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SUBJECT: One Book Northland Announces 2021 Book Choice

BY: Laura Selden

One Book Northland Announces 2021 Book Choice

[DULUTH, MN] - 2021 marks the 20th year the *One Book* project has brought Northland communities together to celebrate reading. The One Book Northland committee is pleased to announce their selection of *The Nickel Boys* by Colson Whitehead as the 2021 One Book Northland title.

The committee selection was influenced by the cancelation of the 2020 events for that year's selected title, *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson, due to the pandemic. The topic of racial injustice presented in this non-fiction work still needs to be made available for community discussion and so a coordinating fiction work was carefully researched and selected. As with our first selected One Book Northland title in 2002, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, community engagement on these important topics is necessary and desired and the reason for One Book Northland.

American author Colson Whitehead has won many honors for his works, including two Pulitzer Prize awards for Fiction, for *The Underground Railroad* and *The Nickel Boys*, the Orwell Prize for Political Fiction 2020, and the Kirkus Prize for Fiction 2019 for *The Nickel Boys*, his seventh novel. He is also the author of two works of non-fiction, plus essays and short stories.

In *The Nickel Boys*, Whitehead tells the devastating tale of two boys unjustly sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida. The novel is based on the real story of a reform school that operated for 111 years and warped the lives of thousands of children.

In 2021, the Duluth Public Library, along with the Cloquet Public Library, Superior Public Library, Two Harbors Public Library, Barnes & Noble, Bookstore at Fitger's, UMD Office of Diversity & Inclusion, UMD Kathryn A. Martin Library, and Zenith Bookstore will sponsor events related to the selection.

Look for details and links to One Book Northland virtual events online at www.duluthlibrary.org this spring.

The One Book Northland committee includes representatives from the Duluth Public Library, Cloquet Public Library, Superior Public Library, Two Harbors Public Library, University of Minnesota Duluth, Barnes & Noble, Bookstore at Fitger's, and Zenith Bookstore.

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