



### What are the best books you've read over the past 20 years?

This was the question put to the library staff. The results are a display on two bookcases that you can see right across from the circulation desk when you come in. Of course, the display undergoes some changes because it's fine to grab one of those books, walk three steps, and check it out to take home and read.

But let's just take twenty books in publication date order and see what the staff recommends. Some of this list might serve as a trip down Memory Lane, too, since, as Director Pamela Williams tells us, "Not only are these books staff picks but they are patron picks, too – the most popular books of each year. Staff picked; patron validated."

2000: **A Walk to Remember** by Nicholas Sparks. When we think of Sparks, we think of romance. This was his third best seller.

2001: **Skippping Christmas** by John Grisham. Perhaps those of us in Frankenmuth could best imagine what a situation it could turn into if we simply decided to skip Christmas one year, like Grisham's fictional family did.

2002: **The Life of Pi** by Yann Martel. A sixteen-year-old on a lifeboat with a hyena, zebra, orangutan, and a Bengal tiger makes for an incredible allegorical story.

2003: **The Da Vinci Code** by Dan Brown, set in Rome, creates mystery and suspense around church and art history.

2004: **Runaway** by Alice Munroe gives us nine wonderful short stories.

2005: **The Book Thief** by Marcus Zusak is a Holocaust story written as Young Adult fiction that has proven irresistible for adult readers, too.

2006: **Sharp Objects** by Gillian Flynn precedes her most famous book (see 2012) by six years proving she was popular sooner than we remember.

2007: **The Shack** by William P. Young is a book that has been both loved and rejected by various religious people but provides an interesting scenario of God communicating.

2008: **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society** by Shaffer and Barrows gives us a different WWII narrative of resistance set on the island of Guernsey off the British coast.

2009: **The Help** by Kathryn Stockett explores the subversive techniques that people of color in the south employed during segregation to wrest some control as domestic servants.

2010: **Still Alice** by Lisa Genova explores the effects of Alzheimer's disease on a professor, her family, colleagues, and friends.

2011: **Breaking Dawn** is part of the Twilight series by Stephanie Meyer, especially popular with teens.

2012: **Gone Girl** by, again, Gillian Flynn set the stage for lots of books with “Girl” in the title but none as good as Flynn’s. It is a thriller with a fascinating narration.

2013: **Sycamore Road** by John Grisham gives us both a suspicious death and a wasp’s nest of hostile relationships once the will is made public, a Grisham legal thriller.

2014: **Mr. Mercedes** by Stephen King brings us a serial killer who lasts through a trilogy of books.

2015: **Go Set a Watchman** by Harper Lee wasn’t that good a book but deserved a look because of Lee’s one other book, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. A manuscript of *Watchman* was dug up and finally published and ended up the literary talk of the year.

2016: **The Nest** by Cynthia Sweeney is a second book focused on a will or, in this case, a trust fund, that becomes threatened. Family relationships are strained.

2017: **Pachinko** by Min Jin Lee is one of a number of excellent books by Korean authors in this last decade and on the New York Times’ Best Book of the Year list.

2018: **Educated** by Tara Westover is a memoir on this list about Westover’s life struggling for an education having never been allowed to go to school as a child.

2019: **American Spy** by Lauren Wilkinson updates the spy genre from the Cold War era to the contemporary world. She makes it just as exciting.

And there we have it – one popular book from the library staff for the last twenty years validated by your own choices. Stop in and check one out if you’ve missed it or just take an opportunity to review what you’ve read during the last two decades. Don’t worry about 2020 – we’ve got you covered.

See you at the Library.

**Upcoming Events:** Fri. Jan. 31 at 6:00 p.m. **Stuffed Animal Story Time and Sleepover**; Fri. Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m. **Adult Movie Night** showing **Judy**; Sat. Feb. 8 at 5:30 p.m. **Zombie Nerf Wars for Teens**. Follow us on our website Calendar and FB to keep track of events.