

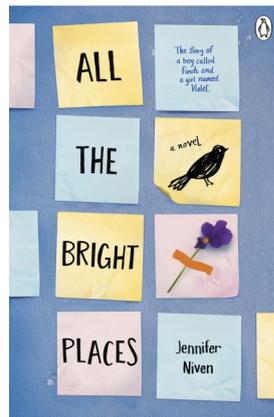
## **All The Bright Places**

By Jennifer Niven  
Publisher: Penguin  
ISBN 9780141357034  
\$17.99

**Secondary Book  
of the Month**

### *Blurb:*

Theodore Finch is fascinated by death, and he constantly thinks of ways he might kill himself. But each time, something good, no matter how small, stops him. Violet Markey lives for the future, counting the days until graduation, when she can escape her Indiana town and her aching grief in the wake of her sister's recent death. When Finch and Violet meet on the ledge of the bell tower at school, it's unclear who saves whom. And when they pair up on a project to discover the 'natural wonders' of their state, both Finch and Violet make more important discoveries: It's only with Violet that Finch can be himself - a weird, funny, live-out-loud guy who's not such a freak after all. And it's only with Finch that Violet can forget to count away the days and start living them. But as Violet's world grows, Finch's begins to shrink.



### Lamont Review:

I read a huge number of books each year and every so often an incredible book comes along that touches me deeply. I was blown away by All the Bright Places - the characters, Finch and Violet, their relationship and their thoughts, particularly on the main theme of the book, suicide.

The book brings home the impact of mental illness and the need to acknowledge and respond to indicators early to possibly reduce the devastating effects.

With some book reviews I don't want to give to away too much about the plot for fear of spoiling the book, so I will just say that this is one of the most powerful, thought provoking books I have ever read. The plot is intense, the characters real, and the writing impeccable, with the theme being handled almost gently.

This is a must read and will be an instant success with YA's the world over.

Working in the book industry, I get the pleasure of reading and promoting brilliant new titles – often before the 'hype' catches on. It was great to be one of the first in Australia to tell people to read Harry Potter, Wonder and The Fault In Our Stars and then see how well they were received. Now I'm excited to be telling you to read All The Bright Places – it is a wonderful, moving book that is destined for great things.

*Reviewed by Rob*

## **The Flywheel**

By Erin Gough

Publisher: Hardie Grant Egmont

ISBN 9781742978178

\$19.95

### *Blurb:*

Seventeen-year-old Delilah's crazy life is about to get crazier. Ever since her father took off overseas, she's been struggling to run the family's café -- The Flywheel -- without him and survive high school.

But after a misjudged crush on one of the cool girls, she's become the school punchline as well. With all that's on her plate she barely has time for her favourite distraction - spying on the beautiful Rosa, who dances flamenco at the tapas bar across the road.

Only her best friend Charlie knows how she feels about Rosa, but he has romantic problems of his own. When his plan to win an older woman's heart goes horribly wrong, Del is the only one who can help Charlie stay out of jail.

All this leaves Del grappling with some seriously curly questions. Is it okay to break the law to help a friend? How can a girl tell another girl she likes her without it ending in humiliation and heartbreak? And - the big one - is it ever truly possible to dance in public without falling over?



### Lamont Review:

The Ampersand project is publisher Hardie Grant's idea to get a new Australian author published each year.

They had immediate success with their first selection, Melissa Keil's CBCA short listed *Life in Outer Space*, *Flywheel* is their second Ampersand winner and a great read it is.

Erin Gough is a great new voice in Australian teen fiction.

This book follows the journey of seventeen year old Delilah's (Del's) crazy life after her father took off overseas and she is left to manage the family café, The Flywheel. This may have been possible if their head chef had not departed in the first days. So Del's life is in turmoil. She drops out of school, she isn't sure how to handle her feelings for the beautiful flamenco dancer, Rosa, and when her best friend Charlie gets onto the wrong side of the law, she doesn't know how far to go to help him.

Del has experienced humiliation and heartbreak before and is not sure she wants to face this again.

Strong themes and characters warm the mood of this book as you dream of a happy outcome.

It is a coming of age, find your true place novel that will appeal to those 15 and older.

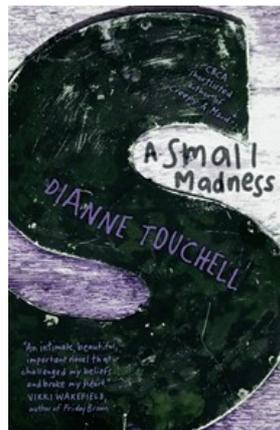
*Reviewed by Rob*

## **A Small Madness**

By Dianne Touchell  
Publisher: Allen & Unwin  
ISBN 9781760110789  
\$16.99

### *Blurb:*

Rose didn't tell anyone about it. She wondered if it showed. She looked at herself in the mirror and turned this way and then that way. She stood as close to the mirror as she could, leaning over the bathroom basin, looking into her own eyes until they disappeared behind the fog of her breath. Looking for something. Some evidence that she was different now. Something had shifted inside her, a gear being ratcheted over a clunky cog, gaining torque, starting her up. But it didn't show. How could all of these feelings not show? She was a woman now but it didn't show and she couldn't tell anyone.



### Lamont Review:

Dianne Touchell, Australian author of Lamont Standing Order and CBCA shortlisted *Creepy and Maude's* second book is being released to huge acclaim. (The only 5 star rated YA book in Books and Publishing magazines fourth quarter 2014 junior edition.)

This is a powerful novel that deals with deep and at times disturbing themes. It tackles the effects an unwanted pregnancy can have on a teenager and the consequences that subsequent bad decisions can lead to.

It is gripping and totally a absorbing read, but in the end, you wonder if Rose's decision of denial justifies our need to believe her to be a monster.

Dianne Touchell suggests guilt and evil are very different things and that underscores what this novel really teaches us.

A story that will have people talking. It is at times shocking and will only be appreciated by those 15 and older.

*Reviewed by Rob*

## **Trust Me, I'm Lying**

By Mary Elizabeth Summer

Publisher: Random House

ISBN 9780857987037

\$19.99

### *Blurb:*

Julep Dupree tells lies. A lot of them. She's a con artist, a master of disguise, and a sophomore at Chicago's swanky St. Agatha High, where her father, an old-school grifter with a weakness for the ponies, sends her to so she can learn to mingle with the upper crust. For extra spending money Julep doesn't rely on her dad--she runs petty scams for her classmates while dodging the dean of students and maintaining an A+ (okay, A-) average. But when she comes home one day to a ransacked apartment and her father gone, Julep's carefully laid plans for an expenses-paid golden ticket to Yale start to unravel. Even with help from St. Agatha's resident Prince Charming, Tyler Richland, and her loyal hacker sidekick, Sam, Julep struggles to trace her dad's trail of clues through a maze of creepy stalkers, hit attempts, family secrets, and worse, the threat of foster care. With everything she has at stake, Julep's in way over her head . . . but that's not going to stop her from using every trick in the book to find her dad before his mark finds her. Because that would be criminal.



### *Lamont Review:*

This is a far cry from the usual teenagers books about love, life and boys. This is a full on adventure and mystery.

Julep is a high school con artist and a master of disguise. She knows every trick in the book, as she was taught by the best - her Dad.

When she comes home to find their apartment ransacked and her Dad missing, she starts asking questions. This sets off a whole new chain of events and Julep will need as much help as possible.

Her biggest problem is who can she trust. Sam, her faithful friend and computer hacker, Tyler the schools golden boy or Mike the struggling PI.

A fast paced, well thought out teen novel that is remarkable for a debut novel.

I really loved this book with its complex main characters Julep and a cast of thoroughly entertaining characters.

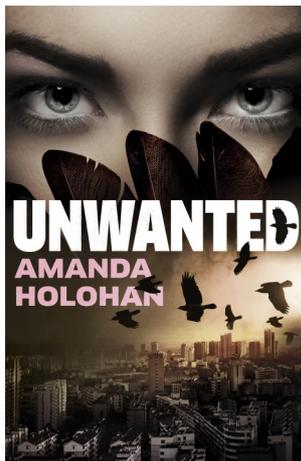
Perfect for Year 9 and up who love a mystery ( and a little romance as well!!)

*Reviewed by Michelle*

**Unwanted**  
By Amanda Holohan  
Publisher: Penguin  
ISBN 9780143571094  
\$19.99

*Blurb:*

All her life, Bea has wanted nothing more than to become a sniper on the wall and earn the coveted ink of a Dread warrior - a mark of distinction among her people. She knows that one day the terrifying Erepii might break through the city's outer defences, and if her people aren't prepared and the wall is breached then the last human city will fall. But everything Bea thinks she knows is about to be challenged... What does the ink really do as it flows underneath their skin and who is the mysterious Unwanted boy that keeps appearing in her life?



Lamont Review:

*Unwanted* is a story that leads you in many directions. And just when you think you might be on the track of figuring out the story, there seems to be another twist.

Set in a world at war, Bea lives in an environment that is totally controlled. Everything they do is regulated. But then she meets Red. She isn't sure what or who he is. She thinks he is just another Unwanted, living in the slum of the city, but things just don't seem to add up. And the more time she spends with him, the more confused and dangerous her life becomes.

Is her life and that of everyone in the city all that they have been lead to believe, or are they all being lied to?

It is very much a science fiction story, touched with mystery, family loyalty, deceit and lies.

Although the main character is a girl, it is certainly a story that boys would love as well.

*Reviewed by Sam*

## **Moon At Nine**

By Deborah Ellis

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760111977

\$16.99

### *Blurb:*

Fifteen-year-old Farrin has many secrets. Although she goes to a school for gifted girls in Tehran, as the daughter of an aristocratic mother and wealthy father, Farrin must keep a low profile. It is 1988; ever since the Shah was overthrown, the deeply conservative and religious government controls every facet of life in Iran.

If the Revolutionary Guard finds out about her mother's Bring Back the Shah activities, her family could be thrown in jail, or worse. The day she meets Sadira, Farrin's life changes forever. Sadira is funny, wise, and outgoing; the two girls become inseparable. But as their friendship deepens into romance, the relationship takes a dangerous turn. It is against the law to be gay in Iran; the punishment is death.

Despite their efforts to keep their love secret, the girls are discovered and arrested. Separated from Sadira, Farrin can only pray as she awaits execution. Will her family find a way to save them both?



### Lamont Review:

Deborah Ellis again takes us on a journey into a life, that with her help, we can only begin to understand. That is the life of a 15 year old girl, Farrin, who is growing up in 1988 under an oppressive regime in Iran.

She attends school and does very well. She has wealthy parents and her mother holds 'bring back the Shah' meetings which could see them all jailed or killed.

But when Farrin befriends the new girl at school, Sadira, their friendship develops strange feelings and they fall in love. This is unacceptable in Iran and punishable by death.

But could this really happen?

Based on real life events, this is a gripping eye opener that I won't ruin the end for you.

For our Christian schools, I must say a kiss is shared between the girls, but that is all.

It is a great read and is best suited to those 14+.

*Reviewed by Rob*

**For the Forest of a Bird**  
By Sue Saliba  
Publisher: Penguin  
ISBN 9780143571780  
\$17.99

*Blurb:*

A novel about love and the things you can and can't change, from the winner of the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for young adult fiction. Nella closed her hand in the pocket of her dress, and she felt the feather against her fingers. 'I want to tell you something,' she said, and it did not matter that there was no reply. 'I want to tell you that he's coming home. . . and it's going to be like it was before he went away, before everything broke apart.' Nella waits for the swallows by the creek each spring. It's a secret vigil she's followed ever since her father left. This year she's going to take him with her . . . but can we ever return to the way things were?



Lamont Review:

Nella's life had turned upside down when her similarly minded nature loving father had left the family home years earlier.

But just as the swallows annually returned to their nest at a nearby creek, Nella was sure things could always return for the better.

But then he has a heart-attack and when Nella visits his house on Phillip Island to await his return from hospital, she realises that things do change. They could change back to better times, but they do move on.

How will Nella be able to fit into his new life? Will she return to her depressed, pill filled mother and cold brother?

Whimsically written, this hope for the future, coming of age novel will be most appreciated by girls 12-15.

*Reviewed by Rob*

**1915 Do You Dare? Jimmy's War**  
By Sherryl Clark  
Publisher: Penguin  
ISBN 9780143308027  
\$14.99

*Blurb:*

Do you dare . . . Leave school to support your family? Save your big brother? Stand up to the local crims? It's an adventure in history. Do you Dare? It's 1915 in Melbourne's inner west and Jimmy has left school to support his family while his brother is away at war. But when Jimmy's brother returns, he is a different person, and Jimmy finds his 'odd jobs' for the local crims have also taken a turn for the worst. Will Jimmy go to gaol and can he save his family and his brother...?



*Lamont Review:*

Sherryl Clark has highlighted the stark reality of growing up during WWI. Jimmy is a good kid. He goes to school, reluctantly, and loves to kick the footy with his friends.

But life is tough. It is 1915. It is now only his Mum and him. Jimmy is not only dealing with the death of his father, but is adjusting to life without his brother around, who is away fighting the war.

When his Mum becomes sick, Jimmy takes on the responsibility of being the only one who can feed the family. School will just have to wait. He needs to work. They need the money.

He has been a delivery boy and had a back-breaking job at the rail yards. But it is his work for Bill Prosser that is the most lucrative. But Jimmy knows it could end in major trouble. But what choice does he have?

When Arthur returns home from the war as a shell of the strapping, young, handsome man he was, life just gets even more complicated.

For such a young boy, Jimmy must make some extremely tough decisions. Will he make the biggest mistake of his life?

A perfect read for boys 12 and up.

*Reviewed by Sam*