Patron Picks

Featuring

Meera Subramanian



Writer, Reader, and Nature Lover

Meet Meera:

“Books can take us into other worlds and other peoples’ lives.”

I'm a reader and a nonfiction writer who has lived in West Barnstable for the last fifteen years. I write about the environment for places like *Nature*, *Orion* and *The New Yorker*; like to shellfish in Barnstable Harbor; and spend way too much time delighted by the woodpeckers and wild turkeys that inhabit our backyard. (if my editors only knew...)

I wrote a book about the human and global health implications of India’s ravaged landscape (*A River Runs Again: India's Natural World in Crisis*) and recently collaborated with illustrator Danica Novgorodoff to create a graphic novel about youth climate activists (*A Better World Is Possible: Global Youth Confront the Climate Crisis*).

I hope you'll join me this month at The Old Village Store for a live storytelling event, presented in partnership with Barnstable Land Trust, exploring survival, resilience, and connection in a climate-changed world.

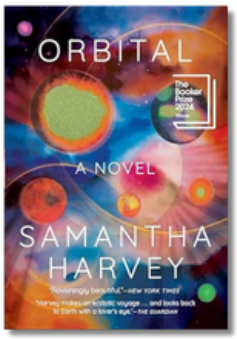
What Reading Means to Me

What does reading mean to me: Everything. I love to travel but hate being away from my bookshelf and Sturgis! Since I was a kid, I've been a bookworm, in love with the way books can take us into other worlds and other peoples' lives. By the time we turn that last page, we can be changed in ways big and small.

My Library Community

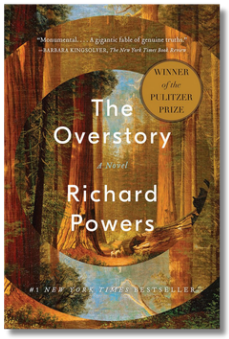
We live in a time of rampant individualism and commercialism, but libraries like Sturgis are these incredible public spaces that bring people together in the most creative and kind ways, and don't charge you a penny. Gabrielle, Lisa, Christy and the whole team are always there to help us find our way, curating community.

Meera's Picks



Orbital by Samantha Harvey: This slim, superb novel takes place on the International Space Station and not too much happens other than circling the planet a staggering 16 times in a 24-hour period, emerging with a whole new vantage of this fragile, precious earth, "the answer to every question."

The Overstory by Richard Powers: Powers is a master of structure and storytelling and here he turns our attention to trees, and the people whose lives they radically intermingle with, showing how the natural world around us can shape our place in it. There's a reason this won the Pulitzer Prize.

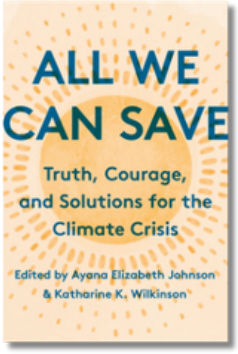




One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This by Omar El Akkad. And, someday, this will be required reading for anyone unsure of what position to take on Gaza... or any war.

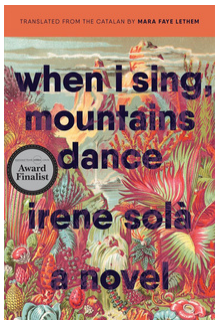
What If We Get It Right?: Visions of Climate Futures by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. There's so much doom about climate change, misbegotten ideas that to address the problem, our lives would be less. Johnson went to talk to all sorts of people to explore all the ways that dealing with the climate crisis could make the future a more vibrant and delightful place to be.

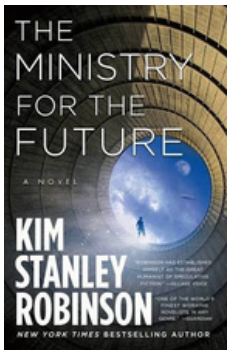




All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson.
This is a lovely edited collection from women who are at the forefront of climate work.

When I Sing, Mountains Dance: A Novel by Irene Solà.
This dreamy novel by a Catalan writer is haunting in the way the story unfolds from many perspectives, including storms, witches, and mushrooms!

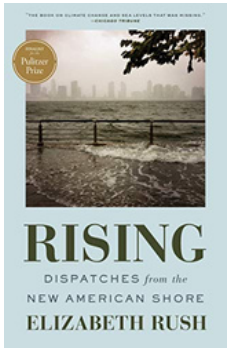




The Ministry for the Future by Kim Stanley Robinson. This book is the one I tell people to read if they want to get a sense of every aspect of what might unfold in the near future with climate change. It's a gripping, page-turning novel, but it's also rooted in all of the policy, activism, and science that is truly at play.

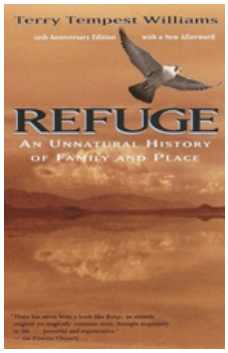
The Undertow: Scenes from a Slow Civil War by Jeff Sharlet.
I was lucky to have Jeff as a journalism professor when I went to NYU grad school. He's been open-eyed about the trajectory of political life in America for a really long time. A tough and (unfortunately) necessary read for these times.

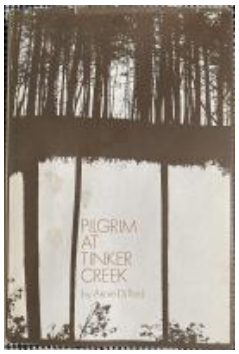




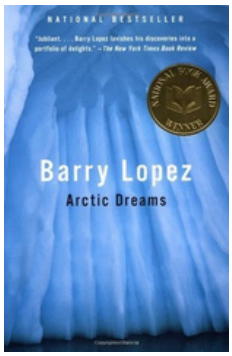
Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore by Elizabeth Rush
A beautiful reported exploration of what coastal communities face when answering the question of whether to stay or leave as sea levels rise. A must-read for any Cape Codder.

Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place by Terry Tempest Williams: This was the first book I remember reading that showed the power of bringing together a non-fiction story that is about both place and family in the most intimate of ways.



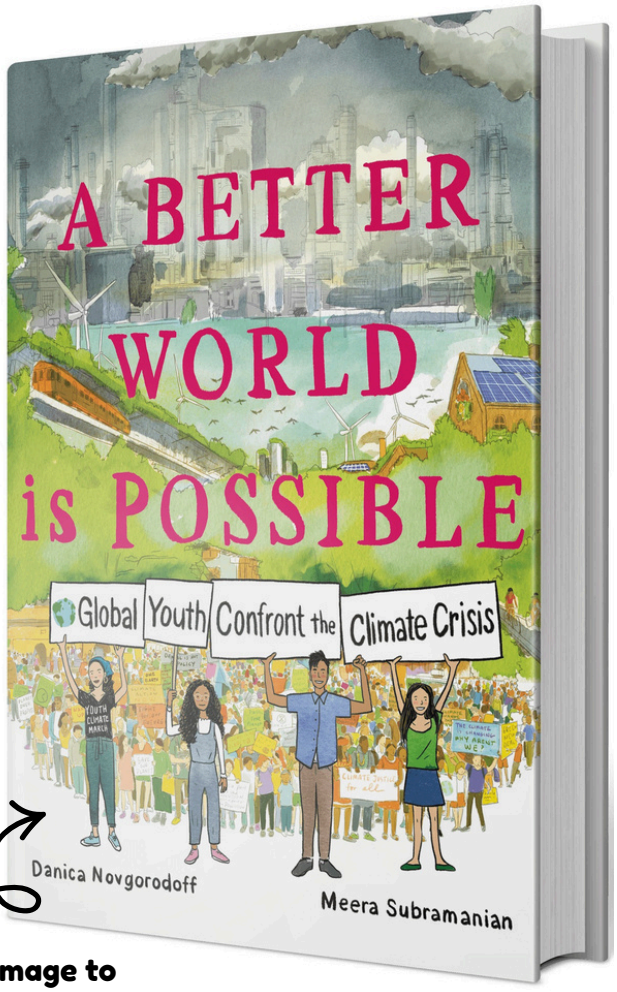


Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard. A classic. I read this over and over when I want to still the oft-spinning world and melt into the mind of a person paying intimately close attention to the natural world, who can be kinda silly, too.



Arctic Dreams by Barry Lopez. Ditto from what draws me to Dillard, but more serious. (Also, you'll see where Philip Pullman got so much of his inspiration for *The Golden Compass*)

Don't forget to check out Meera's latest book:



Click the image to reserve a copy today!

Patron Picks

Our Patron Picks Spotlight highlights the readers in our community.
Periodically, we feature a patron, share their reflections on what reading means to them, and present a list of their top book recommendations. This spotlight celebrates the many perspectives and stories that make up our library community.

Would you like to be featured?
Tell us about your reading journey and share the books you love! Selected patrons will be highlighted in a library display and newsletter.

For more information or to get involved,
Contact Gabrielle at reference@sturgislibrary.org

