JUNE 2019
NOW IN PAPERBACK

The Female Persuasion: A Novel
By Meg Wolitzer
(Riverhead Books, 9780399575323, $17)

“I never could have anticipated this book, and now I can’t imagine a world without it. The Female Persuasion follows the ambitious but shy Greer Kadetsky, her boyfriend, her best friend, and the feminist icon who launches her into the world. Through these vivid, complex, and lovable characters, Wolitzer explores both the principle and reality of feminism, as well as the desire to become our fullest selves and the twists and turns that journey can take. The Female Persuasion is powerful, generous, smart, and deeply kind; I can’t wait for the world to meet it.”
—Megan Bell, Underground Books, Carrollton, GA

Florida: Stories
By Lauren Groff
(Riverhead Books, 9781594634529, $16)

“After wowing readers (former President Barack Obama included) with 2015’s Fates and Furies, Lauren Groff returns with a collection of stories just as wise and meticulously constructed. Within the sun-kissed, palmetto-strewn swampland of Groff’s Florida, we encounter a pair of abandoned sisters, anxious mothers, and a woman being pushed to the edge. Groff examines the lives of her characters with a surveyor’s eye, capturing the sense of dread and desire mothers, and a woman being pushed to the edge. Groff examines the lives of her characters with a surveyor’s eye, capturing the sense of dread and desire

The Great Believers: A Novel
By Rebecca Makkai
(Penguin Books, 9780735225353, $16)

“This flawlessly written and lovingly told story depicts the immediate toll AIDS took on the Chicago gay community in the ‘80s and the long-term impact on survivors and their families. Makkai threads it all compellingly together with art world intrigue and institutional drama. The Great Believers brought to my mind several of my favorite contemporary novels: A Little Life, Three Junes, and The Goldfinch. Rebecca Makkai, in my opinion, has launched herself into a writing new category of literary achievement with this.”
—Becky Dayton, The Vermont Book Shop, Middlebury, VT

His Favorites: A Novel
By Kate Walbert
(Scribner, 9781476793407, $15)

“Kate Walbert is one of my favorite writers and she continues to create memorable novels, as evidenced by this new one. There’s something about the way she tells her story of a young girl struggling to balance a wild energy with a soft heart who is preyed upon by a charismatic and overbearing teacher that makes this novel both sing and pierce the heart simultaneously. I read this in one evening and it was completely overtaken by it.”
—Sheryl Coteur, Copperfield’s Books, Sebastopol, CA

Invitation to a Bonfire: A Novel
By Adrienne Celt
(Bloomsbury Publishing, 9781635571530, $17)

‘Adrienne Celt’s Invitation to a Bonfire is a propulsive literary thriller masterfully constructed and written with an extraordinary, raw urgency that will leave readers breathless. Inspired by the marriage of Vladimir and Vera Nabokov, Celt explores the love and ambition of two strong-willed women who compete for the passions and artistic control of a literary icon. The novel’s characters are original and vividly drawn, with all the complexities and contradictions of their emotions and intensions fully realized. This is a story that you will not be able to put down, and certainly one of the most memorable and satisfying reads of the year. Adrienne Celt is a writer to watch.”
—Lori Feathers, Interabang Books, Dallas, TX

Lake Success: A Novel
By Gary Shteyngart
(Random House Trade Paperbacks, 9780812987201, $18)

“When Barry Cohen’s marriage and hedge fund company begin to crumble, he hops a Greyhound bus to El Paso, hoping to find himself among the ‘real Americans’ of the Trump era. Meanwhile, the wife he left behind struggles to build a solo life among the one percent. Together, their stories are a biting portrait of a country unimproved by the best of intentions. Equal parts Sense and Sensibility, A Confederacy of Dunces, and Bonfire of the Vanities, Lake Success is a wickedly funny satire and a rollicking good story for tough times.”
—David Enyeart, Common Good Books, St. Paul, MN

The Lost Family: A Novel
By Jenna Blum
(William Morrow Paperbacks, 9780062660350, $16.99)

“The characters in Jenna Blum’s The Lost Family are deeply real and unforgettable: a man and a woman both trying to compensate for the losses of their previous families by creating a new family, and the daughter who grows up with them, feeling equally lost. Blum gets so many things effortlessly right: the terror of Nazi Germany; the fluctuating zeitgeist of New York in the 1950s, ’70s, and ’80s; the way the foodie father, the dieting wife, and the eating-disordered daughter all express themselves through their relationship with food. I would recommend it for Meg Wolitzer fans, though Blum’s style is definitely her own.”
—Nina Barrett, Bookends & Beginnings, Evanston, IL

Number One Chinese Restaurant: A Novel
By Lillian Li
(Picador, 9781250229328, $17)

“Growing up in a small town in the ’80s, my first experience of Chinese food served tabletops in a grand mansion. So, our annual vacation to visit family. The Empress restaurant—near the White House!—boasted about its Peking duck, just like the suburban D.C. Duck House in Number One Chinese Restaurant. The Duck House connects three generations of a restaurant dynasty and three star-crossed pairs of lovers, who are about to find out that, like a good stir fry, timing is everything. This is a masterful debut. I came for the fun Chinese restaurant setting, but I stayed for the characters.”
—Carla Bayha, Literati Bookstore, Ann Arbor, MI

Ohio: A Novel
By Stephen Markley
(Simon & Schuster, 9781501174483, $16.99)

“Stephen Markley’s powerful debut plunges the depths of the cruel trick played on small-town America during the recession, war, and political and cultural hostility of the last 15 years and delivers us the gift of surprising and exquisite beauty and hope. In this story of four former classmates and one summer night in 2013, Markley gives us insightful and gorgeous prose revealing the humanity that continues to carry on in the broken center of America. I hope to read this author’s keen writing for many years to come.”
—Beth Albrecht, The Magic Tree Bookstore, Oak Park, IL

Providence: A Novel
By Caroline Kepnes
(Random House Trade Paperbacks, 9780399591457, $17)

“Providence, a novel for the Stranger Things audience, is a fun and interesting blend of light fantasy and soft horror themes. I am a huge Lovecraft fan and devour fiction books that reference Lovecraft, and author Caroline Kepnes does a nice job creating a weird and entertaining ride while explaining Lovecraft and The Dunwich Horror to those who may not be familiar. Overall, I found this book to be exactly what I needed: a nice escape from the confines of the horror genre. I’m also happy to see more female writers bringing their own voices to horror in new and interesting ways.”
—Guy Lopez, Womans’s Bookstore, Pasadena, CA

The Summer Wives: A Novel
By Beatriz william
(William Morrow Paperbacks, 9780062660350, $16.99)

“When her mother marries one of the wealthy summer residents in 1931, 18 year-old Miranda enters the exclusive world of Winthrop Island. A perfect summer beach read, the story moves from 1930 to 1951 to 1969, when Miranda returns to the island. The year-round residents and the summer people don’t mix much, but long-buried secrets won’t stay buried forever. Love, scandal, murder, jealousy—The Summer Wives has it all!”
—Susan Taylor, Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza, Albany, NY