



LANDFALL

DELVE DEEPER READING LIST



This list of fiction and nonfiction material, compiled by Matt Pettit at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Landfall*. Through shard-like glimpses of everyday life in post-Hurricane María Puerto Rico, *Landfall* is a cautionary tale for our times. Set against the backdrop of the protests that toppled the governor in 2019, the film offers a prismatic portrait of collective trauma and resistance as Puerto Ricans navigate dismantled social services and newcomers eager to profit.

Contributors

Matt Pettit

ADULT NON-FICTION

“Blackout in Puerto Rico.” *Frontline*, written, produced and directed by Rick Young, Public Broadcasting Service, PBS Distribution, 2018.

An investigation into FEMA's failure to provide adequate relief in Puerto Rico following Hurricane María in 2017. Looks at the role Wall Street and a debt crisis fueled by the U.S. government have played in Puerto Rico's ongoing humanitarian and economic crisis.

Bonilla, Yarimar and LeBrón, Marisol. *Aftershocks of Disaster: Puerto Rico Before and After the Storm*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2019.

An in-depth look at Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria and the preexisting crisis that conditioned this historic disaster.

Two years after Hurricane Maria hit, Puerto Ricans are still reeling from its effects and aftereffects. *Aftershocks* collects poems, essays and photos from survivors of Hurricane Maria detailing their determination to persevere.

The concept of "aftershocks" is used in the context of earthquakes to describe the jolts felt after the initial quake, but no disaster is a singular event. *Aftershocks of Disaster* examines the lasting effects of hurricane Maria, not just the effects of the wind or the rain, but delving into what followed: state failure, social abandonment, capitalization on human misery, and the collective trauma produced by the botched response.

Gil, Guillermo Rebollo. *Writing Puerto Rico: Our Decolonial Moment*. Palgrave Pivot, 2018.

This text, an autoethnography and practice in intersectionality, discusses new ways to engender radical political thought and activism that challenge PROMESA and austerity measures in Puerto Rico. The author analyzes art, literature, and activism to show their innovative epistemologies, which emerge even in precarious circumstances.

Klein, Naomi. *The Battle for Paradise: Puerto Rico Takes on the Disaster Capitalists*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2018.

In the rubble of Hurricane Maria, Puerto Ricans and ultrarich “Puertopians” are locked in a pitched struggle over how to remake the island. In this vital and startling investigation, bestselling author and activist Naomi Klein uncovers how the forces of shock politics and disaster capitalism seek to undermine the nation's radical, resilient vision for a “just recovery.”

Klein, Naomi. *Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. New York: Picador, 2008.

In this book Naomi Klein explodes the myth that the global free market triumphed democratically. Exposing the thinking, the money trail and the puppet strings behind the world-changing crises and wars of the last four decades, *The Shock Doctrine* is the gripping story of how America's "free market" policies have come to dominate the world-- through the exploitation of disaster-shocked people and countries.

La Brega: *Stories of the Puerto Rican Experience*. (Podcast). A co-production from WNYC Studios and Futuro Studios. <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/la-brega/about>

A seven-part podcast series that uses narrative storytelling and investigative journalism to reflect and reveal how *la brega* has defined so many aspects of life in Puerto Rico. Available in English and Spanish. Created by a team of Puerto Rican journalists, producers, musicians, and artists from the island and diaspora; hosted by On the Media's Alana Casanova-Burgess.

Morales, Ed. *Fantasy Island: Colonialism, Exploitation and the Betrayal of Puerto Rico*. Bold Type Books, 2019.

Since its acquisition by the US in 1898, Puerto Rico has served as a testing ground for the most aggressive and exploitative US economic, political, and social policies. The devastation that ensued finally grew impossible to ignore in 2017, in the wake of Hurricane María, as the physical destruction compounded the infrastructure collapse and trauma inflicted by the debt crisis. The author emphasizes that the only way to stop Puerto Rico from being bled is to let Puerto Ricans take control of their own destiny, going beyond the statehood-commonwealth-independence debate to complete decolonization.

Pasch Richard J., et al. *National Hurricane Center Tropical Cyclone Report: Hurricane María*. https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/data/tcr/AL152017_María.pdf. Accessed 28 May 2020.

Official United States government meteorological analysis of Hurricane María that includes charts, graphs, illustrations and images.

The Puerto Rico Syllabus. *Critical Thinking about the Puerto Rican Debt Crisis*. <https://puertoricosyllabus.com/>

The goals of this collaborative and interactive project - #PRSyllabus - are to support people in their journeys to: (1.) To understand how the contemporary Puerto Rican debt crisis has its roots in the colonial and capitalist relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States; (2.) To show how the debt crisis is affecting the lives of millions of Puerto Ricans in the territory and the diaspora; and (3.) To provide examples of Puerto Rican groups organizing against the austerity measures being imposed upon them by Washington and Wall Street.

“Rise of the Superstorms.” *Nova*, written, produced and directed by Liesl Clark. Public Broadcasting Service, PBS Distribution, 2018.

In summer 2017, three monster hurricanes swept in from the Atlantic one after another, shattering storm records and killing hundreds of people. Dive into the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and María. How can scientists better predict these storms, and what does the 2017 season tell us about the likelihood of similar storms in the future?

Vita Ayala, *Puerto Rico Strong: A Comics Anthology Supporting Puerto Rico Disaster*. Diamond, 2018.

This comics anthology includes art and writing by many Puerto Rican authors. In both realistic and fantastical ways, the stories in this text explore different forms of being Puerto Rican, either on the Island or in the Diaspora. All its proceeds go towards disaster relief.

Zambrana, Rocío. *Colonial Debts: The Case of Puerto Rico*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019.

With the largest municipal debt in US history and a major hurricane that destroyed much of the archipelago's infrastructure, Puerto Rico has emerged as a key site for the exploration of neoliberalism and disaster capitalism. In *Colonial Debts* Rocío Zambrana develops the concept of neoliberal coloniality in light of Puerto Rico's debt crisis. Drawing on decolonial thought and praxis, Zambrana shows how debt functions as an apparatus of predation that transforms how neoliberalism operates. Debt functions as a form of coloniality, intensifying race, gender, and class hierarchies in ways that strengthen the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. Zambrana also examines the transformation of protest in Puerto Rico. From La Colectiva Feminista en Construcción's actions, long-standing land rescue/occupation in the territory, to the July 2019 protests that ousted former governor Ricardo “Ricky” Rosselló, protests pursue variations of decolonial praxis that subvert the positions of power that debt installs. As Zambrana demonstrates, debt reinstalls the colonial condition and adapts the racial/gender order essential to it, thereby emerging as a key site for political-economic subversion and social rearticulation.

ADULT FICTION

Cofer, Judith Ortiz. *Latin Deli: Telling the Lives of Barrio W.* WW Norton & Co. 1993.

A community transplanted from what they now view as an island paradise, these Puerto Rican families yearn for the colors and tastes of their former home. As they carve out lives as Americans, their days are filled with drama, success, and sometimes tragedy.

Lopez, Marco, et al. *Puerto Rico Strong: A Comics Anthology Supporting Puerto Rico Disaster Relief and Recovery.* Lion Forge, 2018.

Puerto Rico Strong is a comics anthology that explores what it means to be Puerto Rican and the diversity that exists within that concept from 41 of today's most exciting Puerto Rican comics creators.

McCoy, Sarah. *The Time It Snowed in Puerto Rico.* Shaye Areheart Books, 2009.

It is 1961 and Puerto Rico is trapped in a tug-of-war between those who want to stay connected to the United States and those who are fighting for independence. Verdita has always been safe and secure in her sleepy mountain town, but she must find the strength to decide what sort of woman she'll become.

Miranda-Rodriguez Edgardo, et al. *Ricanstruction: Reminiscing & Rebuilding Puerto Rico.* Somos Arte LLC, 2018.

Anthology featuring contributions from writers and artists from the comic book industry to Puerto Rican and Latinx celebrities. Produced and also featuring stories written by Edgardo Miranda-Rodriguez, this anthology teams up his original character La Borinqueña with some of the most iconic comic book heroes of all time from DC Comics: Wonder Woman, Batman, Superman, Aquaman, The Flash and many others. Original stories also take us to the past to explore the beautiful history of Puerto Rico as well as tales that envision a stronger and rebuilt island.

Negrón, Sergio Gutiérrez. *They say that the sleeping ones.* 3rd edition, Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, 2017.

This novel takes place in the XXI century and hones in on the daily life of the professional middle class in Puerto Rico. Even though this social class tries to construct a haven apart from the rest of the world, it cannot fully escape violence: one character gets injured accidentally in a shooting and wakes up after being in coma for 4 years. This novel displays the first phases of the economic crisis on the Island.

Rodriguez, Ivelisse. *Love War Stories*. Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2018.

From childhood, Puerto Rican girls are taught to want true love. They are raised by women whose lives were filled with grief and betrayal. These short stories document how these love wars unfold across generations.

NON-FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Levy, Patricia. *Puerto Rico: Cultures of the World*. Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2005.

Explores the geography, history, government, economy, people, and culture of Puerto Rico.

Goldsworthy, Steve. *Puerto Rico: Isle of Enchantment*. AV2 by Weigl, 2012.

Did you know that people called the Tainos lived in Puerto Rico more than 800 years ago? Some English words, such as barbecue and hammock, come from the Taino language. Discover more exciting facts about the history, geography, and symbols of this territory in Puerto Rico, part of the Explore the U.S.A. series. Each book in the series uses vibrant images and engaging text to take beginning readers on a journey to the places that make up this great nation.

Gregory, Josh. *If You Were a Kid Surviving a Hurricane*. Children's Press, 2018.

If a hurricane was heading toward your hometown, what would you do? Readers will enjoy the thrilling story of Carrie and Dan, two friends who find themselves caught in the path of a major hurricane. Along the way, they will learn how hurricanes form, how weather scientists track and study these storms, what people do to protect themselves from wind and flooding, and much more.

Hudak, Heather C. *Surviving the Hurricane: Hear My Story*. Crabtree Publishing Company, 2020.

In 2017, Puerto Rico was hit hard by Hurricane María, which devastated the island, buildings, and people, and knocked out power. Based on the experiences of many hurricane victims, this fictional story follows Antonio and his family who fled to a safer part of the island, then returning to their village where they struggle to rebuild with little help. Interspersed with facts and case studies about what causes hurricanes, this narrative tells a story common to many people who have had to flee and rebuild their lives after losing their homes, possessions, and sometimes, loved ones.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Cartaya, Pablo. *Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish*. Viking, 2018.

After a fight at school leaves Marcus facing suspension, Marcus's mother takes him and his younger brother, who has Down syndrome, to Puerto Rico to visit relatives they do not remember or have never met, and while there Marcus starts searching for his father, who left their family ten years ago and is somewhere on the island.

Courage, Nick. *Storm Blown*. Delacorte Press, 2019.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, Alejandro worries about his great-uncle while helping guests at a resort, and in New Orleans, Emily worries about her sick brother, as a major hurricane rages, changing both their lives forever.

Landron, Rafael. *Beba and Little Sister Island / Beba y la Isla*. Editorial Campana, 2010.

Given the various environmental injustices made apparent by U.S. governmental responses to Hurricane Maria relief, it is important to remember how Puerto Rico has been used in the past as an experimental site for chemicals, coal ash, and other hazardous materials by U.S. agencies. This endearing book, written by Rafael Landron, tells the story of the island of Vieques, a military base for decades, from the perspective of Beba. Beba, a manatee swimming off its shores, witnesses test bombs and their consequences for her world and rallies other marine life in an attempt to defend the island. The bilingual story of Beba gives children another perspective on the activist victory of 2003 who gained the exit of the U.S. Marines from Vieques.

Martinez, Lisa Bolivar and Martinez, Matthew. *Good Night Puerto Rico*. Good Night Books, 2017.

Good Night Puerto Rico features Old San Juan, El Morro, El Yunque, Kiosks of Luquillo, Canopy tour, celebrating "Los Reyes," surfing in Rincón, caves in Camuy, vejigantes in the Carnaval de Ponce, La Fortaleza, the lighthouse at Cabezas de San Juan in Fajardo, Plazas of Puerto Rico, local foods, and more. This beautifully illustrated children's board book captures the heart and soul of Puerto.

Olivencia, Laura Rexach. *Por ahí viene el huracán*, 2018.

A story of the everyday occurrences of a young girl who happens to live in Puerto Rico when Hurricane Maria hits. Rexach Olivencia gives us the perspective of what life was like for children a few days before the hurricane and then in the days after.

Wallner, Alexandra. *Sergio and the Hurricane*. Henry Holt, 2000.

A young boy is excited when he hears that a hurricane is coming to his oceanfront home in San Juan, Puerto Rico, but when it comes, he learns how dangerous hurricanes can be.

Sánchez-Korrol, Virginia. *The Season of Rebels and Roses*. Pinata Books, 2018.

Ranging from Puerto Rico to Cuba and the United States, this engaging novel for teens follows historical figures that were instrumental in the fight for self-determination in Puerto Rico. Addressing issues that remain relevant today—including racism and the island’s status—*The Season of Rebels and Roses* also sheds light on women’s involvement in their nations’ liberation—and their own.