

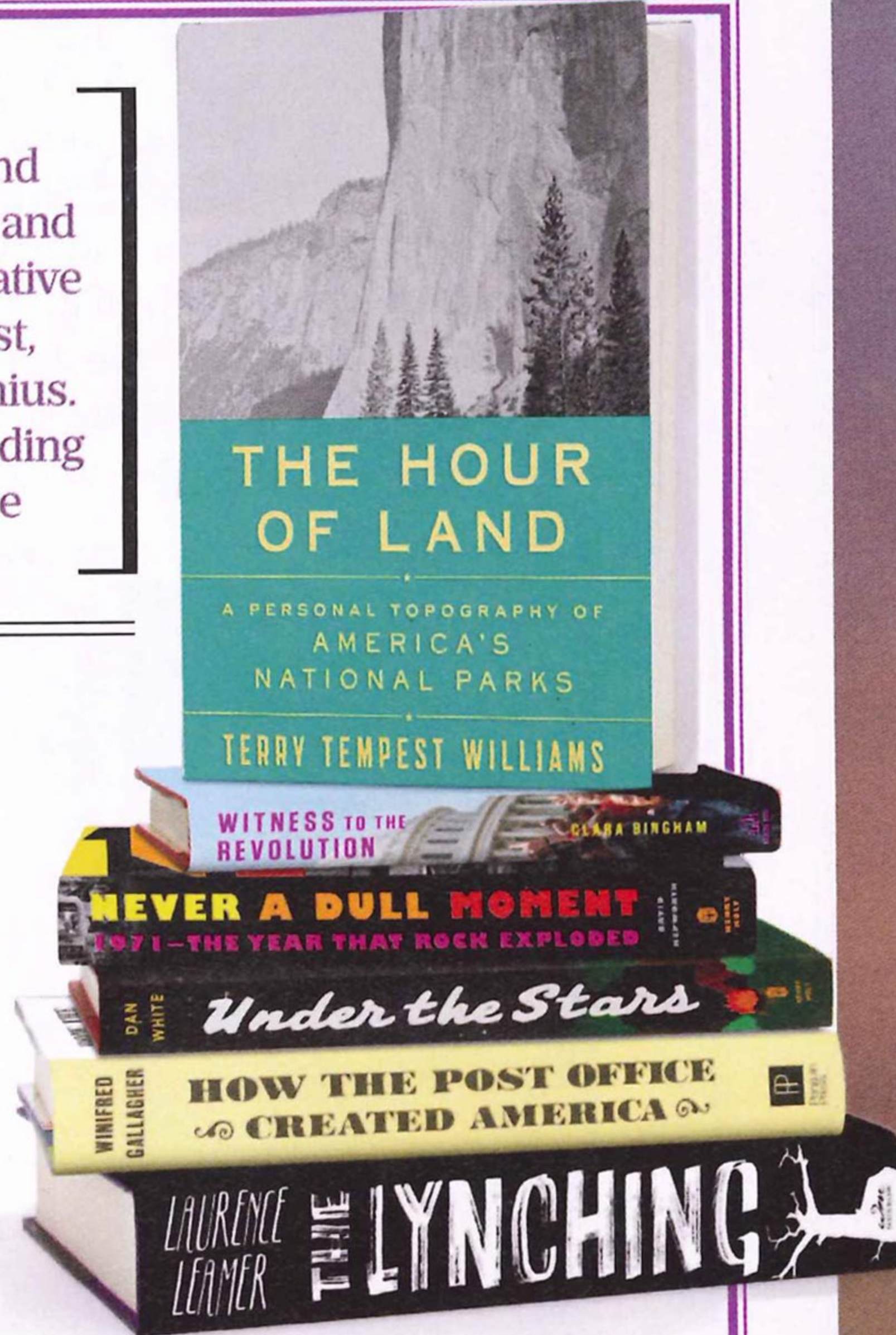
BORN IN THE USA

IS AMERICA DIFFERENT from other nations for its obsession with liberty and justice, its wide open spaces, its questing and restless innovation? Each of these provocative books offers surprising takes on protest, courage, big-picture thinking, nature, genius. Taken together, they enrich our understanding of our roots and our appreciation of the challenging expanse we call home.

THE HOUR OF LAND

by Terry Tempest Williams
(Sarah Crichton Books)

"Our national parks are memory palaces where our personal histories reside," muses naturalist and activist Williams in her ode to the sacred spaces—millions of acres from Alaska to Maine—that are the legacy of Abraham Lincoln's 1864 Yosemite Grant Act. Whether contemplating the spiritual life she finds "inside the heart of the wild" or marveling at the peaks and monuments that comprise "our best idea"—the National Parks system—Williams movingly urges us to remember that "heaven is here."



The Lynching

by Laurence Leamer
(William Morrow)

Morris Dees, the civil rights attorney who cofounded the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the landmark 1984 lawsuit he won on behalf of a slain black man's family are at the heart of this stirring true story of racial politics and the legal takedown of the Ku Klux Klan.

Witness to the Revolution

by Clara Bingham
(Random House)

A gripping oral history of the centrifugal social forces tearing America apart at the end of

the '60s—Nixonian corruption, the war in Indochina, the Black Panthers, psychedelic drugs, Cointelpro, youthquake, domestic terrorism—with recollections by Bill Ayers, Jane Fonda, and Carl Bernstein, among others. This is rousing reportage from the front lines of U.S. history.

Under the Stars

by Dan White
(Henry Holt)

Whether sharing the backstory of everyone's favorite fireside dessert (s'mores, of course), roughing it in the buff, or braving the wilderness with 21st-century

amenities in tow, the disaster-prone White revels in a cherished national pastime—camping—with curiosity and humor.

Never a Dull Moment: 1971—The Year That Rock Exploded

by David Hepworth
(Henry Holt)

A revelatory account of the bombshell 365 days that gave birth to what the author dubs "the rock era"—12 months when Marvin Gaye, Joni Mitchell, Sly Stone, and a host of others broke with convention to give us the music that made us.

How the Post Office Created America

by Winifred Gallagher
(Penguin Press)

Without a postal service linking far-flung territories together like "a central nervous system," our country's story would have been radically different. Including American originals like Ben Franklin (the first postmaster general) and the young riders of the Pony Express, this invigorating book tells the unlikely story of snail mail—not at all dull, though perhaps soon to be extinct.