

Thursday, April 25, 6:00 pm

TATTERED COVER ASPEN GROVE BOOK TALK

Our Aspen Grove booksellers are excited to share their favorite books for adult readers and book groups.

Everyone is welcome!

Wolf Pack by C.J. Box

reviewed by Aspen Grove Bookseller Roxie Harrington

C.J. Box never fails to provide a complete, enthralling tale of bad guys and good ol' boys fighting it out. In his most recent title **Wolf Pack**, we pick up after Joe Pickett's last adventure in **The Disappeared** with his job back. The bad news? He's come to learn that a drone is killing wildlife, and the drone belongs to a mysterious and wealthy man whose son is dating Joe's own daughter, Lucy.

As in the other books in the *Joe Pickett* series, you get caught up on Joe, Mary Beth, Lucy, Sheridan, April, Daisy the lab, Nate and Liv. You also meet again the neighbors and friends all living their quiet lives in Saddlestring, Wyoming, when all peace and quiet explodes along the roads, up and down the hills as evil edges its way towards the little berg. Thank God, Joe is always on alert, always suspicious with Nate by his side.

Read this. You NEED the rush!

"Look up tried and true in the literary dictionary and you'll find a picture of C. J. Box, thanks to his superb *Joe Pickett* series. For proof look no further than **Wolf Pack**, in which Box tops even himself. . . A thriller of rare depth and emotion, featuring pitch perfect plotting and characterizations every bit the equal of Cormac McCarthy and Larry McMurtry."—*Providence Journal*

The New York Times: Footsteps by The New York Times Company

reviewed by Aspen Grove Fiction Book Club Moderator Lizz Lewis

The New York Times: Footsteps: From Ferrante's Naples to Hammett's San Francisco, Literary Pilgrimages Around the World is one of those books that I saw on the shelf and liked the feel of it. It is a nonfiction travel book that collects short essays about countries and cities around the world, inspired by famous authors, that is printed in blue ink!

I loved reading about authors and places that I wasn't already familiar with, and the writing quality of NYT reporters is very high quality. I also liked how it was arranged by United States, then Europe, then beyond—helped make it geographically clearer in my mind. My favorite was definitely Dashiell Hammett's *San Francisco*! It is so easy to picture the gritty scenes and mood of the *Maltese Falcon*. Here are a few excerpts:

San Francisco is well known for its transformations, the most recent one fueled by tech money that has seemingly scrubbed much of the city clean. Evidence of it tends to be easy to mock: the \$4 artisanal toast, the shuttle buses carrying workers from the city interior to Silicon Valley, the preponderance of reclaimed wood. But for almost a century, the city has been indelibly linked with an enigmatic genre that might be considered an antidote to all of that: noir.

Like the characters that populate it, noir can be tough to put your finger on: a fog rolling in from the bay and coating city streets; a lonely sort of glamour perched on a bar rail; a sense of menace just over your shoulder. It is a genre that revels in ambiguity.

And so perhaps a search for noir in San Francisco was bound to yield some mysteries. Was an apartment at the edge of the Tenderloin, one lovingly restored in the décor of a bygone era, actually home not just to the writer Dashiell Hammett but his most famous creation, Sam Spade? Who was the enigmatic woman from the 1920s whose name adorns a nearby cocktail bar, lovingly made, speakeasy style, in an actual speakeasy? And what about that doorway at the end of the alley, a pivotal location in Hammett's best-known book?

Above all: Could this city still be home to noir?...

My guide through this urban landscape, in spirit and inspiration, was Hammett. Though he lived in San Francisco for less than a decade, his association with both the city and noir is inarguable; his early stories and novels are the ur-texts of noir, and Spade its antiheroic face...

In his writing, Hammett was obsessive, almost comically so, about San Francisco geography. Locations pile up like elements in a chemical equation: "Pine Street, between Leavenworth and Jones"; "the Garfield Apartments on Bush Street"; "walking over to California Street." But no location holds a more essential place than our next stop, Burritt Street, where, in "The Maltese Falcon," Sam Spade's partner, Miles Archer, is shot and killed by the book's femme fatale, Brigid O'Shaughnessy...

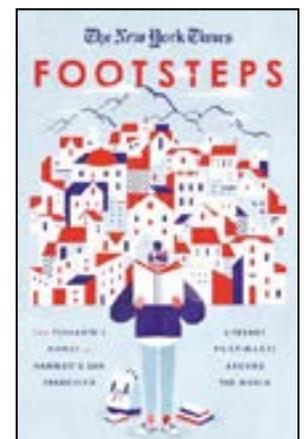
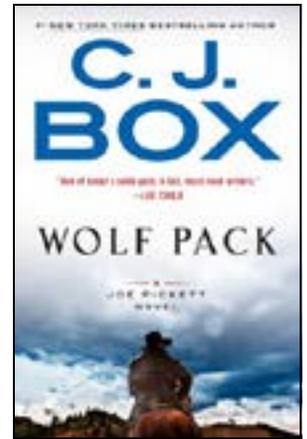
I asked Mr. Muller why Hammett wrote about San Francisco with enormous specificity but little emotion.

"Because he was a detective," he said. "He's writing reports." That approach became highly influential on what would eventually be called noir.

As the light began to fade and shadows crept across the room, Mr. Muller said he believed that the appeal of noir can be summed up in his three-word description of the genre: "suffering with style." Noir, he said, "presupposes the worst aspects of human nature," yet its birth "coincided with the pinnacle of American style." That juxtaposition all began with Hammett.

Part of Mr. Muller's take on noir is that, in the end, it's not about solving mysteries. The *Maltese Falcon* is—spoiler alert—not the *Maltese Falcon*. It's a fake. As I headed down Post back toward Union Square, I realized that my search for noir was itself based on a red herring. Noir is a state of mind. I thought back to a phrase Mr. Heron had used.

For anyone who likes to read about far-off places, and/or enjoys travelling will love this great blend of literature and the rest of the world.



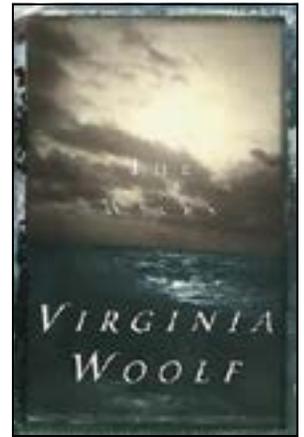
The Waves by Virginia Woolf

reviewed by Aspen Grove Manager Portia Graf

I would probably not have read this had I not been in the Woolf literature study at the University of Colorado Denver last year. Of all the titles that we read, this one was one of my favorites. In Virginia Woolf's classic novel *The Waves*, six characters—three men and three women—struggle with the death of a beloved friend, Percival. Though where most novels follow such events from an outward perspective, Woolf uses a series of soliloquies and internal thoughts from the six to paint their stories on the page. In between each chapter as well is a general unnamed perspective describing the waves of the ocean at different times of day. The movement of the tide up and down the coast paralleled with the internal grappling of concepts like death and life, and the nature of the world is beautifully weaved together into a character-driven drama that you won't soon forget. "It is a poetic dreamscape, visual, experimental, and thrilling."

The core concept of this book really is the conceptualization of death as both an unnatural state of being and a natural occurrence. Woolf does an excellent job using the romanticized image of the ocean at different points of the day to create a wave-like, fluid movement to her story, one that compliments the characters' internal struggles in the wake of tragedy.

This is considered one of Virginia Woolf's most famous works, and is often considered her greatest. It is a classic modernist narrative that has and will continue to withstand the test of time.



Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead by Tom Stoppard

reviewed by Aspen Grove Bookseller Daniel Thorne

For those of you a bit rusty on your Shakespeare, the famed tragedy *Hamlet* presents two peculiar characters in the latter half of the play: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Within the plot of *Hamlet*, the young prince murders Polonius resulting in his exile to England. These two characters are recruited by Claudius to spy on Hamlet and turn him into the King of England to be executed, just to very quickly meet their own deaths.

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead by Tom Stoppard tells their story while they wait for their one scene in the play. Echoes of the rest of the play go on in the periphery, while our heroes talk nonsense and comic metaphysics. There is also a great movie adaptation with Gary Oldman and Tim Roth. It's funny, modern, and a little absurd, perfect for the literary nerd with a sense of humor.

The 7 ½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle by Stuart Turton

reviewed by Aspen Grove Manager Portia Graf

reviewed by Aspen Grove Fiction Book Club Member Kira Buono

Portia's Review: For the TCAG Fiction Book Club, Lizz recommended reading this obscure mystery that none of us had heard of: *The 7 ½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* by Stuart Turton. I am so glad she found this.

The book opens with a man waking up in the middle of the woods with no memory of who he is, where he's at, or why he's there; all he remembers is the name Anna. And to top it off, he witnesses a woman screaming for help being chased by a dangerous looking man, and hears the crack of a gunshot. Panicked and confused, he finds his way back to the main estate—Blackheath mansion—where he lives a very confused day ending with the dramatic death of the host's daughter, Evelyn Hardcastle.

The next morning, he wakes up a new man...literally, and he learns the rules of the game. Aiden Bishop has eight days—specifically eight repetitions of the same day, each spent in a different host—to uncover the identity of Evelyn's killer. And if that isn't complicated enough, there are two others present with the same task and only one can escape.

So begins the incredible mystery of Evelyn Hardcastle's murder, told eight-fold in a complex, exhilarating turn of events. This is an all new type of mystery novel. It's reminiscent of the classics like *Sherlock Holmes* stories and *Hercule Poirot* novels while also adding a completely unique dimension—or eight—to the story. It's an incredible addition to the mystery genre, one that all mystery/thriller readers should indulge.

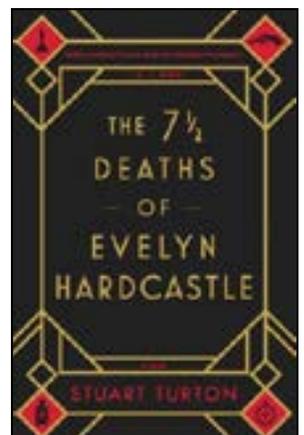
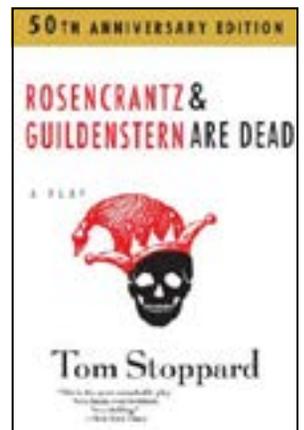
I was absolutely blown away by the crafting of this novel—let alone the fact that it was Turton's first! It really is like a complex Agatha Christie style dinner party mystery, but folded over itself multiple times. It must have taken YEARS to map out the entire plot. It's incredible that there aren't any inconsistencies (at least that I noticed...) I have serious writers envy. I'd give this book to anyone really, but I'd shove it into the hands of any mystery buff. I already have two co-workers lined up to borrow my copy, and I'm sure there'll be more.

"If Agatha Christie and Terry Pratchett had ever had LSD-fueled sex, then *The 7 ½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* would be their acid trip book baby. Darkly comic, mind-blowingly twisty, and with a cast of fantastically odd characters, this is a locked room mystery like no other." —Sarah Pinborough

Kira's Review: *The 7 ½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* is Agatha Christie meets *Black Mirror*. The main character, Aiden Bishop, learns that he will relive each day with a new host until he can solve the death of Evelyn Hardcastle. However, the world that Turton has created has more in depth and more diabolical than what first meets the eye. The book's structure is unique and enticing as it follows Bishop's journey through the perspective of eight different characters on eight different days, yet the author bounces back and forth between days to revisit certain issues. While on the surface this book deals with a murder mystery, it has a much deeper concept: who are you as a person? Further, if you do not like who you are as a person, can someone truly change?

Since each character is so different, and since each character plays a necessary role in the story, I think each "day" of the book has its own best section. My favorite character and section was that of Detective Jim Rashon—he appeared to be the only character in the book that was a straightforward decent person who gathered all of the evidence and looked at the events in a rational manner. Also, his drive to do anything for his love, Grace Davies, was such a cute and redeeming quality. Even with his detective skills and regardless of the skills of the seven other hosts, each piece of information you think is not important to the story or something that doesn't make sense at the time still leads to uncovering the mystery at the end. I loved that I was tracking the book and taking notes as I was going, but still couldn't piece the story together or guess the ending.

For readers who want a fresh/modern take on the typical murder mystery, this book is for you. For those that love futuristic novels, this book is for you. For those that think that some concepts in *Black Mirror* will come to fruition, this book is for you. I would recommend this book to anyone who feels like they are in a reading rut, or to someone who wants to change up their reading life and dive into a book that takes a classic theme and gives it a modern twist.



[Golden Child](#) by Claire Adams

reviewed by Aspen Grove Bookseller Kathy Baum

What would you be willing to sacrifice for your children?

Golden Child is a stunning portrayal of a family and their hope for a better life for their kids. Clyde and Joy are raising their twin sons, Peter and Paul, in rural Trinidad. Even as it becomes clear that Paul is a genius and Peter struggles in school, the boys are always together, protecting each other. That is until, after a home break-in, Paul goes missing.

Clyde Delaysingh, the patriarch of the family, works hard and sacrifices for his family. In a later scene, the tears stream down Clyde's cheeks, a rare moment of vulnerability allowed in a lifetime of sacrifice and strength. For that reason, he's earned top ranking in Adams' characters.

Adams writes beautifully of her native Trinidad and the quest for survival. Goodreads gives a great analysis: "Like the Trinidadian landscape itself, **Golden Child** is both beautiful and unsettling; a resoundingly human story of aspiration, betrayal, and love." The wrenching ending of **The Golden Child** stayed with me for days. 5 out of 5 stars.

[Paperscapes: The Aviary](#) by Matt Merritt

reviewed by Aspen Grove Buyer Margaret Noteman

Perfect for the birder, the flower gardener or the butterfly fan, **Paperscapes** will bring back childhood memories of the joy of something to play with once the gift giving is over. After the removable portion is pressed away, the pages with information about each bird, flower and butterfly remain bound in the book for future enjoyment. I admit I was going to leave my copies intact, but once I started pressing out birds I couldn't stop!

[Kafka on the Shore](#) by Haruki Murakami

reviewed by Aspen Grove Bookseller Jennifer Martin

Kafka on the Shore by Haruki Murakami is a great pick for those who like surrealism (a slightly better term for Murakami than "magical realism"), magical realism, or weird shit. I read a review when it first came out, and it sounded interesting. Plus, I had read and enjoyed other Murakami titles.

Two storylines merge: Kafka, a teenager, runs away from home, enmeshed in a mystery involving his mother. Meanwhile, Nakata, an old man with no shadow, who can talk to cats, and who may or may not have experienced a UFO encounter when he was a child, also leaves home, searching for a missing cat. I found the Nakata parts a tad more memorable than Kafka's, probably because of Nakata's interactions with the truck-driver he hitches a ride with.

This is a book that rewards multiple readings, but doesn't require them. On a basic level, it's a quest story, in which Fate might be throwing its weight around. On their respective journeys, Kafka and Nakata each encounter dangers and helpers, both otherworldly and mundane, and end up in the same place for the climax. As a weird-ass adventure set in contemporary Japan, I found the book more than satisfying. But if you wish to read further...

[The Library Book](#) by Susan Orlean

reviewed by Aspen Grove Manager Portia Graf

The Library Book by Susan Orlean is an incredible true crime story about the massive fire at LA Public Library that impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of book lovers across the nation.

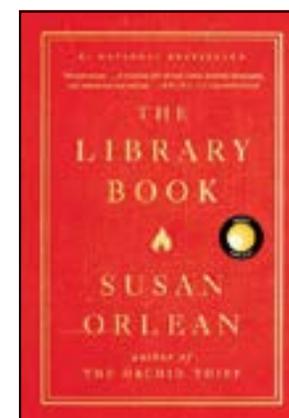
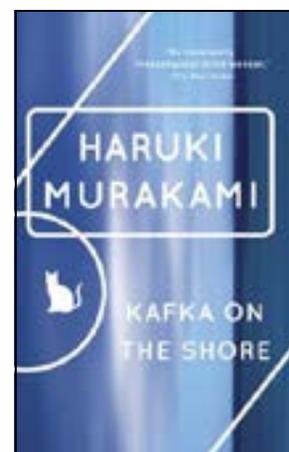
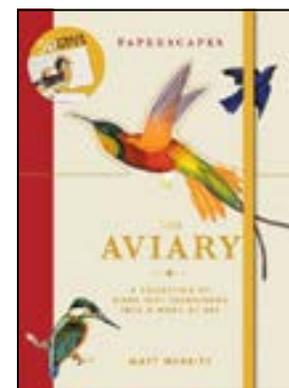
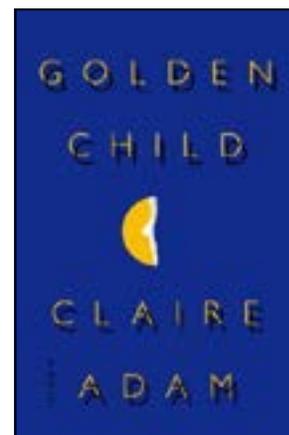
"On the morning of April 29, 1986, a fire alarm sounded in the Los Angeles Public Library. As the moments passed, the patrons and staff who had been cleared out of the building realized this was not the usual fire alarm. As one fireman recounted, "Once that first stack got going, it was 'Goodbye, Charlie.'" The fire was disastrous: it reached 2000 degrees and burned for more than seven hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed four hundred thousand books and damaged seven hundred thousand more. Investigators descended on the scene, but more than thirty years later, the mystery remains: Did someone purposefully set fire to the library—and if so, who?

Weaving her lifelong love of books and reading into an investigation of the fire, award-winning *New Yorker* reporter and *New York Times* bestselling author Susan Orlean delivers a mesmerizing and uniquely compelling book that manages to tell the broader story of libraries and librarians in a way that has never been done before.

In **The Library Book**, Orlean chronicles the LAPL fire and its aftermath to showcase the larger, crucial role that libraries play in our lives; delves into the evolution of libraries across the country and around the world, from their humble beginnings as a metropolitan charitable initiative to their current status as a cornerstone of national identity; brings each department of the library to vivid life through on-the-ground reporting; studies arson and attempts to burn a copy of a book herself; reflects on her own experiences in libraries; and reexamines the case of Harry Peak, the blond-haired actor long suspected of setting fire to the LAPL more than thirty years ago.

Along the way, Orlean introduces us to an unforgettable cast of characters from libraries past and present—from Mary Foy, who in 1880 at eighteen years old was named the head of the Los Angeles Public Library at a time when men still dominated the role, to Dr. C.J.K. Jones, a pastor, citrus farmer, and polymath known as "The Human Encyclopedia" who roamed the library dispensing information; from Charles Lummis, a wildly eccentric journalist and adventurer who was determined to make the L.A. library one of the best in the world, to the current staff, who do heroic work every day to ensure that their institution remains a vital part of the city it serves."

I love how dedicated Susan Orlean is to this particular story. Yes, she is a great journalist and a good writer, but listening to her reading **The Library Book**, you can hear the passion for the topic. Her personal ties to the L.A. Library from her childhood through to adulthood presents itself in a way that integrates anecdote with her research. Despite its depressing subject, this incredible volume is great for any book lover, librarian, book seller, or really book enthusiast. **The Library Book** is a must-read title if there ever was one.



Figuring by Maria Popova

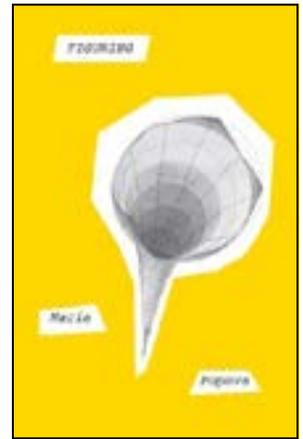
reviewed by Aspen Grove Manager Mark Lehnertz

Figuring is an amazing book by Maria Popova. According to the jacket, it “explores the complexities of love and the human search for truth and meaning through the interconnected lives of several historical figures across four centuries—beginning with the astronomer Johannes Kepler, who discovered the laws of planetary motion, and ending with the marine biologist and author Rachel Carson, who catalyzed the environmental movement.”

She creates a skein of history to capture the interconnected lives of people and the reader's attention. Her characters are real people, some of whom may in more traditional narrations be dismissed by little more than a line or maybe a paragraph or two. Conveying the deep compassion and clarity of Popova's presenting the twin struggles of lives out-of-sync with social expectation, the pursuit of curiosity, intellect, meaning, and a drive to know...something more...is difficult to do in a short review. It is done marvelously.

This book is important enough to be at risk of being a must-have on the bookshelf. Please, please read it.

“Intimate...timely...**Figuring** thunders along with a novelistic intensity, propelled by the organic drama of its extraordinary lives...It speaks to the quality of Popova's own writing that it survives comparison with the literary giants of the last four centuries. Her wonderfully deft and sincere prose melts down the raw materials of heavy research into a coruscating flow of ideas, images, and insights that add skin and sinew to the bones of biographical fact to create a forward-looking history that's both timely and timeless.” —*Vanity Fair*



She's Come Undone by Wally Lamb

reviewed by Aspen Grove Bookseller Daniel Thorne

My friend recommended *She's Come Undone* by Wally Lamb to me, claiming it is one of her favorite books. Though it is well celebrated, I was skeptical of this Oprah's book club pick. Now having read it, I give it five out of five.

She's Come Undone is a coming of age story speaking through the trauma and loss experienced by a young girl named Delores Price. The book takes her through a rape, the loss of her mother, and other hardships, but it also takes her on an emotional journey. She faces depression, anger, and obesity, as well as a series of romantic and platonic relationships, all of which teach her to find a life worth living for herself.

Delores is a strong character that dominates the narrative and she fills up the whole book cover to cover with her incredible development. The prose is very fluid, and its deeply intimate and personal, to the point where you feel like you're experiencing the events of the book alongside Dolores. It's a great read for someone who's been through hard times and found themselves on the other side, or someone who's struggling to capture that feeling of solidarity in their own lives. It's an excellent heavy emotional read.



Aspen Grove Book Talks

**Last Thursday of every month, 6:00 pm,
Tattered Cover Aspen Grove**

Our Aspen Grove booksellers are excited to share their favorite books for adult readers and book groups. Receive 10 % off any recommended book during the evening of the book talk.

Tattered Cover Book Clubs

Everyone is welcome to join us for one (or more!) of the following book club meetings. For book selections, please pick up a monthly calendar in-store or check online at www.tatteredcover.com/tc-weekly-bestsellers.

TC LoDo Book Club • Meets at 6:00 pm on the first Monday of every other month at the Tattered Cover Historic LoDo.

Travel Lovers' Book Club • Meets at 5:30 pm on the second Monday of each month at the Tattered Cover Colfax Avenue.

Third Thursday Book Club • Meets at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of every other month at the Tattered Cover Colfax Avenue.

Mystery Book Club • Meets at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of every other month at the Tattered Cover Colfax Avenue.

Aspen Grove Fiction Book Club • Meets at 3:00 pm on the third Saturday of every month at the Tattered Cover Aspen Grove.

Aspen Grove Nonfiction Book Club • Meets at 6:30 pm on the third Saturday of every month at the Tattered Cover Aspen Grove.



Other Book Clubs

Denver7 Book Club • Meteorologist Lisa Hidalgo not only knows the weather, she knows great books, and is an avid reader! Join us each month for light refreshments and a lively discussion of Lisa's monthly book pick. The Denver7 Book Club is reserved for guests 21+. Registration is required, visit tatteredcover.com.

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- TC Book Club Books - 10% discount on books presented during that month
- Recommended Reading Books - 10% discount the day of the talk

Upcoming Events

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