

Periodical gifts

This Christmas, CC staff members are giving people print subscriptions.

Features in the [December 15, 2021](#) issue



For the friend whose spirituality is deeply invested in ecology—and we should all be getting there, even if we’re late to the party—[EcoTheo Review](#) publishes original essays, reviews, poetry, and art that enliven the conversation between faith and environmental justice. Founded at Princeton Theological Seminary in 2013, the literary journal has grown into a collective, a conference, and the Starshine and Clay Fellowship, which supports emerging Black poets with publication and mentorship.

For the friend who is southern and sick of southern stereotypes (that’s me; I’m the friend), the [Bitter Southerner](#) challenges the narrative with writing and reportage that are by turns difficult and delightful, critical and celebratory. Writers and artists explore the myths and tropes of southern life—often turning them inside out, always pushing for what the magazine calls a “better South.” To go with your gift subscription, you could also pick up something from the [Bitter Southerner’s general store](#)—like the coffee-table book *Waffle House Vistas*, a screen-printed tea towel

from artist Courtney Garvin, an “abide no hatred” pride flag, or a “good trouble” graphic tee in honor of civil rights hero John Lewis.

For the whimsical friend who loves to support work made by women’s hands, [Ethel](#) is both a twice yearly, limited edition zine of writing and art and a micropress specializing in handmade chapbooks. Each issue is a delight to read, hold, and see on your bookshelf—and every single copy is hand sewn with love by cofounder Sara Lefsyk.

And finally, for the old-school social justice warrior in your life, why not go back to the source? [The Catholic Worker newspaper](#) has been afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted since it was founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933. Still only a penny an issue and never online, you’ll have to write to them to request your print subscription for a whopping \$0.25. (They also accept donations.)

—**Jessica Mesman**, associate editor

A pet peeve of mine is the assumption that American political thought exists between two binary poles. It’s as if the two-party system controls not just our governance but our wider political imagination as well. When I hear this from someone, I’m tempted to respond with a rant about the great variety of political thought in this country. I really should just buy them a magazine subscription instead.

The self-proclaimed “world’s first socialist-feminist glossy magazine” has a perfect title: [Lux](#). It’s a name that both honors the revolutionary socialist Rosa Luxemburg and evokes a sense of indulgence. “Contra stereotypes about socialism,” write the editors, “we believe in abundance for all.” Two issues into its short life, the magazine has tackled a variety of fascinating subjects that each, in its way, challenges the notion that American leftists have to choose between cultural priorities and economic ones. It also looks fantastic—a sly subversion of a consumer-driven women’s magazine.

A perennial question for leftist radicals is if and when to make common cause with mainstream liberals. It might be an easier sell if mainstream liberalism were shaped by [The American Prospect](#), which embodies a progressivism that’s for economic equality, labor rights, industrial policy, and social welfare. When *TAP* was founded in

1989, these priorities were out of fashion in the Democratic Party. That's changed somewhat, but unions remain weak and inequality keeps growing. This magazine's savvy advocacy and engaging writing are as vital as ever.

Like the socialist *Lux* and the labor-oriented *TAP*, the [Front Porch Republic](#) has a lot invested in social solidarity. Its politics are quite different, however: the online publication and its print journal, [Local Culture](#), are focused on localism, voluntary association, and organic community. The front porch is a borderland between public and private space writ small, and FPR explores the way such liminal spaces are essential to democracy. While it's true that [localism sometimes betrays a xenophobic shadow side](#), that hardly negates localism's witness to our unrooted, displaced contemporary existence. *FPR's* resistance to social atomization, economic centralization, and cultural homogenization has much to say to conservatives, to liberals, and to those of us who find that binary distinction simplistic and tiresome.

—**Steve Thorngate**, managing editor

There are many magazines that I wish I could read on a regular basis, so this year I'm giving gift subscriptions to the people I live with. My husband, for instance, is getting [Nautilus](#), an artsy, philosophical science magazine that publishes a nicely designed print edition every other month. The writing is great—Cormac McCarthy's nonfiction debut was in *Nautilus*—and the topics are diverse. (How much are our perceptions of dinosaurs shaped by capitalism? A lot, it turns out.)

My younger daughter is getting [Kazoo](#), an “ad-free, indie magazine for girls, 5 to 12, that celebrates them for being strong, smart, fierce and true to themselves.” Created in Brooklyn and printed in Vermont on recycled paper, each quarterly issue is filled with colorful puzzles, stories, comics, games, interviews, crafts, and enough subtle humor to keep adults entertained as they read it with their children.

My older daughter is receiving [Illustoria](#), a gorgeous triannual magazine for creative children age 6 to 12 that encourages the expression of ideas through storytelling and art. Some of the content in each issue is created by children, and (as with *Kazoo*) each issue focuses loosely on a single theme. *Illustoria* is a visual feast, so I will be perfectly happy if these issues end up on a bookshelf rather than in the recycle bin.

I don't have a third child, so I might need to buy myself a subscription to [Bravery](#), a magazine for kids (and, ahem, apparently also adults) that produces four issues a year, each focused on a brave and bold woman. Maya Angelou, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Mae Jemison, Frida Kahlo, Bernice Bing, and Yusra Mardini have been featured in the past. One recent issue is about Susan La Flesche Picotte, who was the first Indigenous American woman to earn a medical degree in the United States.

—**Elizabeth Palmer**, senior editor

Since the start of the pandemic last year, the percentage of Black families that homeschool has more than quintupled. I, a Black mother, have been obsessively researching home education options since 2019, because I want my children's education to be as decolonized as possible—and because my oldest child is about to turn five, which means I have to make a decision about his schooling soon. (Plus, I am a type one on the Enneagram, which means that obsessively researching anything is kind of my jam.)

I've quickly learned that navigating homeschool spaces can be tricky, especially if your end goal is an inclusive, antiracist education. That's where [Secular Homeschooler](#) comes in. At first, as a decidedly unsecular person, I was put off by the title. But after actually engaging with the content, I've adopted the magazine as a resource to recommend to any caregiver looking to create an inspired home education environment. And the fact that it is intentionally inclusive means even religious folk will find it helpful. There are only four issues so far (available only on Amazon), but each one is jam-packed with over 100 pages of information and practical tips.

My next two magazine recommendations are for anyone wanting to deconstruct the effects of years of White supremacist conditioning around health and beauty. (Are you sensing a theme in my life?) [Radiant](#) and [CRWN](#) are gorgeously designed magazines that center the experiences and natural beauty of Black femmes. I do think that *Radiant* could do a little more to counter the idea that to be pretty means to be thin, but I'm willing to overlook that for a magazine that highlights the wisdom of Tracee Stanley, one of the country's best advocates for our collective need for deep rest.

—**Dawn Araujo-Hawkins**, news editor

Since fifth-grade gym class, it has never really been my style to get up to speed. The world moves too fast for my slow self, and I am always behind the group, pumping my little legs as fast as possible to catch up. But is it possible that there's another way? Enter [*Delayed Gratification*](#), the magazine for slow journalism. *Delayed Gratification* takes pride in being behind, looking carefully at things that have long left the news cycle. It's a quarterly magazine designed to filter out the noise.

Maybe you have a slow news person in your midst; maybe you have a fast-thinking, adventurous child. [*Honest History*](#) is a magazine for children that takes them around the world with stories about long-lost cities and empires, expansive thinking about memorable figures, and a lot of truth telling about how the world that children will inherit came to be. It's colorful, thoughtful, and intriguing. By the way, fun fact, did you know that Americans used to be able to send their children through the mail?

For those of us who have never gotten tired of stories and storytelling, [*Parabola: The Search for Meaning*](#) is a sophisticated magazine from the Society for the Study of Myth and Tradition. It offers rich, interfaith and multifaith considerations of thematic subjects, religious symbols, and spiritual practices. *Parabola* is a conversation, an exploration, and sometimes a revelation.

—**Amy Frykholm**, senior editor

Publications have gotten to be quite expensive over the years (the *Catholic Worker* notwithstanding), and perhaps rightly so. Printed materials demand a wealth of precious resources in order for them to reach their intended hands. Given the work that goes into them and the work they are capable of—reflecting, challenging, and expanding our world and our selves—magazines (at their best) are worth the price.

For my almost teenage daughter, I am looking at a subscription to [*Teen Breathe*](#). Created in the UK by the folks behind the mindfulness journal *Breathe*, this bimonthly magazine is aimed at calming, affirming, and inspiring young people, who are frequently bombarded with a host of new concerns—from their own expanding emotional palette to the grim realities of a changing climate. Plus it has recipes, which will instantly appeal to my daughter, who often finds refuge in baking and sharing something delicious.

For my teenage niece who eats, sleeps, and breathes all things tennis, I am considering a subscription to [Racquet](#). Founded about five years ago, *Racquet* is a beautifully designed and illustrated quarterly publication that “celebrates the art, ideas, style, and culture that surround tennis.” It is as much a resource for the latest in racquet technology or forehand technique as it is a gorgeously colorful consideration of the game’s expansive reach.

For my friend who is sometimes in need of artistic inspiration, I think a subscription to the long-standing photography quarterly [Aperture](#) may be in order. The publication of *Aperture*, a foundation created in New York in 1952 by a group of fine art photographers, *Aperture* self-identifies as the “magazine of photography and ideas.” Each massive issue is a visual feast of photographic work and commentary that spans the globe with its voices and subjects. I find that the large-sheet presentation of the work in a luxe, hard-copy format functions as a corrective to the ephemeral ubiquity (or is it ubiquitous ephemerality?) of our social media scrolls.

—**Daniel Richardson**, art director

I first heard of [Womankind](#) earlier this year when I was finishing up my last semester of college. I was writing a paper on how social movements influence the larger rhetorical culture, and I came across the magazine while researching the National Organization for Women. *Womankind* is an ad-free quarterly women’s magazine that focuses on ideas about culture, creativity, philosophy, nature, and ways to live a more fulfilling life. Its writers are prominent journalists, authors, and artists who offer insights meant to challenge contemporary thought and meaning in today’s society. This beautiful magazine gives women a voice and celebrates the triumphs they achieve every day.

Another subscription I wish I’d had while at school (and yes, I’m still reminiscing about college) is [Spirituality and Health](#). This magazine is a great resource for wellness and healthy living. It covers topics such as meditation, yoga, nutrition, social justice, and public health. *Spirituality and Health* aims to enhance life by making connections between personal beliefs, physical well-being, and mental health—all while incorporating a variety of different traditions and cultures. It leaves readers feeling nurtured physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

—**Marie Watson**, editorial assistant

I first subscribed to [Scientific American](#) when I was in high school. I was excited by the awe-inspiring world of science that I never quite found the courage to study seriously in school, and my parents encouraged me to put down the money. *Scientific American* takes up fascinating topics involving everything from the environment and outer space to medicine and the human body. For those who care to learn about substrate-based peptidomimetic inhibitors or three-dimensional electrodes with mesoporous structures, there's always the peer-reviewed journal *Science*. But for those of us who want to know how elephant trunks really work and what's behind human stuttering, there's *Scientific American*—the oldest continuously published monthly magazine in the United States.

A news magazine of commentary on daily congressional activity hardly sounds like a gift from St. Nick. It seems more like grist for politicians, congressional aides, and lobbyists who don't have a life outside the Beltway. But the widely respected and impressively nonpartisan *The Hill* covers everything from public policy to local life in a way that should matter to all of us. Its relatively new subsidiary forum, [Changing America](#), tackles some of the nation's most pressing issues through narrative and in-depth features. Organized around five content pillars—respect, sustainability, resilience, enrichment, and well-being—*Changing America* speaks to what we could all afford to pay more attention to in life. When I get tired of eating, sleeping, and cursing the word partisan, this forum is one of my support systems for becoming a better citizen.

As the flagship journal of the National Audubon Society, [Audubon](#) is, as one might suspect, centered on birds. But to speak helpfully about birds in our time is to delve into ecosystems, habitat, and human behavior in ways that would have seemed low priority just a few generations ago. Through a combination of rich photography, advocacy, informed research, and on-the-ground study, this bimonthly provides a backdrop for some of the things we need to care about if we are to have any birds in our future.

—**Peter W. Marty**, editor/publisher

To my college-age female friends who are all starting to navigate being an adult woman, I'm giving a subscription to a piece of feminist history: [Ms.](#), the first national

American feminist magazine. With pages filled with images and voices of diverse women who cover politics, books, and culture, Ms. publishes critical, intelligent, and accessible pieces on topics from abortion to critical race theory to climate change. The magazine also provides free subscriptions to 5,000 people incarcerated in women's prisons and to hundreds of domestic violence shelters.

I spend a lot of time with tutors and teachers of reading and writing, so I'm giving them a subscription to the [Writer's Chronicle](#). From the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, this magazine is geared toward people who love to read and write. It features pieces on the craft of writing and how to teach it, interviews with authors and writers, and news from the publishing world. This thoughtful and pragmatic magazine will be right at home in any writing center.

The classical musicians in my life would enjoy a subscription to [BBC Music Magazine](#). This is the magazine for classical music fans, featuring profiles of musicians from all times and places, reviews of new pieces, and the fascinating stories and debates behind some of the most well-known music and composers. And every month, your magazine comes with a CD filled with featured music!

—**Annelisa Burns**, research assistant

Throughout my adult life, my beloved Aunt Frances (now 93) has given this native New Orleanian [Southern Living](#) magazine each year for Christmas. I love it. Thanks to one of its many amazing recipes, I make a killer apple, pear, and cranberry pie for Thanksgiving dinner. The interior paint colors in my home were inspired by *Southern Living* home décor photos.

Truth be told, though, I am more of a [Bitter Southerner](#) living with legacies of racism, poverty, and ignorance. None of that is uniquely southern, of course. I've lived in St. Louis and Chicago, where I witnessed as bad or worse. But I have a lot of southern friends—including some living in exile—who will enjoy the inaugural print volumes and online content of the *Bitter Southerner*, a magazine that stands for a better South by sharing the stories of great southern change makers, musicians, writers, innovators, chefs, and more.

Speaking of pies and chefs, I think it's time for me to hang up my apron as chief household cook and dishwasher. Would a gift subscription for my partner to [Cook's](#)

[*Illustrated*](#), with its easy recipes and instructions, be too selfish a Christmas gift? Surely not. I am confident he would enjoy some porchetta-style turkey breast, tartiflette (a French potato and cheese casserole), and leeks vinaigrette even more with the pride of having cooked the meal himself.

That subscription might be too obvious a hint. Maybe I should go for something subtler, like the poorly named [*Garden and Gun*](#) with its homage to southern food, drink, conservation, sport, and dogs. After all, our dog is named Gumbo. I could always dog-ear the pages that have the most enticing recipes as not-so-subtle hints, and maybe he would let me read *Garden and Gun's* "The Ultimate Guide to Grits." (Great. Now I'm hungry.)

—**Trice Gibbons**, audience development editor