

for personal use or to correct social and economic inequities. The examples and stories are intriguing, unexpected and satisfying by turns. It turns out, by the way, that the fame of Albert Einstein can be explained in part by the same factors that powered the \$8.8 million Kickstarter launch of the game Exploding Kittens. — *Carol Cruzan Morton*

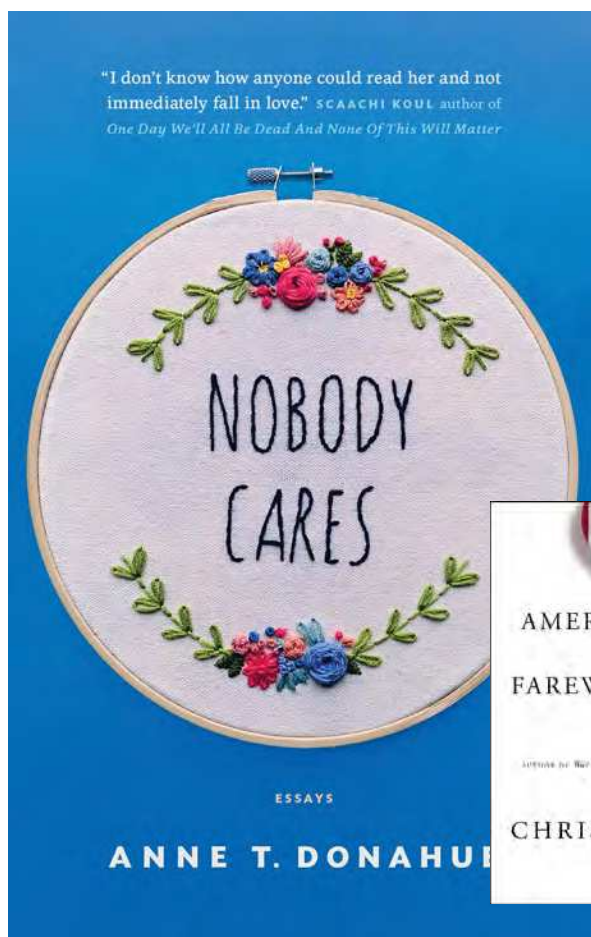
essays

Nobody Cares by Anne T. Donahue. ECW Press, \$15.99.

Being a millennial American woman is hard. OK, maybe not *hard* hard, in the way that other people in the world are starving and dying, but it's still hard, alright? Anne T. Donahue dives into these very hardships in her collection of personal essays, *Nobody Cares*. Partially humorous and a little too-close-to-home, Donahue tackles the absurdities of caring too much about social media, dealing with the complexities of mental illness, grieving over the loss of loved ones and just wanting to be interesting. Donahue explores themes of the suffocating, almost inherent selfishness and self-indulgence that come with being a modern young woman trying to keep up and curate an "image," all while trying to wrestle with the fact that in the end, nobody cares. — *Meerah Powell*

■ **Up Up, Down Down** by Cheston Knapp, Scribner, \$25

Cheston Knapp's debut goes about as well as you'd expect the first book from a managing editor of a literary magazine to go. The humanity and camaraderie you want to — and sometimes do — feel with Knapp is too often broken up by his use of \$10 words when a 25-cent one would do. Some reviewers have praised Knapp for his expansive vocabulary, but it feels a little too try-hard,



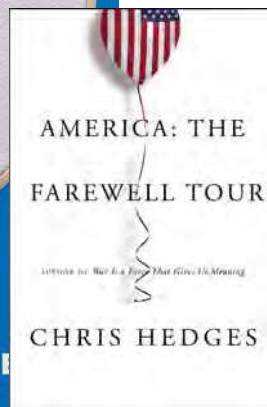
breaking the brotherhood I feel with the writer who fears that his career will never be as successful as he imagines it to be.

Despite the stilted prose, Knapp delivers excellent meditations on life, love and what it means to come of age. The seven essays in *Up Up, Down Down* are roughly connected. You can read them on their own and enjoy the

semi-professional wrestlers; dank, beer-soaked frat dudes and adult skateboard camps, but allusions to and wisdom from previous tales and adventures will be lost. Though this commentary reads more like a college freshman literature paper than the fluid storytelling that Knapp — the managing editor of *Tin House* — has the knack for, the author wrestles with big questions weaving his personal meditations with commentary on what great writers have had to say. — *Max Thornberry*

America: The Farewell Tour by Chris Hedges. Simon & Schuster, \$27.

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Chris Hedges is one of a kind — a lone, furious voice crying in the wilderness of our national and global collapse. The diagnosis, needless to say, is dire. An equal opportunity iconoclast with a voluminous knowledge of political theory, geo-global politics and traditional Western liberalism, Hedges relentlessly digs beneath the outcroppings of our moral and social decay, and his latest book is a corker: A searing analysis of the consequences of a decade's-long assault on civic society by the neoliberal forces of late-stage capitalism. No mere abstractionist, Hedges — a war reporter who has witnessed empire collapse firsthand — travels to ground zero of America's decay and disenfranchisement, taking an intimate look at U.S. communities ravaged by poverty, addiction, unemployment and pervasive hatred. This book pulls no punches. It's a hard but necessary read, and we dare not avert our eyes from Hedges' prognosis. "Corporate capitalism has made war on the communal and the sacred," Hedges writes. "These bonds will be re-established or we will slip further into a world where death is more attractive than life." — *Rick Levin*



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