Staff Picks Booklist and Reviews:

Here are the top 50 circulated books from the staff picks table!

*Top 50 is for books off the staff picks table only. Numbers are based on how many times the copy of the book on the staff picks table was checked out. We do have multiple copies of many books that would’ve added to these numbers but this list is based only on the copies that were placed on the staff picks table. Many books were checked out numerous times before being put on the staff picks table. For more information, including plot, and to request a copy, visit our catalog https://ursus.maine.edu/.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Checkouts</th>
<th>Staff Rating</th>
<th>Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Pink Chimneys</em></td>
<td>Ardeana Hamlin Knowles</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Fantastic historical fiction set in Maine by a Maine author, intriguing characters, I wanted to write fan fiction after reading!</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Girl on the Train</em></td>
<td>Paula Hawkins</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>A frightening journey through the eyes of a drunk. Prepare to be gaslighted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>A Summer to Remember</em></td>
<td>Mary Balogh</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Excellent story and wonderful characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>All the Light we Cannot See</em></td>
<td>Anthony Doerr</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Haunting, beautiful prose I didn’t want it to end but couldn’t stop reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Agatha Raisin and the Vicious Vet</em></td>
<td>M.C. Beaton</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>2nd in the series but even better than the 1st! A quick fun read, and no, you don’t have to read the 1st to enjoy the 2nd but... after reading you’ll want to read all 31 in the series!</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Bitten</em></td>
<td>Kelley Armstrong</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>A new and unusual werewolf story</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>The Glass Castle: A Memoir</em></td>
<td>Jeanette Walls</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>This book came highly recommended and I’m so glad to have read it. What a life! Maybe the best memoir I’ve read.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>The Surgeon</em></td>
<td>Tess Gerritsen</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Creepy and disturbing but excellent start to her series.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Fast Women</em></td>
<td>Jennifer Cruise</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Humorous romance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>The Devil in the White City</em></td>
<td>Erik Larson</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Non-fiction that brings to life Chicago, the World’s Fair of 1893, and serial killer H. H. Holmes who built a hotel to murder fair goers in. Very eerie and knowing it’s non-fiction makes it eerier!</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Sharp Objects</em></td>
<td>Gillian Flynn</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>5 Stars</td>
<td>Superb! Better than Gone Girl!</td>
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</table>
12. **Anansi Boys** by Neil Gaiman  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Continuing the American Gods series with Anansi, an Akan folktale character who often takes the shape of a spider and is sometimes considered to be a God of all knowledge of stories. Taking the role of trickster, he is also one of the most important characters of West African, African American and Caribbean folklore. Gaiman bases this fascinating story around this God and has created a story about family that’s also a mythical coming of age detective story!

13. **Garden Spells** by Sarah Addison Allen  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Family, the uniqueness of each member. Restoration and healing from the past. A great story.

14. **Shakespeare’s Christmas** by Charlaine Harris  
Staff Rating: 3 Stars/ Turned off at first but then enjoyed.

15. **The Winter King** by Bernard Cornwell  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Thrilling series on King Arthur. Outstanding historical fiction.

16. **Murder on Marble Row** by Victoria Thompson  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Love this series!

17. **The Poacher’s Son** by Paul Doiron  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Get hooked on a series! Great read by a Maine author set in Maine!

18. **The Thirteenth Tale** by Diane Setterfield  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Excellent, finished this in 2 days, the mark of a good book!

19. **Dark Places** by Gillian Flynn  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Creepy and compelling (Better than Gone Girl)

20. **Winter Garden** by Kristin Hannah  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Emotional and hard to put down.

21. **Breakfast at Tiffany’s** by Truman Capote  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ All time favorite. Quick read. Read it 3 times!

22. **Gone Girl** by Gillian Flynn  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ A thriller layered with brilliant characters. Excellent!
23. *Agnes and the Hitman* by Jennifer Cruise and Bob Mayer  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Entertaining and action-packed with fun characters

24. *The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Wonderful characters and stories from glorious Africa.

25. *The Uncommon Reader* by Alan Bennett  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ An Amusing exploration of an addiction to reading.

26. *Empire Falls* by Richard Russo  
Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Assigned reading that I ended up falling in love with. Ever wonder what it's like for those who stay in their hometown? This story based in Maine is about that.

27. *Bet Me* by Jennifer Cruise  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ A romantic comedy that is sure to satisfy!

28. *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ This bestselling author has penned a brilliant non-fiction book about the food industry and eating local. It's a part memoir, depicting a year in the author's life that will motivate you to follow suit. I want to try the recipes!

29. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ An enthralling and heart breaking story.

30. *Strong for Potatoes* by Cynthia Thayer  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Wonderfully evocative story set in a Maine indigenous community

31. *The Tightwad gazette: Promoting Thrift as a Viable Alternative Lifestyle* by Amy Dacyczyn  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Book has some great ideas

32. *Insane City* by Dave Barry  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ A madcap comedy that will appeal to many, especially fans of the movie the Hangover!

33. *Carrie* by Stephen King  
Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ written while teaching at Hampden Academy, Stephen Kings 1st book will leave you haunted. Terrifying moral of the story is... don't be a bully!
34. *The Invitation* by Oriah Mountain Dreamer
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Love the poem the story is based on, ...I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand on the edge of the lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, “Yes”! A guide to life.

35. *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Fanciful and sweet. A tale to be savored with a smile.

36. *Me Before You* by Jojo Moyes
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ An interesting exploration of euthanasia. (great movie too)

37. *The Search* by Nora Roberts
   Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Perfect mixture of romance and suspense.

38. *Sleepyhead* by Mark Billingham
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ genuinely disturbing and creepy.

39. *The Little Stranger* by Sarah Waters
   Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Atmospheric and creepy

40. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* By Philip K Dick
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Iconic Sci-Fi at its most thought-provoking

41. *Under the Eagle* by Simon Scarrow
    Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Exciting story set in the Roman military.

42. *Adrift: Seventy-Six Days Lost at Sea* by Steven Callahan
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ This book is very intense. You won’t want to put it down.

43. *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Genius writing with a wonderful story

44. *Mr. Churchill’s Secretary* by Susan Ella MacNeil
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ First in an engaging series. Fast paced historical fiction.

45. *Murder on Waverly Place* by Victoria Thompson
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ An awesome addition to the gaslight mysteries!

46. *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson
    Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ A summation of life, the universe, and everything. By a non-scientist.
47. Winter Street by Elin Hildebrand  76 checkouts
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Loved this family! Loved this whole trilogy (and the 4th book that came out after). Glad she continued the story.

48. A Street Cat Named Bob by James Bowen  74 checkouts
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ The true story of Bob, a wonderfully unique cat and the recovering drug addict that he saves.

49. The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom  74 checkouts
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ A story about life, death, and so much more. Everyone leaves an impact, including you, you may not even realize so be kind always!

50. A Shadow in Summer by Daniel Abraham  71 checkouts
   Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Great series, unusual and surprising.

Honorable Mentions:

These are books that did not make the top 50 but our staff members really like and think you might too! Listed here in alphabetical order.

1. Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Loved that it’s told from the dog’s point of view. Crying may occur.

2. Beartown by Fredrik Bachman
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ The best book I’ve read this year!

3. The Boat Rocker by Ha Jin
   Staff Rating: 4 Stars/ Well written characters that have depth. Scary relevant.

4. Cities of Rust by Ariel Bonin
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Read this entire post-apocalyptic trilogy in a week. Easily became attached to the characters and became invested in their survival.

5. Craig and Fred: A Marine, a Stray Dog, and How They rescued Each Other by Craig Grossi
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Incredible story about a man and his dog, persistence, war, and coming home. Maine author.

6. Euphoria by Lily King
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ You won’t be able to put this down! Eye opening!
7. *Five Days at Memorial* by Sheri Fink  
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Excellent but very disturbing!

8. *A Game of Thrones* by George R R Martin  
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ So much better than the TV series: character-driven  
   Fantasy at its very best

9. *The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah  
   Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Captivating story about uprooting your life and finding a new one. Full of family drama set in an interesting location that the author brings to life.

10. *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ I want a Gatsby! I could read this a million times and fall in love each time.

11. *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Awesome book. A must read dystopian novel that leaves you thinking long after it’s over.

12. *Haunted Islands in the Gulf of Maine* by Marcus LiBrizzi  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Lots of fun history. Would like to visit each Island - except for Sable of course.

13. *Heart and Brain* by Nick Seluk  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ A witty and relatable graphic novel about life and the feelings we have. Delightful

14. *The Kiss Quotient* by Helen Hoang  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Sexy, Fun, and Inclusive!

15. *Leopard at the Door* by Jennifer McVeigh  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ A moving historical fiction. Set in Kenya in the 1950’s and beautifully describes the location as well as the events that took place around that time.

16. *Lock In* by John Scalzi  
    Staff Rating: 5 Stars/ Scalzi does it again- exciting and imaginative, this book is a winner.

17. *March Book One* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, & Nate Powell  
    One of the best graphic novels I’ve ever read. Incredible story and art.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Meaty</td>
<td>Samantha Irby</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Laugh out loud hysterical. I kept getting weird looks while reading this in public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Orphan Train</td>
<td>Christina Baker Kline</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Compelling, well-researched historical fiction. Stayed up all night because I couldn't put it down! A must read!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Perdido Street Station</td>
<td>China Mieville</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ingenious sci-fi set in a world that sounds bizarre but feels familiar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Scraps, Peels, and Stems</td>
<td>Jill Lightner</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Good recipes, great resource, enjoyable reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>This Will only Hurt a Little</td>
<td>Busy Philipps</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The best celebrity memoir I've read this year (2019).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The Underground Railroad</td>
<td>Colson Whitehead</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A powerful and moving story with incredible characters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Weathering Shame</td>
<td>Kevin Mannix and Linda Rota</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Great read by Maine authors about a subject not often talked about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Wicked Good</td>
<td>Amy Lewis Faircloth and Joanne Lewis</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Heartwarming and emotional. This story touches on many subjects including divorce, adoption, single motherhood, aspergers, and witchcraft. Based largely in Bangor.</td>
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