O'Neill, *Netherland*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Sixty Days and Counting* (*Science in the Capital* trilogy)  
 Helen Schulman, *A Day at the Beach*  
 Helena Mariá Viramontes, *Their Dogs Came with Them*
- 2008 Barack Obama elected president  
 Susan Choi, *A Person of Interest*  
 Sharon Daniel, *Public Secrets*  
 Aleksandar Hemon, *The Lazarus Project*  
 Linda Hogan, *People of the Whale*  
 Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth*  
 Toni Morrison, *A Mercy*  
 Jason Nelson, *I Made This. You Play This. We Are Enemies*
- 2009 Margaret Atwood, *The Year of the Flood* (*MaddAddam* trilogy)  
 Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Windup Girl*  
 Jeanine Capó Crucet, *How to Leave Hialeah*

## CHRONOLOGY

- Dave Eggers, *Zeitoun*  
 Victor LaValle, *Big Machine*  
 Jonathan Lethem, *Chronic City*  
 Mark Marino, *The Ballad of Work Study Seth, The Loss Wikiless Timespedia*  
 China Miéville, *The City and the City*  
 Maggie Nelson, *Bluets*  
 Thomas Pynchon, *Inherent Vice*  
 David Small, *Stitches*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Galileo's Dream*  
 Jess Walter, *The Financial Lives of the Poets*
- 2010 Earthquake in Haiti  
 Largest oil spill in US history in the Gulf of Mexico  
 Paolo Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker* (*Ship Breaker* trilogy)  
 Myriam Chancy, *The Loneliness of Angels*  
 Don DeLillo, *Point Omega*  
 Jennifer Egan, *A Visit from the Goon Squad*  
 Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom*  
 Rachel B. Glaser, *Pee on Water*  
 Mira Grant, *Feed* (*Newsflesh* series)  
 Sheila Heti, *How Should a Person Be?*  
 N. K. Jemisin, *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* and *The Broken Kingdoms* (*Inheritance* trilogy)  
 Ben Marcus, *The Flame Alphabet*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *Who Fears Death*  
 Gary Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*  
 GB Tran, *Vietnamerica*  
 Karen Tei Yamashita, *I Hotel*
- 2011 Occupy Movement begins  
 Syrian Civil War begins  
 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster  
 World population reaches seven billion people  
 Samiya Hameeda Abdullah, aka “Goldii,” “Trap Doors” (song)  
 Teju Cole, *Open City*  
 Mira Grant, *Deadline* (*Newsflesh* series)  
 Andrea Hairston, *Redwood and Wildfire*  
 N. K. Jemisin, *The Kingdom of Gods* (*Inheritance* trilogy)  
 Mat Johnson, *Pym*  
 Matthew Kaopio, *Up Among the Stars*  
 Ben Lerner, *Leaving the Atocha Station*

## CHRONOLOGY

- Mark Marino and Rob Wittig, *Occupy MLA*  
 China Miéville, *Embassytown*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Witch*  
 Amy Waldman, *The Submission*  
 Jesmyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones*  
 Colson Whitehead, *Zone One*
- 2012 Murder of Trayvon Martin  
 Hurricane Sandy  
 Rover Curiosity takes a selfie on Mars  
 Paolo Bacigalupi, *Drowned Cities* (*Ship Breaker* trilogy)  
 Tobias S. Bucknell, *Arctic Rising*  
 Samuel R. Delany, *Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders*  
 Ceyenne Doroshow, *Cooking in Heels*  
 Dave Eggers, *A Hologram for the King*  
 Louise Erdrich, *Round House*  
 Cat Fitzpatrick and Casey Platt, *The Collection: Short Fiction from the Transgender Vanguard*  
 Gillian Flynn, *Gone Girl*  
 Ben Fountain, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*  
 Mira Grant, *Blackout* (*Newsflesh* series)  
 N. K. Jemisin, *Dreamblood* series  
 Caitlín R. Kiernan, *The Drowning Girl: A Memoir*  
 Barbara Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*  
 Victor LaValle, *The Devil in Silver*  
 Toni Morrison, *Home*  
 Porpentine, *Howling Dogs*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, 2312  
 Emily Short, *Counterfeit Monkey*  
 Chris Ware, *Building Stories*
- 2013 Black Lives Matter Movement founded  
 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*  
 Margaret Atwood, *MaddAddam* (*MaddAddam* trilogy)  
 Imogen Binnie, *Nevada*  
 Wesley Chu, *The Lives of Tao* and *The Deaths of Tao* (*Tao* trilogy)  
 Teju Cole, "Seven Short Stories about Drones"  
 Edwidge Danticat, *Claire of the Sea Light*  
 David Eggers, *The Circle*  
 Fullbright Company, *Gone Home* (video game)  
 Ben Katchor, *Hand-Drying in America*

## CHRONOLOGY

- Rachel Kushner, *The Flamethrowers*  
 Kiese Laymon, *Long Division*  
 Jonathan Lethem, *Dissident Gardens*  
 Jason Nelson, *Nothing You Have Done Deserves Such Praise*  
 Ruth Ozeki, *A Tale for the Time Being*  
 Thomas Pynchon, *Bleeding Edge*  
 Nathaniel Rich, *Odds against Tomorrow*  
 George Saunders, *Tenth of December*  
 Saïd Sayrafiezadeh, *Brief Encounters with the Enemy*  
 Zadie Smith, “Meet the President!”  
 TC Tolbert and Tim Trace Peterson, *Troubling the Line: Trans and Genderqueer Poetry and Poetics*
- 2014 Fatal shooting of Michael Brown leads to protests in Ferguson, Missouri  
 Tobias S. Buckell, *Hurricane Fever*  
 Teju Cole, “Hafiz” and *Open City*  
 Dane Figueroa Edidi, *Yemaya’s Daughters*  
 William Gibson, *The Peripheral*  
 Chang-rae Lee, *On Such a Full Sea*  
 Edan Lepucki, *California*  
 Ben Lerner, *10:04*  
 Emily St. John Mandel, *Station Eleven*  
 Richard McGuire, *Here*  
 Ottessa Moshfegh, *McGlue*  
 Celeste Ng, *Everything I Never Told You*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *Lagoon* and *Who Fears Death*  
 Porpentine, *With Those We Love Alive*  
 Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*  
 Marilynne Robinson, *Lila*  
 Merritt Tierce, *Love Me Back*  
 Jeff VanderMeer, *Southern Reach* trilogy
- 2015 US Supreme Court strikes down state bans on same-sex marriage  
 Mia Alvar, *In the Country*  
 Cameron Awkward-Rich, “The Little Girl Will Never Tire of Confession”  
 Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife*  
 Paul Beatty, *The Sellout*  
 Danny Cannizzaro and Samantha Gorman, *Pry*  
 Wesley Chu, *The Rebirths of Tao* (*Tao* trilogy)

## CHRONOLOGY

- Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*  
 Jennine Capó Crucet, *Make Your Home Among Strangers*  
 Sharon Daniel, *Inside the Distance*  
 Carola Dibbell, *The Only Ones*  
 N. K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season* (*Broken Earth* trilogy)  
 Kendrick Lamar, *To Pimp a Butterfly* (album)  
 Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts*  
 Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Sympathizer*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *The Book of the Phoenix*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *Aurora*  
 Frank Spotnitz, *The Man in the High Castle*  
 (TV series, –present)  
 Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*  
 Adrian Tomine, *Killing and Dying*  
 Vendela Vida, *The Diver's Clothes Lie Empty*  
 Claire Vaye Watkins, *Gold Fame Citrus*
- 2016 Central American migrant crisis  
 Donald Trump elected president  
 Trans-Pacific Partnership (not ratified)  
 Campo Santo, *Firewatch* (video game)  
 Roderick Coover and Scott Rettberg, *Toxi\*City: A Climate Change Narrative*  
 Emil Ferris, *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters*  
 Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing*  
 Andrea Hairston, *Will Do Magic for Small Change*  
 N. K. Jemisin, *The Obelisk Gate* (*Broken Earth* trilogy)  
 Kendrick Lamar, *Untitled Remastered* (album)  
 Victor Lavalle, *The Ballad of Black Tom*  
 China Miéville, *This Census-Taker*  
 Gabby Rivera, *Juliet Takes a Breath*  
 Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*  
 Kai Cheng Thom, *Fierce Femmes and Notorious Liars: A Dangerous Trans Girl's Confabulous Memoir*  
 Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*  
 Jia Qing Wilson-Yang, *Small Beauty*
- 2017 Fyre Festival  
 Hurricanes Harvey and Maria  
 Paolo Bacigalupi, *Tool of War* (*Ship Breaker* trilogy)  
 Gabrielle Bell, *Everything Is Flammable* (comic)

## CHRONOLOGY

- Alan Bigelow, “How to Rob a Bank”  
 Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do*  
 Zinzi Clemmons, *What We Lose*  
 Ryan Coogler, *Black Panther* (film)  
 Louise Erdrich, *Future Home of the Living God*  
 Giant Sparrow, *What Remains of Edith Finch*  
 (video game)  
 Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West*  
 Amira Hanafi, *A Dictionary of the Revolution*  
 N. K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky* (*Broken Earth* trilogy)  
 Stephen Graham Jones, *Mapping the Interior*  
 Victor LaValle, *The Changeling*  
 Min Jin Lee, *Pachinko*  
 Valeria Luiselli, *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions*  
 Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Refugees*  
 Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Warrior*  
 Jordan Peele, *Get Out* (film)  
 Gabby Rivera, *America*  
 Kim Stanley Robinson, *New York 2140*  
 George Saunders, *Lincoln in the Bardo*  
 Danzy Senna, *New People*  
 Angie Thomas, *The Hate U Give*  
 Jeff VanderMeer, *Borne* and *The Strange Bird*  
 Jesmyn Ward, *Sing, Unburied, Sing*
- 2018 Extinction Rebellion movement founded  
 March for our Lives protests following Parkland, Florida school mass shooting  
 Sesshu Foster, *City of the Future*  
 Shelley Jackson, *Riddance: Or: The Sybil Joines Vocational School for Ghost Speakers & Hearing-Mouth Children*  
 Tayari Jones, *An American Marriage*  
 Rachel Kushner, *The Mars Room*  
 Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*  
 Tommy Orange, *There There*  
 Daniel Peña, *Bang*  
 Casey Plett, *Little Fish*  
 Richard Powers, *The Overstory*

## CHRONOLOGY

- 2019 Mueller Report on 2016 election interference released  
Impeachment of Donald J. Trump by House of Representatives  
Laila Lalami, *The Other Americans*  
Ann Leckie, *The Raven Tower*  
Ben Lerner, *The Topeka School*  
Valeria Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*  
Dina Nayeri, *The Ungrateful Refugee*  
Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys*  
Ocean Vuong, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*