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2017 NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS LONGLIST FOR NONFICTION

The ten contenders for the National Book Award for Nonfiction

New York City, September 14, 2017: The National Book Foundation today announced the Longlist for the 2017 National Book Award for Nonfiction. Finalists will be revealed on October 4.

The Nonfiction Longlist includes two titles by previous National Book Awards honorees: a 1973 Contemporary Affairs Winner (a discontinued category) and a 2003 Poetry Finalist. Longlisted authors have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize, the Bancroft Prize, the Hurst Award, and the Taft Award, and their prior works have been named Best Books by *The New York Times*, *TIME*, NPR, *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*. The wide majority of this year's titles are concerned with American history and politics, with several focusing on unknown stories and figures or the rise of modern American movements. The list comprises a Russian-American, a Canadian-American dual citizen, and American-born writers from Nebraska to Pennsylvania to North Carolina. One longlisted title is a debut.

Two titles are from authors each appearing as National Book Awards contenders for the third time, and both have new books that trace American influences on our modern culture. In *The Evangelicals*, 1973 National Book Award Winner and 1980 Finalist **Frances FitzGerald** details the ways in which Christian evangelicals have profoundly shaped our nation and politics. **Kevin Young**, twice nominated for the National Book Award for Poetry, appears for the first time in the Nonfiction category with *Bunk*, which charts the history of the hoax as an American phenomenon.

Two longlisted titles uncover little known American stories: **Erica Armstrong Dunbar's** *Never Caught* details the life of Ona Judge, a woman who escaped slavery and spent her life pursued by her former owners, George and Martha Washington. **David Grann's** *Killers of the Flower Moon* exposes the systematic murders of the Osage people in the 1920s, crimes that led, in part, to the formation of the FBI.

Three titles, including one debut, address the history of race and racism in America. In *The Blood of Emmett Till*, **Timothy B. Tyson** investigates the life and political legacy of the eponymous youth, reassembling the image of a

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flesh and blood teenager whose murder would become the catalyst for a movement. **James Forman Jr.**'s debut, *Locking Up Our Own*, tracks the history of mass incarceration, focusing on the wave of black leaders who supported harsher sentencing and tough-on-crime measures that overwhelmingly affected black communities. In *The Color of Law*, **Richard Rothstein** posits that segregation in America was birthed and reinforced by our government at all levels, effectively creating distinct racial divides in our modern geography.

Other longlisted titles explore the roots and future of our current political world. *Democracy in Chains* by **Nancy MacLean** looks at the rise of the radical right and their organized attempts to enmesh themselves in American politics. **Naomi Klein**'s *No Is Not Enough* suggests that, based on our nation's cultural trajectory, the rise of populism and shock politics in the United States is both a logical and reversible development.

In *The Future Is History*, **Masha Gessen** presents a cautionary tale for our current political moment as she chronicles the lives of four Russian-born people whose experiences provide insight into the reemergence of totalitarianism in modern Russia.

Publishers submitted a total of 553 books for the 2017 National Book Award for Nonfiction. The judges for Nonfiction are Steve Bercu, Jeff Chang, Ruth Franklin, Paula J. Giddings (Chair), and Valeria Luiselli. These distinguished judges were given the charge of selecting what they deem to be the best books of the year. Their decisions are made independently of the National Book Foundation staff and Board of Directors; deliberations are strictly confidential. To be eligible for a 2017 National Book Award, a book must have been written by a US citizen and published in the United States between December 1, 2016 and November 30, 2017.

The National Book Award Finalists will be announced on October 4 and the Winners at the invitation-only National Book Awards Ceremony and Benefit Dinner on November 15 in New York City.

2017 Longlist for the National Book Award for Nonfiction:

Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*
Atria / 37 INK / Simon & Schuster

Frances FitzGerald, *The Evangelicals: The Struggle to Shape America*
Simon & Schuster

James Forman, Jr., *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America*
Farrar, Straus & Giroux / Macmillan Publishers

Masha Gessen, *The Future Is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia*
Riverhead Books / Penguin Random House

David Grann, *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*
Doubleday / Penguin Random House

Naomi Klein, *No Is Not Enough: Resisting Trump's Shock Politics and Winning the World We Need*
Haymarket Books

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Nancy MacLean, *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America*
Viking / Penguin Random House

Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*
Liveright / W. W. Norton & Company

Timothy B. Tyson, *The Blood of Emmett Till*
Simon & Schuster

Kevin Young, *Bunk: The Rise of Hoaxes, Humbug, Plagiarists, Phonies, Post-Facts, and Fake News*
Graywolf Press

Nonfiction Biographies:

Erica Armstrong Dunbar is the Charles and Mary Beard Professor of History at Rutgers University. She also serves as Director of the Program in African American History at the Library Company of Philadelphia. Her first book, *A Fragile Freedom: African American Women and Emancipation in the Antebellum City* was published by Yale University Press in 2008.

Frances FitzGerald is a recipient of the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the Bancroft Prize, among others. She is the author of *Fire in the Lake, America Revised, Cities on a Hill, Way Out There in the Blue*, and *Vietnam: Spirits of the Earth*. She has written for *The New Yorker, The Atlantic, Harper's, The New York Review of Books, The Nation, Rolling Stone*, and *Esquire*. She lives in New York and Maine with her husband, James Sterba.

James Forman Jr. is a professor of law at Yale Law School. He has written for *The New York Times, The Atlantic*, numerous law reviews, and other publications. A former clerk for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, he spent six years as a public defender in Washington, D.C., where he cofounded the Maya Angelou Public Charter School.

Masha Gessen is a Russian-American journalist and the author of several books, including *The Man Without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin*. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Carnegie Fellowship, and her work has appeared in *The New York Times, The New York Review of Books, The New Yorker, Slate, Vanity Fair*, and many other publications. A longtime resident of Moscow, Gessen now lives in New York.

David Grann is a staff writer at *The New Yorker* and the bestselling author of *The Lost City of Z*, which was chosen as one of the best books of the year by *The New York Times, The Washington Post*, and other publications and has been translated into more than twenty-five languages. He is also the author of *The Devil and Sherlock Holmes*. His work has garnered several honors for outstanding journalism, including a George Polk Award.

Naomi Klein is an award-winning journalist, syndicated columnist, documentary filmmaker and author of the international bestsellers *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies, The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* and *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. She is a senior correspondent for *The Intercept* and her writing appears widely in such publications as *The New York Times, Le Monde, The Guardian* and *The*

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Nation, where she is a contributing editor. Klein is a member of the board of directors for climate-action group 350.org and one of the organizers behind Canada's Leap Manifesto. In November 2016 she was awarded Australia's prestigious Sydney Peace Prize. Her books have been translated into more than thirty languages.

Nancy MacLean is the award-winning author of *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, a *New York Times* "noteworthy" book of the year, and *Freedom Is Not Enough*, which was called by the *Chicago Tribune* "contemporary history at its best." She is the William H. Chafe Professor of History and Public Policy at Duke University and lives in North Carolina.

Richard Rothstein is a research associate of the Economic Policy Institute and a Fellow at the Thurgood Marshall Institute of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. He lives in California, where he is a Fellow of the Haas Institute at the University of California, Berkeley.

Timothy B. Tyson is a Senior Research Scholar at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, Visiting Professor of American Christianity and Southern Culture at Duke Divinity School, and adjunct professor of American Studies at the University of North Carolina. He is the author of *Blood Done Sign My Name*, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, winner of the Southern Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, and winner of the Grawemeyer Award in Religion; and *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*, winner of the James A. Rawley Prize for Best Book on Race and the Frederick Jackson Turner Prize for Best First Book in U.S. History from the Organization of American Historians. He serves on the executive boards of the North Carolina NAACP and the UNC Center for Civil Rights.

Kevin Young is the author of a previous work of nonfiction, *The Grey Album: On the Blackness of Blackness*, which was a *New York Times* Notable Book, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for criticism, and the winner of the Graywolf Press Nonfiction Prize. He is also the author of nine books of poetry, including *Blue Laws: Selected and Uncollected Poems 1995–2015*, which was named to the longlist for the National Book Award; *Book of Hours*, which won the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets; and *Jelly Roll: A Blues*, which was named a finalist for the National Book Award and for the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. He is the editor of many books and anthologies, including *The Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton 1965–2010* and *The Best American Poetry 2011*. His most recent book is *Bunk*. Young is the director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City.

2017 National Book Award Judges for Nonfiction:

Steve Bercu is co-owner of BookPeople in Austin, Texas. He began his retail life at the age of five in his family's toy store (the first in Dallas) where he worked until he went to college. Every single store in the shopping area was locally owned then. Customers knew the owners of the stores and knew they were their neighbors. That experience has been the strongest influence on his sense of retail. He is committed to local, independent business and seeing that it play an important role in future retail. He has served on ABA's Board of Directors where he was its immediate past President. He has kept his focus on nonfiction literature since his days as a history major in college.

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Jeff Chang is the Executive Director of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts at Stanford University. His books include *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*, *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*, and *Who We Be: The Colorization of America* (published in paperback in January 2016 under the new title, *Who We Be: A Cultural History of Race in Post Civil Rights America*). His latest, *We Gon' Be Alright: Notes On Race and Resegregation*, was published in September 2016. His next book will be a biography of Bruce Lee. Jeff co-founded [CultureStrike](#) and [ColorLines](#). He was named by *The Utne Reader* as one of "50 Visionaries Who Are Changing Your World" and by KQED as an Asian Pacific American Local Hero. He has been a USA Ford Fellow in Literature and the winner of the Asian American Literary Award.

Ruth Franklin is a book critic and biographer. Her most recent book, *Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2016 and a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, the PEN/Jacqueline Bograd Weld Award for Biography, and the Plutarch Award. Her reviews and essays appear often in *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *The New York Review of Books*, and elsewhere. Her first book, *A Thousand Darknesses: Lies and Truth in Holocaust Fiction*, was a finalist for the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature.

Paula J. Giddings (Chair) is the Elizabeth A. Woodson Professor, Africana Studies, at Smith College. She has published four books, including *Ida, A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching*—winner of the *Los Angeles Times* Prize in Biography and a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. She is a member of PEN and serves on the board of the Authors League Fund and the Nation Institute.

Valeria Luiselli was born in Mexico City in 1983 and grew up in South Africa. A novelist (*Faces in the Crowd* and *The Story of My Teeth*) and essayist (*Sidewalks*), her work has been translated into many languages. In 2014, *Faces in the Crowd* was the recipient of the Los Angeles Times Art Seidenbaum Award for First Fiction and the National Book Foundation's 5 Under 35 award. *The Story of My Teeth* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and won the 2015 Los Angeles Times Prize for Best Fiction.