

BOOK THOUGHTS

BATCH 9



BY **LINDSAY** WINCHERAUK

BOOK THOUGHTS: BATCH 9

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BLUE = MEMOIR OR BIOGRAPHICAL

BLACK = FICTION

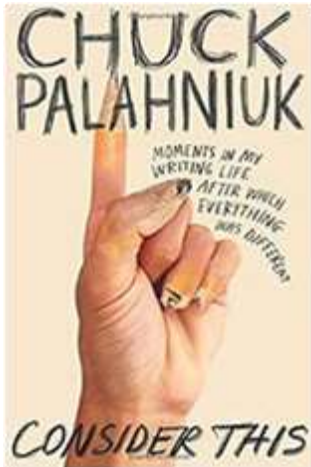
DARK RED = EDUCATIONAL

PURPLE = ESSAY OR STORIES

ORANGE = POETRY

CONSIDER THIS

CHUCK PALAHNIUK



Informative + Deftly Entertained!

How did the book make me feel/think?

INFORMED + DEFTLY ENTERTAINED!

CONSIDER THIS—I picked it up while practicing Social Distancing at my local Chapters.

The cover sucked me in + disturbed me—I did not know what the book was about—I cracked it open.

“Hey, Jay, look at this. This is certainly weird. The book’s pages are upside down and work from back to front. Neat.”

Yes, neat.

1 Someone had turned the jacket around.

Jay laughed.

I DOVE IN when I got home, not knowing what to expect.

I never read the book blurbs before reading.

I like to be surprised.

And, **CONSIDER THIS**, did precisely that.

The book is an essential bible for anyone who writes. PERIOD. Wow, it is chock-full of sage advice on how to... write... not write... craft a story!

I came to a window—I looked in—Mr. |Paula—nick| was handing a giant penguin a man in a flashy jacket. I’m intrigued.

CONSIDER THIS effortlessly bounces between a literary master class to a visceral look into the author’s life. The stories within are exquisite, grotesque, always illuminating.

This book is another word for gem—a precious intoxicating liquified nugget.

WRITTEN: March 26, 2020

GRIEF IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS

MAX PORTER



Breathtaking.

How did the book make me feel/think?

BREATHLESS

Every word washed over me like a tsunami.

I lost my mother.

I lost my father.

I lost my mother for a second time.

I cannot find my father.

After consuming the last word of GRIEF IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS, I shook, wiped away my tears, embraced my laughter, and was rendered speechless.

My friend Jay glanced my way; all I could muster was WOW.

There is nothing like this. I gasped.

I feel less alone.

Fright became swaddled in comfort.

GRIEF IS A THING WITH FEATHERS scorched my every emotion, leaving me warm and hopeful!

"...the fact that their two smells became one smell, our smell. Us."

WRITTEN: MARCH 19, 2020

WHAT IS MISSING

MICHAEL FRANK



A harrowing journey of discovery.

How did the book make me feel/think?

DISTRAUGHT

I found **WHAT IS MISSING** to be a harrowing journey of discovery for members of several families blessed with privilege. I wouldn't say I liked a single character in this book. Instead, I found them to be self-absorbed to a fault + repulsive.

The book paints privilege with the disgusting brush of reality that they believe they can get whatever the wealthy want, regardless of the outcome. The characters are ego-driven as opposed to altruistic. Instead, they create their own world of

disarray by suppressing the truth and believing they can justify their actions by feigning words of love and connection when all hell breaks loose, and their selfish actions rip apart the souls of the children trapped in their wake.

The ending twists and turns through turmoil and will leave you with mouth agape.

WHAT IS MISSING takes us on a journey most of us would never be capable of living and a life none of us would ever want.

WRITTEN: March 17, 2020

ON EARTH WE'RE BRIEFLY GORGEOUS

OCEAN VUONG



It's a love story. It's a tragedy. It's gorgeous. I cried.

How did the book make me feel/think?

The book obliterated me.

Raw + Visceral + Exhilarating + Unflinching + Real

"Because something in him knew she'd be there. That she was waiting. Because that's what mothers do. They Wait. They stand still until their children belong somewhere else."

Little Dog cobbles together a letter to his illiterate mother, who survived the Vietnam war.

Her life is littered with challenges, poverty, and oppression.

Little Dog needs her to know who he is, and the pages drift from horrific to understanding to sadness to acceptance.

"Because freedom, I am told, is nothing but the distance between hunter and prey."

Little Dog, although he's writing a love letter to his mother, he's also writing a letter to all of us → to the Universe.

He needs to tell us who he is + who we have become.

He needs to let us know the 'American Dream' is fractured → unfair.

He needs to tell us about the immigrant's plight.

The book is visceral, scrutinizing the centuries-long head-start of privilege. It is a story about America's corporate fed path to addiction ravaging those struggling to climb, to fit in, to belong.

"I did not know then what I know now: to be an American boy, and then an American boy with a gun, is to move from one end of a cage to another."

ON EARTH WE'RE BRIEFLY GORGEOUS is a gut-punching tale about the realities of being different and the burning desire to be whole. It is a story about the fears of coming out.

"Sometimes, being offered tenderness feels like the very proof that you've been ruined."

ON EARTH, WE'RE BRIEFLY GORGEOUS, shredded my perceptions, dropping me into the tremulous embrace of understanding — it is one of the best books I've read.

It's a love story.

It's a tragedy.

It's gorgeous.

I cried.

"It's not fair that the word laughter is trapped inside slaughter."

LANNY

MAX PORTER



Can anyone possibly survive + find themselves in a place where they don't belong?

How did the book make me feel/think?

SPLAT

I threw LANNY across the room. It slammed into the kitchen island and fell to the floor – resting in a shoebox. The lid on the box rattled off the counter and floated down to the box, closing LANNY inside.

My friend Jay barked, “Why did you do that?”

CAPTIVATELY FRUSTRATED

I read the last one-hundred-forty-three pages in a single sitting. Never once-rising. Page-after-page of being engrossed as Max Porter set his own definition of storytelling. Dead Man Tothwort's, dead man thoughts scrambled, often nonsensical, floated past me, difficult to disseminate. He's a dead man, after all.

The town is picturesque. Dark. Insular. Can newcomers ever truly be accepted?

Lanny goes missing – I cheer for him to be found.

Lanny's Mum wanted a place to raise her gifted + challenged son where he could wander freely, lessening her burden.

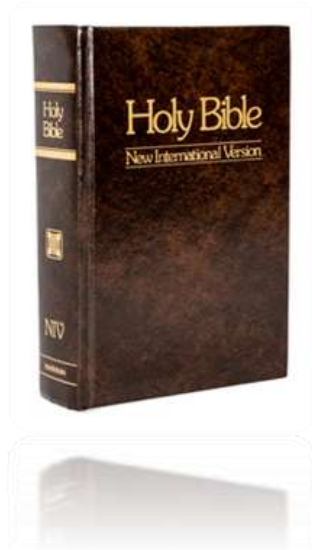
Lanny's Dad, perhaps, wanted his gifted + challenged son to be out of the site of judgement – loving him, optional.

While LANNY lay entombed in the shoebox on my kitchen floor, I pondered: Can anyone possibly survive + find themselves in a place where they don't belong?

WRITTEN: March 23, 2020

HOLY BIBLE

COMMISSIONED STORYTELLERS



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A bunch of stories. Some gory. Most unbelievable. Supposedly teaching us something?

How did the book make me feel/think?

My lifetime of thoughts sprinkled somewhere in a designated section on my website.

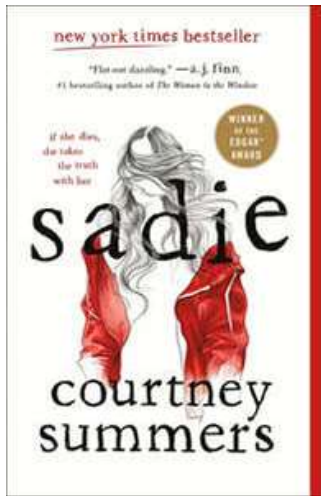
Thank you, God, for creating the internet!

Please keep me from burning ↓↓↓

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SADIE

COURTNEY SUMMERS



... a grippingly harrowing page-turner ...

How did the book make me feel/think?

SADIE is a grippingly harrowing page-turner about love, dysfunction, predators, the quest for ravenous revenge, + deconstructing the illusiveness of closure. Its prose is breathtaking, eloquent, intoxicating.

Monsters lurk.

This work of fiction teeters precariously close to reality. To where Sadie, damaged to the core—children from broken homes often become broken themselves—when the punishment she must endure is bruised, smashed, cut, punched, punched

while trying to make proper a lifetime of wrongs both physically and inside of her being. I felt every tumult as if it had been inflicted directly on me.

I cheer for Sadie, lament for Sadie, and want her to escape; I want her to survive.

Courtney Summers drops the storyline like a DJ lays down a haunting bass-line—bringing the reader to a crescendo and then smashing them back to reality. Spent. Broken. Thirsting for another page—to help Sadie wake from the damage of never genuinely being given a chance to thrive.

Sadie scares me. I worry about Courtney. How could she possibly find the darkness to write such a compelling look into the horrific world of monsters and predators, so damaged by disease they prey and search for vulnerability to satisfy their vileness?

I don't want to believe these evils exist.

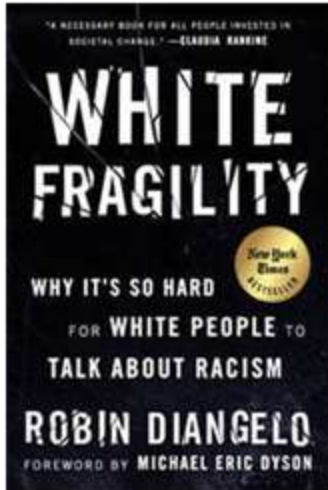
SADIE is a masterful work of fiction waking us to the reality we must look out for those of us on the fringes, and if something or someone seems out of place, it likely is—we must look out for each other.

For the last half of **SADIE**, you wouldn't have been able to pry it from my grip. Instead, it flowed effortlessly to where I felt my reading speed and ability increase with my thirst for the next page, and in the end... Sadie lingers in my soul.

WRITTEN: May 2, 2020

WHITE FRAGILITY

ROBIN DIANGELO



RACISM: "A system of advantage based on race."

How did the book make me feel/think?

REFLECTIVE. AWARE.

I was born in the western world in insular, predominately white, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

That translated to being born into White Supremacy + being addled by a biased, racially prejudiced worldview. It is not something I was an active participant in, but every white person, in at least the western world, is unwittingly subjected to racist tropes from Day 1. White people predominately control the media + movies, + books. And because of the

narrow-minded presentation of life, we can't escape it. But, if you disagree, you are not truthful. Growing up, we shared horrific jokes about cultures we've never had interactions with, just because — thinking we were hilarious — we weren't.

I do not know a single white person who is not racist, including myself.

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But why change?

White Supremacy comes with significant benefits for you if you are white. Part of becoming an antiracist is admitting this.

Before I go on, I'd like to clarify that we have a responsibility to change.

We have a responsibility to become recovering racists.

WHITE FRAGILITY is a compelling read, offering a path to recovery.

WHITE PEOPLE
WHITE PEOPLE

STOP BEING DEFENSIVE ABOUT WHO YOU ARE. CHANGE.

How?

Be active.

When a friend says to you, "Some racist jokes are best told only to a certain audience."

Let your friend know there is no such thing as a racist joke.

When reading a book about walking paths in Norway, the author writes:

"When you walk, you don't need spandex pants or a headband or one of those strange upper-arm configurations that joggers often wear as if it were a defibrillator or pepper

spray, and they were running through Baltimore's most dangerous alleyways."

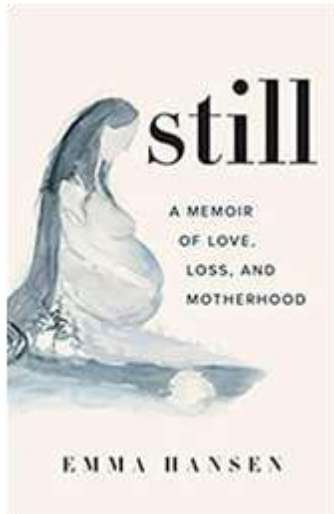
Pay attention, and ask, what was the point of that passage? If you are honest with yourself, you will realize we all play a role, and the only way we move forward is by precisely that. Paying attention, and every chance you get, don't allow racism to fester.

My recovery is a lifelong ordeal, but I help make the world a better place every time I speak up.

That is how this book made me feel.

STILL

EMMA HANSEN



Evocative + Emotionally-Laden. A must-read for men.

How did the book make me feel/think?

On December 12, 1987, my mother died. She had been ill for two years. One week before she died, it tasked me with driving her to the hospital. On the steps of our house this bone-chilling night in Saskatoon, with tear-stained eyes, she said to me, "I'm never going to be home again, am I?" I lied to her.

In 2003, I discovered by accident (long story) she was not my birth mother; The news sent me reeling.

In October 2016, I travelled to Calgary to meet my birth mother for the first time, alongside her deathbed. As I left the room + said goodbye, my mother uttered her last words to me, "I'm

never going to see you again, am I?"

I didn't have the strength to lie. Afterward, grief's assault was unrelenting.

No man could ever understand what it is like to carry a child?

In **STILL**, Emma Hansen lays bare in breathtaking, painful, heart-wrenching fashion, shining a bright light on the bond that forms with an unborn child (Reid + Everett).

Emma courageously shares her pain + inner-most thoughts in an evocative, emotionally laden way. Cracking the door wide open. Allowing us to share in her grief with us, hoping it arrives at a place where it is no longer all-consuming + turns from turmoil to a place of warmth because of the importance of never forgetting the things most vibrant to living an entire life.

STILL is an important book. It lets us all, and especially men, into a world foreign to us – giving us an understanding we are all connected.

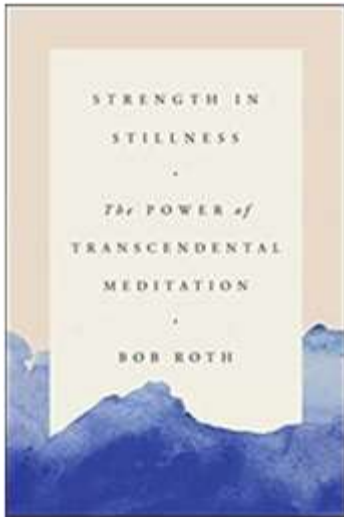
STILL helped ease some of the pain haunting me throughout life. When my mother returned to life, I believed I was an unwanted child, disposable. By reading **STILL** and seeing Emma + Aaron's enduring love for their lost child, I realize unwanted is not a thing. Finding comfort in understanding the unknowns of childbirth has helped ease my grief, and I cannot thank Emma enough for that.

Thank you, Emma, for having the strength to share your heart-wrenching, essentially vital story. We grow when we allow the beauty of vulnerability to seep into our hearts.

That is how **STILL** made me feel.

STRENGTH IN STILLNESS

BOB ROTH



Do you want to gain focus, sleep better, have a healthier heart, be kinder?

How did the book make me feel/think?

STRENGTH IN STILLNESS is a 200 + page endorsement (advertisement) on the magnificent benefits of Transcendental Meditation (TM) sprinkled with anecdotes of how TM has grounded many of the biggest stars and celebrities of the day. Bob Roth is a preeminent expert in the field, and he dedicated his life to encouraging the best out of people.

Do you want less stress in your life?

Do you want to be centred?

Do you want to gain focus, sleep better, have a healthier heart,

be kinder?

YES, is my answer.

TM is not a cult or a religion – which the book helped me realize.

When I digested the last word – I have committed to adding TM to my life, I want to live a fuller life.

The endorsement worked!

Reading this during the COVID-19 Pandemic, I found it enlightening. As much as we are all amid the most horrifying event of the century – now might be the time to change, come out the other end whole and healthier.

WRITTEN: April 13, 2020

HONESTY BREAK

This book is nothing more than a 200+ page advertisement to make Bob Roth money.

But don't all authors want to make money?

Sure, but it's grotesque when they do it under the shade of enlightenment.