Let's get popular or let's get serious

I've spent a lot more time than I usually do frontline bookselling this summer and I am invigorated by it. Connecting with people, be it locals or visitors, is just fun and gratifying. I just love talking books.

So, in that mode as I am, let's talk books. What's selling in your store this summer? The difficult reads or the popular reads, or are those one and the same?

I'm seeking out books written by diverse voices, *Incendiaries* by R. O. Kwon is a stunner, a viscerally impactful read. *Mirage*, the first of hopefully many in a series, is a young adult novel by Somaiya Daud, with lush, poetic language, it's stirring while being remarkably fun and absorbing. A world you could get lost in. We're pleasantly shocked at how many copies of *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin Diangelo our little bookstore in the foothills of the Green Mountains has sold. *There There* by Tommy Orange is also selling successfully this summer, and, while this is likely a reflection of a planned college convocation, Toni Morrison's *The Origin of Others* tops our bestselling list. Many visitors to our store are searching for information—*How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence* by Micheal Pollan is a stack that constantly needs to be replenished, as well as *Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America* by James Fallows, an examination of communities across America, why some make it and some don't.

Books by local authors always top the bestselling list, and we were fortunate to have many great ones this season including: *Two Lives* by Reeve Lindbergh, daughter of aviator-authors Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh, a lovely rumination on her life's duality; *Patient Care: Death and Life in the Emergency Room* by Paul Seward, M.D., a doctor retired (to our town) after five decades of work in emergency medicine; and *Going Up the Country: When the Hippies, Dreamers, Freaks, and Radicals Moved to Vermont*, a fantastic look back at how the counterculture of the sixties and seventies changed Vermont by the even more fantastic Yvonne Daley, director of the Green Mountain Writers' Conference.
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Beyond the local, paperback novels like the Pulitzer prizewinning *Less* by Andrew Sean Greer, *Manhattan Beach* by Jennifer Egan, and *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman, were all big hits. Hardcover novels including my favorite, *Circe* by Madeline Miller (please read *The Song of Achilles* also!) *The President is Missing* (wishful thinking) by Bill Clinton and James Patterson, and *The Overstory* by Richard Powers, while seemingly off to a sluggish start really picked up in sales as the summer wore on. Nonfiction titles round out our popular picks this summer including *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover and *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels* by Jon Meacham.

How exciting it is to ponder that with September and October upon us, more and more great and worthy books will be pouring into our stores offering more and more opportunities to connect with the people who walk through the doors of your shop, find a bit of common ground, and confidently put a book in their hands that will travel with them, on the rest of their vacation, or even just to their back porch or kitchen table, and be enjoyed fully as they take to time to just sit and read. Ahhhh...

~ Jenny Lyons, The Vermont Book Shop, Middlebury, VT

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**NEIBA Best Sellers**

for the week ended **Sunday August 19, 2018**

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