

## #141 - What to Read This Winter

Hello, everyone! You're listening to The Lazy Genius Podcast! I'm Kendra Adachi, and I am here to help you be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. Today is episode 141 - What to Read This Winter. I know that so many of you folks who listen to this podcast love to read. You love books and more books and finding more ways to get more books into your life. I tend to approach my reading life kind of like I do dinner. You might have heard last week's episode - number 140 about creating a winter dinner queue. I respond so well to thinking in terms of seasons. My brain is too naturally caffeinated and likes to plan and figure things out, and sometimes things go a little crazy. So it really helps to look at major categories in my life and make decisions based on the season I'm in. We did that last week with figuring out what's for dinner, and we'll do it this week with our reading. We'll create a quick and easy path to figuring out what to read this winter if that's on your radar and want to make the most of your reading minutes over the next couple of months.

Before we do that, quick announcement. The Swap is back! The Swap is a completely digital downloadable short ebook I wrote awhile back on how to declutter like a Lazy Genius. The description of The Swap is actually The Lazy Genius Guide to Decluttering for Life. When the year started, I got a lot of emails and DMs asking "is the Swap coming back? I need to declutter!" We all get those January jitters as I call them, wanting to calm our space and clean out stuff, and sadly what often happens is we get all gungho and grab a giant black trash bag and just relentlessly attack our stuff. So many things get thrown out just because we're over it. Or we pull everything out of every closet and drawer and start putting in piles and trying to organize things, and then we lose steam and we're stuck rooms covered in piles. There is a different way I promise. So if you want that different way, you want a clear path through your stuff, check out The Swap. It's available through the end of the month, and there's a link in the show notes if you're interested.

Okay, let's talk about our reading this winter. I am all for the approach of just grabbing the next book when you finish the last one. You might be in a really good reading rhythm and don't see the need to change it at all. But here's why I'm being a bit more intentional than that. First, reading itself matters so much to me and likely to you as well. It's fun, it's educational, it's inspiring, it's about stories and imagination, it's all the things. Reading is great. And because reading is great, I want to give it not just the time I think it deserves and I want it to have, but I also want to give it some direction so that I don't forget how important it is.

If you subscribe to The Latest Lazy Letter which goes out every month (and you can sign up for that by clicking on the link in the show notes or going to [thelazygeniuscollective.com/join](http://thelazygeniuscollective.com/join)), but I've talked a lot in recent months about being in a reading rut. I mentioned in an episode a few months when I talked about my fall reading plans. Which, let's revisit real quick.

My three goals for my fall reading were to read what I want when I want, which I very much did; take a break from the library because my at-home reading stack kept getting interrupted, which I mostly did. The only two books I got in the entirety of fall from the library were long holds which I

was not going to give up. Otherwise I pulled from my own shelves which was great. And the third goal I had in the fall was to not worry about reading a certain number of books. Because I like to share book recommendations with you all in that Latest Lazy Letter, I sometimes put unneeded pressure on myself to read a lot, and I don't need to do that. It's okay. I also had a list of seven books I wanted to read in the fall. I read four, quit one because I just couldn't get into it, and didn't read the other two. They're still on my shelf though and will likely find their right time eventually.

So setting those goals and making a list - making a seasonal book stack - really help me be intentional about something that matters like reading. So what about this winter, and what can this mean for you and your reading?

Just like we talked about last week with our dinner queue, think about the season you're in and how you want your reading to serve you in this season. What do you want it to do for you? It could be an escape, you might want to learn about a certain topic or time in history, maybe you're wanting to reread something beloved in these likely slower, quieter months. It so helps to just name something simple that you want your reading to do for you in this season. Then choose books that serve that purpose. It's really simple, so simple it almost feels stupid to say, but the simplest things are so often the most impactful. We think they're so inconsequential, you know, why even think about it? Why even take the time? I'm just going to read! And you totally can, but my reading is more enjoyable when I name what I want it to do for me in the season I'm in. If you've never tried that, maybe now is a good chance to.

So what do I want my reading to do for me these next couple of months? Two things. One I want to be immersed. You might remember two episodes ago when I talked about my time in the winter, one of the things that I'm doing this season in planning my time is not being on Instagram as much. Not because of some life-altering Instagram-is-bad reason but because I know that I'm going to be on it a lot in the spring and summer when I'm telling you all about my book that's coming out, so I'm going to enjoy this season where my Internet obligations are a little slower and a little less. Therefore, I want to fill that time with reading, and if the reading is immersive and something that pulls me in and offers me another amazing world to escape into, I'm all for that. This is the season for that. So I'm going to choose fiction that matches that.

The other goal I have for this season in regards to my nonfiction is to learn things that will benefit both my business and my soul in the second half of the year when I'm in book launch mode. So I'm choosing some books that can help me share the message of the book well but that can also help me name things within me that I don't want to forget when life becomes busier. I'm also including Bill Bryson on my list because I just love his writing and want to read it all. But we'll get to that.

So those are my two very simple goals or purposes of my reading this season. Now it's not on purpose that I have one purpose for fiction and one for nonfiction, but if that particular rubric helps you in naming purposes for your own reading, do it. There are no rules here. Just ask yourself how you want your reading to serve you in this upcoming season.

I'll have the list of my seasonal stack on the blog. I'll put a link in the show notes, but I'll quickly run through what I've chosen and why.

For fiction, I have nine books. The first two are from a trilogy that I mentioned in the Latest Lazy Letter. It's the Scythe trilogy by Neal Shusterman. I just got the second book from the library, and I will definitely get the third at some point very soon. It's dystopian situation where all of the world's knowledge that was stored in the cloud coalesced into a consciousness called The Thunderhead. It solved all of the world's problems. There's no poverty or natural disasters. The ozone is back to normal. All these things. The only problem is overpopulation because people don't die anymore. The big computer in the sky figured out how to beat death, but people are still having kids. So there's a group of chosen people called scythes that are responsible for gleaning the population and they just kill people to keep the population in check. It's bonkers. It's so good. I love it so much, so that trilogy is top of list this season. Super immersive. I always grab it.

Next is *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morganstern. She's the author of one of my favorite books ever, *The Night Circus*, and my beloved friend and someone you should be following on Instagram Erin H. Moon sent it to me as like a nice gift. She heard I was super deep down on the library waiting list and just sent it to me. So sweet. But that's for sure happening very soon.

The fourth is *The Cloven Viscount*. Now this is a book that I don't know even where it's sold. I got it at my local independent bookstore, and it's so weird and awesome. It's very macabre and dark and about a guy who goes to war and gets cut in half like straight down the middle, and one side is evil and the other is good and both fall in love with the same woman and it's so strange. I've had it on my shelf for awhile and picked it up a couple of weeks ago, but then I got two library holds in and so it got shelved again. But it's super short and so weird and interesting, so I'm excited to finish that one.

Fifth, is the next Tana French book - *Broken Harbor*. I love Tana French. I know that this book doesn't get the same raves as some others, but I trust her and love the world that she builds, and mysteries are always something I want to go back to, so I'm excited about that one.

Speaking of mysteries, I'm also putting on the stack *Hush Hush* by Laura Lippman. I've never read any Laura Lippman, but I feel like I'll really like her. The description on the back is about some lady who commits a crime and pleads insanity and then has a documentary made about her or something but maybe she's actually like a master manipulator... it sounds great. I love that kind of thing, so that's on the stack, too.

Three more. *The Thirteenth Tale* by Diane Setterfield. I read her book *Once Upon a River* last year and really loved it. The story was a little slower, but she has such a vibe that I'm into. The writing feels like you're stepping into fog and darkness and it's so great. I really enjoyed her writing, and I own *The Thirteenth Tale* so we're going to try it out.

Big Little Lies. I've seen the series, I've read several books by Liane Moriarty and loved every single one, so I'm going to read this. This is the one I'm a little skeptical about just because I've seen the series and know the story, but I think that if I give it two chapters so I'm committing to giving it two chapters.

Final fiction pick that will actually be saved for the transition from winter to spring is Jayber Crow by Wendell Berry which has been on several stacks so far and I've yet to pick it up. I think though that reading it before a busy season will be such a gift, and it feels like the right time. It's not like the usual fiction I go for, but I love his writing and think a slower human story will be a great thing to start a busy season.

For nonfiction, and again I'm choosing books that are hopefully going to help in moving into this next crazy season, I've chosen six books, one of which I'm reading now.

The Body by Bill Bryson. So Bill Bryson is my new writing idol. I had never read him before, but he somehow is teaching about like the digestive system and brain cells and making me laugh and keeping me interested and it's remarkable. I want to be the kind of writer that teaches kind of rote, dry things in a new way, and he's basically the master. Which is why the second book on the list which is also on my shelf is his other masterpiece, A Short History of Nearly Everything. I do not do history. I don't like it. My brain doesn't like looking back. But I want to. I want to be the kind of person who knows what the Spanish American War was. Wasn't there a Spanish American War? I want to understand sinking ships and wars and movements and all those things, and if anybody is going to make me like it, it's Bill Bryson. Both of those picks are really less about the specific purpose of helping me in this season and more learning not just the information in the books but learning the craft of writing better by reading his writing. He's just brilliant.

Okay, so the other four nonfiction pick will hopefully do what I need them to do.

I'm going to read This Is Marketing by Seth Godin before embarking on lots of book marketing coming up. I'm going to read The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry by John Mark Comer to help me eliminate the hurry before calendar hurry begins. I'm going to read The Happiness Project by Gretchen Rubin because I love to hear and learn about other people's experiences in finding what makes them feel like a person. It gives me more language to name that for myself, especially, again, going into a season that will likely be busier and more stressful than the one I'm in now. And finally I'm going to read Joyful by Ingrid Fetell Lee. It's a book about creating joy in your spaces and your interactions and your life and I'm all about that. It feels like it will go well with one of my favorite books from 2019 called The Art of Gathering by Priya Parker. I love environments and bringing people together in intentional environments. The Art of Gathering is obviously about gathering, and Joyful I think is going to be a bit more boots on the ground and how to create joyful spaces for those gatherings. I'm super excited about that one. I love joy. Joy is great.

So those are my books! That's what I am going to reach for this winter because I want to be immersed and I want to learn some things that will benefit both my schedule and my soul in the spring and summer.

So for you as you move forward from this episode, how do you want your reading to serve you in this season? Name it, and then choose a book or twelve that match that purpose. Again, I'll have the list on the blog and will likely have a picture of my stacks on Instagram @thelazygenius, so if you want to leave some book ideas or your own stack, you can leave a comment on the blog post or you can tag me on your Instagram post and use the hashtag #winterstack2020. That way we can see what we're all reading.

I love talking about books! Thanks for listening to me talk about books, and I hope it gets you excited to read your books this winter. Okay, that's it for today! Don't forget about The Swap! It's available to buy for a couple more weeks, and I will not be doing an Instagram live this Thursday because I'll be out of town. But I'm going to be with the likes of Jamie B. Golden, Bri McKoy, and Laura Tremaine, so I'm not promising Instagram content while I'm with them, but there's a chance of some shenanigans, so be sure you're following me @thelazygenius on Instagram. And follow them! They're seriously some of my favorite follows on the Internet. Truly delightful humans that share such helpful and funny and enriching - that's the word - they enrich your life in their own ways, so go follow them. I'll put links to their accounts in the show notes, too.

Okay, thanks for listening! Go make your winter stack! Until next time, be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. I'm Kendra, and I'll see you next week!