



New RAY bag titles for 2025

***The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness* by Jonathan Haidt (nonfiction)**

In *The Anxious Generation*, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He shows how the “play-based childhood” began to decline in the 1980s, and how it was finally wiped out by the arrival of the “phone-based childhood” in the early 2010s. He explains why social media damages girls more than boys and why boys have been withdrawing from the real world into the virtual world, with disastrous consequences for themselves, their families, and their societies.

***The Backyard Bird Chronicles* by Amy Tan (nonfiction)**

Mapping the passage of time through daily entries, thoughtful questions and beautiful original sketches, the best-selling author of *The Joy Luck Club* shares her search for solace which turned into an opportunity to connect with nature in a meaningful way and imagine the intricate lives of the birds she admired.

***The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters (fiction)**

July 1962. A Mi'kmaq family from Nova Scotia arrives in Maine to pick blueberries; weeks later, four-year-old Ruthie vanishes mysteriously, last seen by her six-year-old brother, Joe. Joe will remain deeply affected by his sister's disappearance for years to come. In Boston, a young girl named Norma grows up as the only child of an affluent family. Her father is emotionally distant, her mother frustratingly overprotective. Norma is often troubled by recurring dreams and visions; as she grows older, Norma slowly comes to realize there is something her parents aren't telling her. Unwilling to abandon her intuition, she will spend decades trying to uncover this family secret.

***The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride (fiction)**

When a skeleton is unearthed in the small, close-knit community of Chicken Hill, Pennsylvania, in 1972, an unforgettable cast of characters, living on the margins of white, Christian America closely guard a secret, especially when the truth is revealed about what happened and the part the town's white establishment played in it.

***James* by Percival Everett (fiction)**

When the enslaved Jim overhears that he is about to be sold to a man in New Orleans, separated from his wife and daughter forever, he decides to hide on nearby Jackson Island until he can formulate a plan. Meanwhile, Huck Finn has faked his own death to escape his violent father, who recently returned to town. As all readers of American literature know, thus begins the dangerous and transcendent journey by raft down the Mississippi River toward the elusive and too-often-unreliable promise of the Free States and beyond. While many narrative set pieces of Twain's original novel remain in place, Jim's agency, intelligence, and compassion are shown in a radically new light.

***The Message* by Ta-Nehisi Coates (nonfiction)**

Ta-Nehisi Coates originally set out to write a book about writing, but found himself grappling with deeper questions about how our stories—our reporting and imaginative narratives and mythmaking—expose and distort our realities. Written at a dramatic moment in American and global life, this work from one of the country's most important writers is about the urgent need to untangle ourselves from the destructive myths that shape our world—and our own souls—and embrace the liberating power of even the most difficult truths.

***Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan (fiction)**

In a small Irish town in 1985, coal merchant and family man, Bill Furlong, while delivering an order to the local convent, makes a discovery that forces him to confront both his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the church.

***Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* by Gabrielle Zevin (fiction)**

Spanning thirty years, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Venice Beach, California, and lands in between and far beyond, this is a dazzling and intricately imagined novel that examines the multifarious nature of identity, disability, failure, the redemptive possibilities in play, and above all, our need to connect: to be loved and to love. Yes, it is a love story, but it is not one you have read before.

***The Women* by Kristin Hannah (fiction)**

In 1965, nursing student Frankie McGrath, after hearing the words "Women can be heroes, too," impulsively joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows her brother to Vietnam where she is overwhelmed by the destruction of war, as well as the unexpected trauma of coming home to a changed and politically divided America.

***Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang (fiction)**

After the death of her literary rival in a freak accident, author June Hayward steals her just-finished masterpiece, sending it to her agent as her own work, but as emerging evidence threatens her success, she discovers just how far she'll go to keep what she thinks she deserves.