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Book of Books: An ebook of
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2018

Book of Books

This web page lists all books reviewed by Steve Hopkins at <http://bkrev.blogspot.com> during 2019 as well as books pending (The Shelf of Possibility) or relegated to the Shelf of Reproach or the Shelf of Ennui. You can click on the title of a book or on the picture of any jacket cover to jump to amazon.com where you can purchase a copy of any book on this shelf.

Key to Ratings:

*****	I love it
****	I like it
***	It's OK
**	I don't like it

*

I hate it

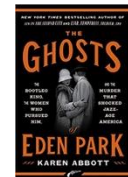
Title (Click on Link to purchase at amazon.com)	Author(s)	Rating	Blog Date	Comments	Click on Picture to Purchase at amazon.com
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[The Ghosts of Eden Park: The Bootleg King, the Women Who Pursued Him, and the Murder That Shocked Jazz-Age America](#)

Abbott, Karen

[9/24/19](#)

Remus. I don't read a lot of true crime books, but I've enjoyed Karen Abbott's prior books, so I picked up her latest, [The Ghosts of Eden Park: The Bootleg King, the Women Who Pursued Him, and the Murder That Shocked Jazz-Age America](#). I had never heard of a bootlegger named George Remus who in 1935 owned more than a third of all the liquor in the United States. Thanks to Abbott's fine writing, she pulls readers into the world of this larger than life character and what the USA was like during Prohibition. I defy readers to complete these 400+ pages and not at some time find oneself rooting for George Remus, especially when one's enthusiasm has been enhanced by a few fingers of bourbon.

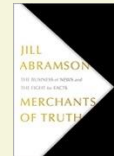


[Merchants of Truth: The Business of News and the Fight for Facts](#)

Abramson, Jill

[4/19/19](#)

Subscribe. Former *New York Times* executive editor Jill Abramson has written a great account of the disruption of the news media, a book titled, [Merchants of Truth: The Business of News and the Fight for Facts](#). She understands this business from the inside and has gained perspective from the outside to assess what all this turmoil means for American life. Many people are losing faith and trust in a free press. Readers who value journalism should read this book and then subscribe to another high-quality newspaper in your town or someplace else.




[Find Me](#)


Aciman, Andre

[12/16/19](#)

Time. Andre Aciman revisits characters from his 2007 novel titled, *Call Me By Your Name*, decades later in another finely written novel titled, [Find Me](#). The title plays out in multiple ways in the novel, to the pleasure of readers. I was delighted by Aciman's exploration of time. Here's one sample, from page 46: "Basically, we don't know how to think of time, because time couldn't care less what we think of time, because time is just a wobbly, unreliable metaphor for how we think about life. Because ultimately it isn't time that is wrong for us, or we for time. If may be life itself that is wrong. ... because there is death. Because death, contrary to what everyone tells you, is not part of life. Death is God's great blunder, and sunset and dawn are how he blushes for shame and asks our forgiveness each and every day." Here's another sample from page 104, "And besides, if I give you an hour now, you'll want a day. And if I give you a day, you'll want a year. I know your type." Fans of the earlier novel will love the return of Oliver and Elio. As a last grabber for you:



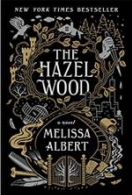
<u>Training School for Negro Girls</u>	Acker, Camille	****	<p>Samuel and Miranda meet on a train. Read the novel to find out what happens next.</p> <p>Range. I enjoyed the range of experience represented in the characters in each of the stories in the debut collection by Camille Acker titled, <u>Training School for Negro Girls</u>. The situations, mostly set in the District of Columbia, are recognizable and insightful. I especially enjoyed <i>Mambo Sauce</i>, in which a black woman who moved from Brooklyn interacted with the owners and patrons of a neighborhood food joint. The contrast between how Constance and her white boyfriend approached the mambo sauce and the restaurant was perfect. Short stories can leave some readers wanting more exposition, but I found in each of these stories, Acker gets the genre just right: we glimpse into the lives of people we recognize and the ways in which they behave tell us something about human nature.</p>	
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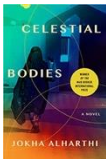
<u>Waiting for Eden</u>	Ackerman, Elliot	*****	<p>Intensity. Readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy Elliot Ackerman's novel titled, <u>Waiting for Eden</u>. Protagonist Eden survived an explosion in Iraq and is at a Texas burn center thanks to the efforts of medical personnel who saved his life. What's left of Eden weighs 70 pounds, down from his normal 220. Eden's distinction is that his were the worst wounds of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that didn't immediately end in death. Eden's wife Mary has spent three years at his bedside waiting for him to communicate, heal or die. The narrator is a ghost: Eden's best friend who died in that blast in Iraq, who is also waiting for Eden to join him in death. These three</p>	
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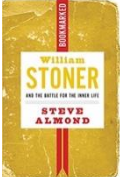

characters are complex, and Ackerman develops them with depth. From the beginning to the end of the novel, Ackerman maintains an intensity while he develops multiple levels of meaning and explores issues of loyalty, suffering and betrayal.

<u>Dominion: The History of England from the Battle of Waterloo to Victoria's Diamond Jubilee</u>	Ackroyd, Peter	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Hardly Children</u>	Adamczyk, Laura	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Children of Virtue and Vengeance</u>	Adeyemi, Tomi	*****	<u>12/20/19</u>	Kingdom. The second novel in the Legacy of Orisha series by Tomi Adeyemi is titled, <u>Children of Virtue and Vengeance</u> . Magic has gone rampant in Orisha with dramatic consequences and changes in which faction dominates. New readers should read the first installment to avoid total confusion. Fans may feel that this novel moves back and forth in ways that may seem unsatisfying, but should keep loyal readers engaged and expecting the next installment. The attempt to unify Orisha has many obstacles, and much of the novel leaves us in a bloody morass as we await what comes next.	
<u>The Coronation</u>	Akunin, Boris	*****	<u>3/6/19</u>	Abduction. I like to read entertaining mystery novels, especially those that keep me guessing long into the narrative. The first novel I've read by Boris Akunin is titled, <u>The Coronation</u> , and features a recurring	

protagonist and private investigator, Erast Petrovich Fandorin. The four-year-old son of a Grand Duke has been abducted shortly before the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II. Ransom requests for royal jewels, including ones that would be visible at the coronation add to the urgency of finding the boy. Fandorin uses great skills at disguise and assimilation with criminals to try to solve the crime. Akunin develops the characters with skill and keeps the plot momentum at a fast pace. Readers who enjoy mysteries, especially in a historical setting, are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

<u>The Hazel Wood</u>	Albert, Melissa	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Celestial Bodies</u>	Alharthi, Jokha	*****	<u>11/14/19</u>	<p>Oman. I picked up a copy of Jokha Alharthi's novel titled, <u>Celestial Bodies</u>, after it won the Man Booker International Prize. This finely written novel draws readers into the Omani culture and the changes to that society over recent decades, through the lens of three sisters. Oman's history of slavery can be disturbing, but Alharthi uses that history to explore the many ways in which people are bound and constrained. The women in this novel are complex and interesting characters and the society in which they live demands change and extracts love and loss as time passes.</p>	
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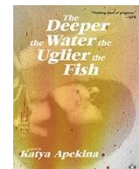
<u>Bad Stories</u>	Almond, Steve	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>William Stoner and the Battle for the Inner Life</u>	Almond, Steve	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Welfare</u>	Anwyll, Steve	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	


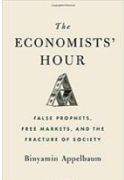
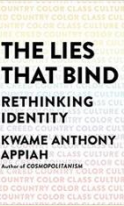

[The Deeper the Water the Uglier the Fish](#)

Apekina, Katya


[12/9/19](#)

Domestic. Many novels that present dysfunctional family life offer insight into the complexity of our human condition. In her debut novel titled, [The Deeper the Water the Uglier the Fish](#), Katya Apekina elegantly presents us with a tragic family saga. Mother Marianne goes to a psychiatric hospital following a suicide attempt. Teenage daughters Edie and Mae leave life with their mother in Louisiana and end up in New York with their father, Dennis, a novelist. Through different narrators, we see tragic lives in different ways. As in many families, different children describe their shared experience in radically different ways, as if they were raised in different places. Greek myths come alive for modern readers on these pages, whether recognized or not.



<u>Amazing Things Are Happening Here</u>	Appel, Jacob M.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Economists' Hour: False Prophets, Free Markets, and the Fracture of Society</u>	Appelbaum, Binyamin	*****	<u>12/16/19</u>	<p>Markets. Readers interested in public policy are those most likely to enjoy Binyamin Appelbaum's finely written book titled, <u>The Economists' Hour: False Prophets, Free Markets, and the Fracture of Society</u>. Appelbaum chronicles the influence of select economists on American life over the past half-century and assesses the outcomes from that influence. Many of the economists and their positions will be familiar to most readers, and some stories may be new. Whether you agree or disagree with Appelbaum, his account is worth reading and his assessment is cogent.</p>	
<u>The Lies That Bind</u>	Appiah, Kwame Anthony	*****	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Identity. Kwame Anthony Appiah offers a framework for thinking about identity in his book titled, <u>The Lies That Bind</u>. Many readers will find assumptions challenged about how identities work. Appiah reveals how our assumptions have been forged, whether as a consequence of conflict, or a result of poor science. Our differences are not as great as we may think they are, no matter how we define "we." There are great stories and clear thinking on these pages. Any reader who enjoys philosophy written for a general audience will likely appreciate this book.</p>	
<u>Sea Monsters</u>	Aridjis, Chloe	*****	<u>4/4/19</u>	<p>Quest. Why does a teen run away from home? That's the question Chloe Aridjis explores in her novel titled, <u>Sea Monsters</u>. Seventeen-year-old Luisa leaves home in Mexico City on a quest to fulfill her obsession.</p>	

Her decisions and choices are exactly what one would expect to flow from the unformed teenage brain. While Luisa heads to the Pacific on her quest, her father tries to find his missing daughter by using every possible connection he can uncover about her whereabouts. We are all on a search for meaning, and in that way, Aridjis pulls us along on our own quest as she explores what Luisa has to teach us all.

The Last Thing I Told You	Arsenault, Emily	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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Trafficking. Fans of the Jackson Brodie series by Kate Atkinson will be delighted with the fifth installment, a novel titled, [Big Sky](#). Patient readers will watch Atkinson meander in what seem like unconnected ways and then observe as she loosens some threads and connects others. At the center of the novel there's crime: a human trafficking ring at work. While the novel can stand alone, readers of the earlier Brodie novels will enjoy the reprised characters, the increased complexity of their development, and the changes in their life situations and behavior, especially protagonist Brodie. Atkinson respects the intelligence of her readers, and feeds us with her humor, insight and clever references. It's been almost a decade since the last installment, so enjoy the feast now that it's finally arrived.

Big Sky	Atkinson, Kate	*****	7/16/19	
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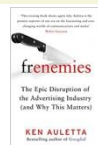
<u>The Testaments</u>	Atwood, Margaret	*****	10/15/19	<p>Resolution. Fans of Margaret Atwood's novel, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>, have waited decades for the author to continue telling the story. To prepare myself for a return to Gilead, I re-read <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>, and am glad I did. I was prepared to open the new novel, <u>The Testaments</u>, with fresh memories. I was delighted that one of the perspectives in the new novel comes from Aunt Lydia. Her insights help readers see Gilead from the inside. As always, Atwood leads readers to think for ourselves. Lydia is more complex than I expected, and she offers an understanding of the power of women in Gilead. We also receive the perspective of Agnes Jemima, born in Gilead as the daughter of a Commander and a Wife. Atwood uses Agnes to help readers understand the expectations placed upon young women in Gilead. The third narrator begins her story outside Gilead, in Toronto, where she gradually understands the truth about her past. Atwood lets readers make up our own minds as we hear these narratives and while there is resolution by the end of the novel, many questions remain. Readers are free to reflect on many levels of meaning structured in this novel and to ponder what it takes to topple a corrupt and immoral regime. Atwood continues to be a keen observer of life and plays the role of messenger to readers about living in our contemporary world and heeding the signs of our times.</p>	
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[Frenemies: The Epic Disruption of the Ad Business](#)

Auletta, Ken

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



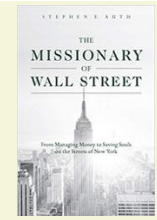
(and Everything Else)

The Missionary of Wall Street: From Managing Money to Saving Souls on the Streets of New York

Auth, Stephen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

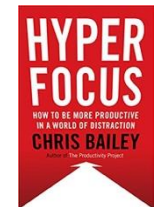


Hyperfocus: How to Be More Productive in a World of Distraction

Bailey, Chris

2/2/19

Discipline. For as long as I can remember, I've been productive, organized and disciplined. After reading Chris Bailey's book titled, Hyperfocus: How to Be More Productive in a World of Distraction, I understand how and why some of my routine practices have been successful. Readers who have trouble with productivity or with managing distractions will find a lot of practical ideas in this book about ways to get the right things done efficiently and effectively. I especially enjoyed the section of the book about scatterfocus, and the ways in which that approach can lead to creativity.



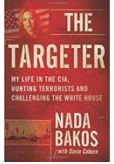
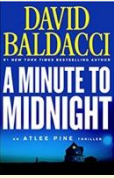
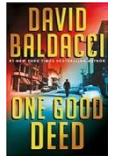
Whisper Network

Baker, Chandler

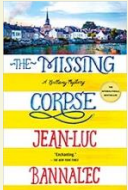
8/15/19

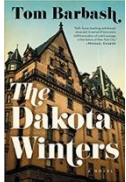
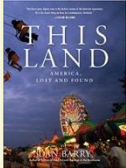

Harassment. The novel by corporate attorney Chandler Baker titled, Whisper Network, deserves a wide readership. Set inside the legal department of a corporation, the action in the novel revolves around past and present sexual harassment by the company's General Counsel. Corporate attorneys and human resources managers will take a busman's holiday with this novel, pleased that their workplace is a much better place for women than the company in this novel. Feminists are likely to feel that Baker speaks their truth with eloquence and explains the ways in which #MeToo gives voice to matters once kept secret. Book clubs



				are likely to embrace this novel and with wine during conversations, personal stories are likely to be revealed. Any man will benefit from reading this novel especially if it leads to improved listening to women and an enhanced perspective about the lives of women in contemporary society.	
<u>The Targeter: My Life in the CIA, Hunting Terrorists and Challenging the White House</u>	Bakos, Nada	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A Minute to Midnight</u>	Baldacci, David	*****	<u>12/16/19</u>	<p>Personal. The second installment in the Atlee Pine series by David Baldacci is titled, <u>A Minute to Midnight</u>. The unsolved murder of FBI agent Pine's twin sister continues to preoccupy her, so she and her assistant take some time off from work to return to Georgia and investigate the old case. Small towns and long held secrets go hand in hand, and Atlee finds herself reliving the trauma of the past as she uses her skills to solve the old case.</p> <p>Archer. Prolific author David Baldacci tries something new in his novel titled, <u>One Good Deed</u>. Baldacci sets this novel in a different time period from his earlier novels. This time out, Baldacci sets the novel in 1949, and features a new protagonist, Aloysius Archer, who served in World War II and, as this novel opens, has been paroled from Carderock Prison, where he served time for a crime he didn't commit. Directed to the small town of Poca City, Archer quickly gets the lay of the land, gets hired for a freelance job, and finds himself in the thick of events in this town that involve love and money and family. The plot</p>	
<u>One Good Deed</u>	Baldacci, David	*****	<u>9/3/19</u>		

is entertaining and the protagonist interesting.

<u>Redemption</u>	Baldacci, David	*****	<u>5/9/19</u> Infiltration. The fifth novel by David Baldacci to feature memory man Amos Decker is titled, <u>Redemption</u> . While Amos is visiting the graves of his wife and daughter, he is approached by Meryl Hawkins, a very ill man recently released from prison. Hawkins claims that he was innocent of the crime, the first homicide case Decker worked on as a local police detective. After Hawkins is murdered Decker feels duty bound to revisit the old case to see if mistakes were made. Fans of crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy the many plot twists in this novel, and fans of the series will be rooting for Decker at every turn.	
<u>The Divers' Game</u>	Ball, Jesse	*****	<u>12/16/19</u> Uncomfortable. Most readers will feel unsettled while and after reading Jesse Ball's novel titled, <u>The Divers' Game</u> . Using fine prose, Ball pulls readers into examining a society in which violence against the other is not only commonplace, it is expected. Is this who we are becoming? Where is compassion? This short book packs a wallop and I can't say how long it takes for the unsettled feeling to pass, because for me, it remains.	
<u>The Missing Corpse</u>	Bannalec, Jean-Luc	*****	<u>6/10/19</u> Belon. The fourth installment in the Brittany Mystery Series by Jean-Luc Bannalec is titled, <u>The Missing Corpse</u> . There's no rushing Commissaire Georges Dupin as he connects the dots to solve a murder mystery. Much of the action in this installment takes place alongside the Belon River with its prized oyster beds. There's also a connection to Scotland and Celtic heritage in Brittany through shared cultivation of bagpipes and	

				oysters. This novel is a mystery lover's treat, with an added bonus for gastronomes. I savored the engaging mystery and will now search for a dozen oysters to pair with a French white wine with just the right level of minerality.	
<u>The Dakota Winters</u>	Barbash, Tom	****	<u>2/21/19</u>	<p>Charmed. The protagonist of Tom Barbash's novel titled, <u>The Dakota Winters</u>, has returned from the peace corps in 1979 at age twenty-three to his childhood home in New York City at the famous Dakota. Anton Winter lives a charmed life as he tries to help his father, Buddy, revive his career as a late-night television host. The neighbors at the Dakota include John Lennon, of course, and Lennon behaves like a regular guy, takes Anton to sea with him and on other adventures. This is a coming of age story, a family tale, and the erratic ways in which our lives play out.</p>	
<u>This Land: America Lost and Found</u>	Barry, Dan	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Suspect</u>	Barton, Fiona	****	<u>2/2/19</u>	<p>Personal. The latest crime novel by Fiona Barton to feature journalist Kate Waters is titled, <u>The Suspect</u>. A story about two young women missing in Thailand lets Kate jump into the lives of the parents worried about their daughters. The story turns personal when Kate learns that her son, Jake, is a suspect in foul play relating to the missing women. The plot twists rapidly with action in both England and Thailand, and family dynamics are dramatic for lots of characters. Children keep secrets from their parents for a variety of reasons, and parents can be in</p>	

denial about the behavior of children. Barton mines all that with great skill in this entertaining novel.

<u>Courting Mr. Lincoln</u>	Bayard, Louis	*****	5/28/19	<p>Springfield. Readers who enjoy historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy Louis Bayard's novel titled, <u>Courting Mr. Lincoln</u>. Set mostly in Springfield, Illinois, the novel imagines the courtship of Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd. Bayard demolishes caricatures of Mary that have endured, and instead presents a lively, savvy, interesting and loving woman with deep political insights. Alongside the courtship story is the tale of Lincoln's friendship with Joshua Speed. Bayard places readers into the social milieu of Springfield, Illinois to observe the interactions of these three historical characters in context.</p>	
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[Charged: The New Movement to Transform American Prosecution and End Mass Incarceration](#)


Bazelon, Emily

5/28/19

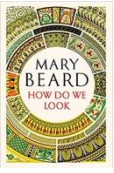
Prosecutors. Any reader interested in public policy, especially criminal justice reform, should read Emily Bazelon's finely written book titled, [Charged: The New Movement to Transform American Prosecution and End Mass Incarceration](#). Bazelon focuses on the power of prosecutors to charge offenders and the incentives that lead to choices made. She selects two offenders, Noura and Kevin, and their prosecutors in Memphis and Brooklyn respectively. Bazelon makes a persuasive case in this book that criminal justice reform is needed, and that fixing the parts of the system that are broken will lead to a stronger society. Readers with no personal experience of the criminal justice system will come away from reading this book with eyes wide open, and those readers with hands on experience are

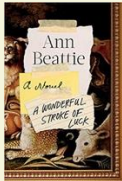


likely to find many practical suggestions for ways to repair this broken system.

<u>Pretend I'm Dead</u>	Beagin, Jen	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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[How Do We Look: The Body, the Divine, and the Question of Civilization](#)

	Beard, Mary	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>A Wonderful Stroke of Luck</u>	Beattie, Ann	*****	<u>8/5/19</u>	<p>Unpredictable. At the core of Ann Beattie's novel titled, <u>A Wonderful Stroke of Luck</u>, there is this reality about life: it's unpredictable. Protagonist Ben was a star at his private school, but has drifted since, not quite living up to his perceived potential. That potential was influenced by a manipulative teacher, Pierre LaVerdere. I know I had teachers like LaVerdere. In college, we called one professor "Flies," because where there's shit, there's flies. It is difficult in youth to discern truth. Lots of characters come and go, each one revealing inner thoughts while being walloped by reality. The nature of life is that things never turn out the way we expect, and Beattie delivers that truth with keen insight in this novel. The title comes from the epigraph and when you read it, you might be quite surprised. It was a great note on which to begin this novel. The reversals in the lives of characters are so frequent that many readers will feel as out of control as Ben himself. And as to LaVerdere, he turns out to be more despicable than I imagined, and when he reenters Ben's life years after their teacher-</p>	
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			<p>student relationship ended, he attempts to reprise his manipulation. Beattie reveals the lies we tell each other and writes with great precision about life as it is: messy, unpredictable and often deceitful. If after the first reading of this novel, you are frustrated or confused, read it again, and its likely you'll see the skill with which Beattie writes this novel.</p>	
<p><u>Madness Is Better Than Defeat</u></p>	<p>Beauman, Ned</p>	<p>***</p>	<p><u>5/24/19</u></p> <p>Temple. My patience was tested while reading Ned Bauman's novel titled, <u>Madness Is Better Than Defeat</u>. Set in remote Honduras, two expeditions have arrived at a temple site with divergent purposes: one to shoot a movie, the other to dismantle the temple and send it to New York City. Speckled with humor followed by seriousness, I found this odd novel a bit disturbing to read. Questions about intentions and reality can become confusing, and at about the halfway point, I was ambivalent about how events would play out. Read a sample before tackling all four hundred odd pages.</p>	
<p><u>If: The Untold Story of Kipling's American Years</u></p>	<p>Benfey, Christopher</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>9/3/19</u></p> <p>Range. I never paid much attention to Rudyard Kipling's writing, and I securely locked him into a box labeled irrelevant old white imperialists. Thanks to an interesting book titled, <u>If: The Untold Story of Kipling's American Years</u>, by literature scholar Christopher Benfey, I know more about Kipling and think of him more highly. I had been clueless about Kipling's time living in the United States, and the relationships he developed in the late 19th and early 20th century with a diverse group of people including Mark Twain, Henry and William James, Teddy Roosevelt and John Hay. While</p>	

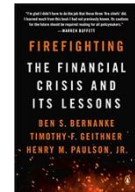
			<p>Kipling's time living in Brattleboro, Vermont was brief, his influence on the United States was more than I expected, as was the influence of the US on him. Readers interested in this time period are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p>	
<u>The Gone Dead</u>	Benz, Chanelle	****	<p>7/3/19</p> <p>Inheritance. Chanelle Benz' debut novel titled, <u>The Gone Dead</u>, will appeal to any reader who enjoys fiction that presents family stories in the context of particular places over time. After protagonist Billie James inherits a shack in the Mississippi Delta thirty years after she left the place, she leaves Philadelphia to spend some time in the house that once belonged to her father, a black poet who died in the Delta when Billie was four years old. Once on site, Billie stumbles into issues of memory, race and justice and pokes at unhealed wounds until secrets are revealed.</p>	
<u>Tell Your Children: The Truth About Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence</u>	Berenson, Alex	*****	<p>2/21/19</p> <p>Evidence. Chances are your mind is made up on the topic of legalization of marijuana. Whether it is made up or not, consider reading Alex Berenson's finely written book titled, <u>Tell Your Children: The Truth About Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence</u>. Berenson makes the case that there is ample scientific evidence that marijuana can cause psychosis. There is also a link between psychosis and violence, and there is evidence that crime is increasing among marijuana users in the states that have legalized marijuana use. We are generally poor at estimating personal risks, and on a topic that seems as settled for individuals as marijuana use, how can we assess personal risks? Start by reading this book that offers proof of legitimate health concerns.</p>	

Firefighting: The Financial Crisis and Its Lessons

Bernanke, Ben S.,
Timothy F. Geithner
and Henry Paulson Jr.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

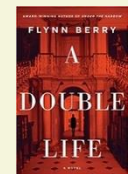


A Double Life

Berry, Flynn

5/24/19

Search. What would you do if your father was suspected of murder and disappeared? The protagonist of Flynn Berry's novel titled, A Double Life, does what most of us would do: look for him. Claire was a child when her father disappeared, and three decades later, while working in London as a doctor, she becomes focused on tracking him down. Berry's prose meanders through an irregular plot but uses every scene to help readers understand Claire. Toward the end of the novel, most readers will anticipate what Claire will do next. Fans of finely written literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

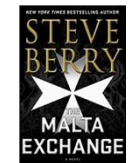


The Malta Exchange

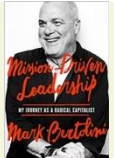
Berry, Steve

4/25/19

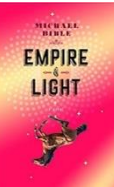
Conclave. The fourteenth Cotton Malone novel by Steve Berry is titled, The Malta Exchange. Fans of this series are those readers most likely to be patient enough to stick with the complexity in this novel. A pope has died, and there's a scheme to get a particular person chosen as pope at the conclave. The complexity comes in the form of a secret document kept by the Knights of Malta, purported to go back to Emperor Constantine and containing material threatening to the Catholic church. There's also evidence about indiscretions by various cardinals that have been documented and are planned to be used to secure votes for the person who wants to be pope. Various secret agents are at work, and Cotton Malone is in

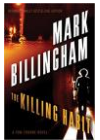


the middle of another mess. If you have any questions about how Cotton fares, you've never read anything in this series.


<u>Mission-Driven Leadership: My Journey as a Radical Capitalist</u>	Bertolini, Mark	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Presidents of War</u>	Beschloss, Michael	*****	<u>5/9/19</u>	<p>Sweeping. General readers who appreciate readable and compelling presentations of history are those most likely to enjoy Michael Beschloss' book titled, <u>Presidents of War</u>. I paced myself while reading this doorstop of a book, reading lots of other things between sections. Beschloss focuses on these United States Presidents: Madison, Polk, Lincoln, McKinley, Wilson, FDR, Truman and LBJ. I found just the right balance between detail and summary. As with other fine writers of American history, Beschloss knows how to draw readers into the setting and the issues through events that are carefully chosen to support the narrative. The war powers of United States Presidents are interesting to explore, and Beschloss is an author who can lead us toward greater understanding of multiple dimensions of the many issues relating to war.</p>	
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<u>Empire of Light</u>	Bible, Michael	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>The Killing Habit</u>	Billingham, Mark	*****	<u>5/24/19</u>	<p>Cats. The fifteenth installment in the Tom Thorne crime fiction series by Mark Billingham is titled, <u>The Killing Habit</u>. Detective Thorne gets some ribbing when he's</p>	
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assigned a case that involves the killing of lots and lots of cats in London. Thorne brings Nicola Tanner into his new case, but she remains involved in a different case involving a new lethal drug. Billingham loves to develop these characters and uses pauses in the action to flesh out more about their personal stories. Readers who like crime fiction with well-developed characters are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.

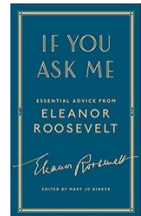
<u>Their Little Secret</u>	Billingham, Mark	****	<u>9/13/19</u>	<p>Connections. The fifteenth Tom Thorne mystery by Mark Billingham is titled, <u>Their Little Secret</u>. Fans of the series will delight in Thorne's flaws and mistakes in this novel and will appreciate his partnership with DI Nicola Tanner. The mystery plot will engage all fans of this genre, and few readers will see all the twists and turns before they arrive on the page. The characters are complex and interesting, and Billingham leads readers into just the right of empathy to make the situations understandable, yet still chilling.</p>	
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[If You Ask Me: Essential Advice from Eleanor Roosevelt](#)

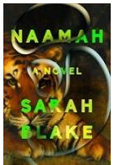

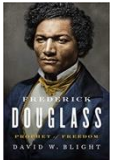
Binker, Mary Jo

Unread


Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>Murder in Bel-Air</u>	Black, Cara	****	<u>9/13/19</u>	<p>Mother. The nineteenth mystery novel by Cara Black featuring Aimée Leduc is titled, <u>Murder in Bel-Air</u>. Fans of the series will be satisfied with the return to Paris, and to the spunky Aimée who is caught between not being the mother she'd like to be and dealing with the hijinks set in motion by her own mother. Aimée seems to never slow down: running her business, raising her child, and</p>	
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			being used by others to achieve their own ends. Readers who enjoy character-driven crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.	
Naamah	Blake, Sarah	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
The Guest Book	Blake, Sarah	*****	7/26/19 Island. I won't be getting to Maine this summer, but thanks to Sarah Blake's novel titled, The Guest Book , I visited an island there and a big old house. Have you ever been in a resort community and noticed a special house and found yourself wondering about the people who live there? If so, this novel is for you. Blake tells the story of a family and what we know and don't know about our parents and their formative experiences. This is a novel about white privilege and family secrets. The names in the guest book for this big old family house on an island in Maine don't include all the guests who have stayed there. Blake explores what changes over time and what doesn't. The prose is terrific, the plot engaging and the characters complex and interesting. I was delighted to be in Maine again through this finely written novel.	
Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom	Blight, David W.	*****	6/18/19 Moses. Readers who enjoy finely written history and biography are those most likely to enjoy the terrific book by David W. Blight titled, Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom . Blight brings all of Douglass to these pages: the man and the myth. The prophet Moses and the prophet Jeremiah. The slave and the freeman. The patriot and the critic. Whether you know a little or a lot	

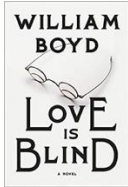
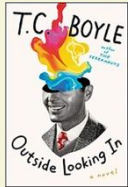
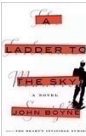
about the life of the great Frederick Douglass, you're likely to learn new things from this book, thanks to private sources that Blight used to inform his writing.

<u>The Gulf</u>	Boggs, Belle	****	<u>8/27/19</u>	<p>School. If you think there's a specialty school for everything, you will not even blink when you head to Florida's Gulf coast to the school at the center of Belle Boggs' debut novel titled, <u>The Gulf</u>. Protagonist Marianne is a teacher and poet on the verge of losing her Brooklyn apartment to condo conversion. After her ex-fiancé and his brother offer her the chance to live in Florida as the director of a small school for Christian writers, she agrees. Since we're in Florida, the characters are larger than life and there is a hurricane. Some funding for the school comes from a group that develops a variety of private for-profit schools aimed at the Christian market. There's lots of wit on these pages, interesting characters, genuine empathy and understanding of our human foibles.</p>	
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[Eventide](#) Bohman, Therese Unread Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>The Wrong Heaven</u>	Bonnafons, Amy	****	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Offbeat. There are ten offbeat and finely written stories in a collection by Amy Bonnafons titled, <u>The Wrong Heaven</u>. The stories are clever, funny, entertaining and packed with insight about what lies beneath the apparent ordinariness of life. If you can't imagine a world in which plastic statues of Jesus and Mary can talk, you may want to look elsewhere for something to read. If you are at all curious about what those statues</p>	
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			have to say, this collection of stories should be right up your alley.	
Love Is Blind	Boyd, William	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
Outside Looking In	Boyle, T.C.	*****	4/25/19 Sacrament. I like most of what T.C. Boyle writes. I've especially enjoyed his skill in skewering hucksters in his novels. While I was reading his novel titled, Outside Looking In , about Timothy O'Leary, I was remembering his much earlier novel about the Kellogg's titled, <i>The Road to Wellville</i> . O'Leary convinces disciples to follow him into lives centered around the sacrament: LSD. The tripping is described with great skill, and the commune is filled with a cast of well-drawn characters who behave exactly as most readers would expect. Con men are great characters, and Boyle offers readers O'Leary at his conniving best. Fans of fine writing, especially those with a good sense of humor are those most likely to enjoy this novel.	
A Ladder to the Sky	Boyne, John	*****	1/4/19 Maurice. Some of the finest protagonists in literature are the despicable ones. John Boyne gives readers the embodiment of our me-first culture in a finely written novel titled, A Ladder to the Sky . Maurice Swift knows how to use others to his advantage, and Boyne knows how to draw readers into Maurice's world, and lead us into an entertaining adventure of manipulation, deceit and immorality. When all societal norms and golden rules are set to the side, we are left with Maurice who stops at nothing to get	

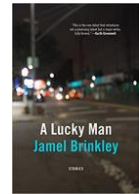
<u>My Sister, The Serial Killer</u>	Braithwaite, Oyinkan	****	10/10/19	<p>what he wants. The writing is terrific, and the critique of ladder climbing is spot on.</p> <p>Witty. Readers who enjoy dark humor are those most likely to enjoy the witty debut novel titled, <u>My Sister, The Serial Killer</u>, by Oyinkan Braithwaite. Her prose grabbed me with an opening scene that involved bleach, and before long I was a co-conspirator with these fascinating siblings as they face desire and pain and the twists and turns of life. The pace of this novel is brisk, and the characters are engaging and interesting. I was thoroughly entertained as Braithwaite tickled the funny bone of my dark side.</p>	
<u>The Spy of Venice</u>	Brendreth, Benet	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Small Fry</u>	Brennan-Jobs, Lisa	****	1/9/19	<p>Complex. Choose your own reason for reading Lisa Brennan-Jobs finely written memoir titled, <u>Small Fry</u>. She writes beautifully. She has the skill to be in her life story and to be outside it at the same time. You already know that her late father, Steve Jobs, could be a jerk. He's not the center of this story, although the father-daughter relationship comes across with love, pain and intimacy. All families are complex. Individuals are packed with strengths and weaknesses. We grow up because of or in spite of the child rearing we received. This memoir reveals the skills of a fine writer and an interesting person. Choose your reason but read this finely written memoir.</p>	

[A Lucky Man](#)

Brinkley, Jamel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



[The Pisces](#)

Broder, Melissa

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

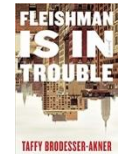


[Fleishman Is in Trouble](#)

Brodesser-Akner, Taffy

[10/10/19](#)

Me. *New York Times* journalist Taffy Brodesser-Akner's debut novel is titled, [Fleishman Is in Trouble](#). The fifteen-year-old marriage of protagonist Toby Fleishman and his wife, Rachel, has ended, and Toby seems ready to start a new chapter in his life. I loved the well-developed characters in this novel, the finely written prose, and the exploration of the challenges to all marriages when our selfishness takes command and we focus on "me" and not "us." Brodesser-Akner deftly touches on what men want and what women want in contemporary upper middle-class urban society. Readers are drawn into the lives of Toby and Rachel and we are set up for an ending that will please most readers. Readers who like clever and complex novels with fine writing are those most likely to enjoy this book.

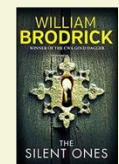


[The Silent Ones](#)

Brodrick, William

[3/26/19](#)

Justice. The sixth installment in the Father Anselm mystery series by William Brodrick is a novel titled, [The Silent Ones](#). Brodrick tackles the issue of clerical sexual abuse of minors in this novel and offers readers a sensitive and complex plot in which we accompany Father Anselm in figuring out



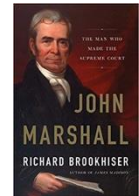
			<p>what happened. The title refers to the victims of abuse, and this quote (pp. 100-101) captures part of the treatment of this topic: “If you fail,’ said Littlemore, ‘then it’s not only Harry who’ll suffer. There are many others. They are the Silent Ones. They live and die in their own private hell. You can take the first step that might help them find their voice. They’ve been lied to and cheated. Their goodwill has been exploited. They’ve said yes to a cover-up when they should have said no. You can do something to change all that.” Readers who enjoy complicated mysteries with well-drawn characters and good writing should consider this novel and this series.</p>	
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John Marshall:
The Man Who
Made the Supreme
Court

Brookhiser, Richard

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



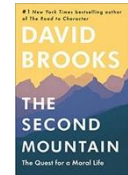
<p><u>Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt</u></p>	<p>Brooks, Arthur</p>	<p>*****</p>	<p><u>5/28/19</u></p> <p>Countercultural. In his book titled, <u>Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America from the Culture of Contempt</u>, Arthur C. Brooks offers a prescription to bring Americans together. Polarization has led most of us to associate exclusively with those with whom we agree and to demonize those who have different views. He encourages readers to join him in a countercultural call to action (p.213): “Go find someone with whom you disagree; listen thoughtfully, and treat him or her with respect and love. The rest will flow naturally from there.” Imagine that and then consider following Brooks’ advice.</p>	
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The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life

Brooks, David

5/28/19

Meaning. In his book titled, The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life, David Brooks describes two stages in life: one that is self-centered that leads us to climb a mountain of achievement; and a second stage in which we focus on others and make commitments to individuals and community. While we may achieve some satisfaction in meeting our self-centered goals as we climb the first mountain, fulfillment comes when we give ourselves to others on that second mountain. Our search for meaning and purpose in life involves dependence on others in the context of community. Brooks tells stories in this book about many individuals, including himself, and the narrative will lead all readers to be introspective about one's own life and the meaning we have found.

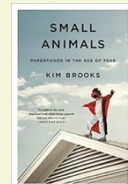



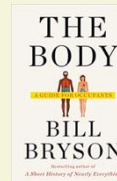
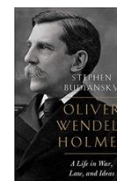
Small Animals: Parenthood in the Age of Fear

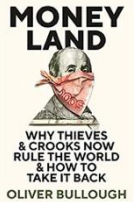
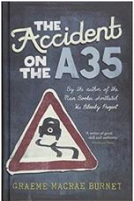

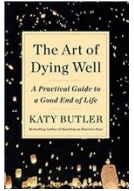
Brooks, Kim

2/2/19

Independence. From the earliest time I can remember, I would leave our family's apartment in the Flatbush area of Brooklyn, and my parents had only a vague sense of where I might be. Were there days when I got in trouble that could have been avoided? Yes. Did I grow up with self-confidence and independence? Yes. Today's children and parents assess risks differently, and the "see something, say something" culture has led concerned individuals to contact the police rather than a parent when they are concerned that a child might be in jeopardy. Kim Brooks has written a book titled, Small Animals: Parenthood in the Age of Fear, that uses her own experience with leaving a child in a car for a few minutes, to describe current social expectations and the angst of parents. If selected for your book group conversation,



				count on hearing lots of stories about child rearing in the past and present.	
<u>Ninety-Nine Glimpses of Princess Margaret</u>	Brown, Craig	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Body: A Guide for Occupants</u>	Bryson, Bill	*****	<u>12/16/19</u>	<p>Comfortable. Find yourself a comfortable chair, and settle in for Bill Bryson's engaging and entertaining book titled, <u>The Body: A Guide for Occupants</u>. Packed with facts, supported with anecdotes and maintained by good writing, the book examines the human body in all its wonder. Bryson has the ability to take something familiar and bring a fresh look and introduce something mysterious and make it understandable. Get comfortable with and in your body as you read this entertaining book.</p>	
<u>Oliver Wendell Holmes: A Life in War, Law, and Ideas</u>	Budiansky, Stephen	*****	<u>8/5/19</u>	<p>Zeal. I love reading a book that closes a gap in my learning that I didn't know was there. Stephen Budiansky's biography titled, <u>Oliver Wendell Holmes: A Life in War, Law, and Ideas</u>, taught me loads of things I never knew about the renowned jurist. Before reading this book, I knew about some of Holmes' Supreme Court opinions. Now, I know about his full life: his zeal for living, how formative his Civil War service was, his many engaging relationships, his lively conversational style and his hunger for knowledge. I feel a bond with Holmes the fellow reader, and when I read about him enjoying P.G. Wodehouse, I felt like I made a new friend. Budiansky writes for general readers in a style that will keep all readers interested throughout this finely written biography.</p>	

<u>Moneyland: Why Thieves And Crooks Now Rule The World And How To Take It Back</u>	Bullough, Oliver	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Accident on the A35</u>	Burnet, Graeme Macrae	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Milkman</u>	Burns, Anna	*****	<u>1/9/19</u>	<p>Challenging. Reading is usually more fun than roaming in the stream of consciousness of Anna Burns in her novel titled, <u>Milkman</u>. This book won the Man Booker prize, and that's why I added it to my reading queue. I recommend this book to patient readers who are comfortable with unusual structure, unnamed characters, and few signposts to help one figure things out. Fans of literary fiction who enjoy finely written prose are those most likely to enjoy this novel. I expect Burns won the prize because of her finely crafted language in this novel. For many readers, it takes more than language to bring reading pleasure. Those readers are warned about this challenging novel.</p>	
<u>The Art of Dying Well: A Practical Guide to a Good End of Life</u>	Butler, Katy	*****	<u>7/16/19</u>	<p>Quality. If after a certain number of decades of living, your thoughts haven't migrated toward death, you're avoiding the inevitable. Quality of life means different things to different people, and when it comes to the notion of "dying well," there may be different meanings there as well. In her book titled, <u>The Art of Dying Well: A Practical Guide to a Good End of Life</u>, Katy Butler encourages</p>	

thinking about what a good end to life means to an individual reader. She offers a variety of anecdotes and practical and thoughtful ways to engage on this topic. Not everyone dies quietly at home in one's sleep. This book helps readers think about the choices that are ours to make when it comes to our care at the end of life. If you think you've made your wishes clear to your loved ones, read this book and think again and provide them with greater clarity about your choices.

<u>Little Faith</u>	Butler, Nickolas	****	7/3/19	<p>Children. After I finished reading Nickolas Butler's novel titled, <u>Little Faith</u>, I thought a lot about faith and family, and the range of behaviors that take place when there is harmony and when there is discord. Children are at the core of this novel. The death of a son led protagonist Kyle Hovde away from his Lutheran faith in rural Wisconsin. After his adopted daughter, Shiloh, moves in with Kyle and his wife, Peg, Kyle gets a chance to love another child, Shiloh's son, Isaac. Shiloh is drawn into a religious community and under the influence of a powerful minister. This pastor believes that Isaac has healing powers, and the family enters a period of discord. Butler builds each character with recognizable and relatable complexity and draws readers into this great story of faith and family, centered on the love of children.</p> 
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[Shortest Way Home: One Mayor's Challenge and a Model for America's Future](#)

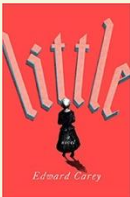
Buttigieg, Pete


3/18/19

Refreshing. I'm continuing my reading journey through books by the various aspirants for becoming the next President of the United States. South Bend mayor Pete Buttigieg offers a refreshing life story in his book titled, [Shortest Way Home: One Mayor's Challenge and a Model for America's Future](#).

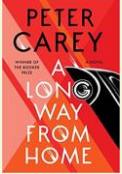


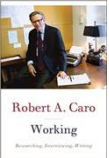
Born in South Bend in 1982, this Harvard graduate and Rhodes scholar worked at McKinsey, is a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, has served as mayor of his hometown since 2012 and married a guy in 2018. He makes a case for leadership by individuals like him from an age cohort with a lot at stake about the next few decades.

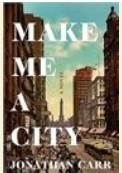
<u>Little</u>	Carey, Edward	*****	<u>3/18/19</u>	<p>Wax. Readers who love historical fiction are those most likely to be delighted by Edward Carey's novel titled, <u>Little</u>, the story of the orphan who became Madame Tussaud. After the death of tiny Marie's parents, she is apprenticed to a man who makes sculptures out of wax. Marie learns this art from him, and they find themselves living in Revolutionary Paris and exhibiting wax heads. We all know what happened to heads during the French Revolution, and Carey places Marie in the middle of the action. If you've ever wondered how Madame Tussaud got started, you're likely to love this novel.</p> 
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<u>Someone Like Me</u>	Carey, M.R.	*****	<u>12/20/19</u>	<p>Place. Most great stories include an element that informs readers that there's more here than meets the eye. In his novel titled, <u>Someone Like Me</u>, M.R. Carey sets up his story by introducing a cast of interesting and complex characters. Several of the characters are considered weird, and before long an otherworldly component enters and takes control. Several characters are linked by common experiences, and all are rooted in a place that ties them together and may be the locus for the events that drive the thrilling plot. Patient readers who can suspend disbelief will be rewarded with a well-told exciting and interesting story that reminded</p> 
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me of some of Stephen King's novels. You may not see what others see, but that doesn't mean it isn't there.

<u>A Long Way from Home</u>	Carey, Peter	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Working</u>	Caro, Robert A.	*****	<u>5/9/19</u>	<p>Process. Along with many fans of Robert Caro's books about Lyndon Johnson, I look forward to reading the fifth and final book whenever Caro finishes it. In the meantime, it was a real joy to read his latest book titled, <u>Working</u>, that assembles perspectives old and new about his writing process. The conclusions are not unexpected. Caro works very hard. He digs deeper and deeper, turning every page in research, asking more and more questions in multiple interviews. He begins to write after he feels his research is done, and that takes a while. Once he starts to write, he writes quickly, but then rewrites multiple times. He wants to be sure that a reader is brought inside the story: that the reader understands the issues and feels as if one is there with what Caro describes. Caro's prose reads so well that he makes it seem easy. This book explains how hard it is to make prose seem that easy.</p>	
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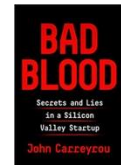
<u>Make Me a City</u>	Carr, Jonathan	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup

Carreyrou, John

1/9/19

Duped. Many readers may have followed the story of Theranos and CEO Elizabeth Holmes in the business press in recent years, especially the work of The Wall Street Journal's reporter, John Carreyrou. In his book titled, Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup, Carreyrou pulls readers into a business scandal involving prominent people who were duped. I hope he sold the book rights to Hollywood, since a screenplay would be great binge-watching melodrama. Holmes worked very hard to suppress Carreyrou's reporting of the scandal at Theranos, but her efforts failed. His investigative skills and the help of employees and others got the story right and the bubble that was Theranos burst. Business is usually more boring than this book, so corporate readers can be titillated by this narrative, and all general readers will find a human story of manipulation and deceit and greed that will keep the pages turning quickly. I wonder if one day we will hear Elizabeth Holmes' side of the story, since she refused Carreyrou's requests to be interviewed.

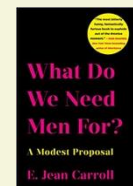


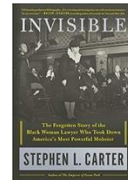
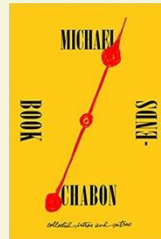
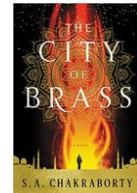
What Do We Need Men For? A Modest Proposal

Carroll, E. Jean

10/25/19


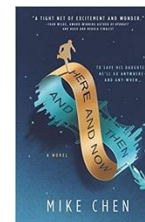
Spunky. Set aside for a moment that you already know one thing E. Jean Carroll says about President Trump in her memoir titled, What Do We Need Men For? A Modest Proposal. With that off your mind, let me set up the rest of this book. Carroll went on a road trip asking women the question in the title. The book is packed with anecdotes, asides, interesting people, and stories from the full and exciting life of the author over the course of many years. This spunky writer is full of life, humor and resilience. There's a




				dark history related underneath the lightness of the narrative, and Carroll's ability to convey her story with grace makes this book capture the highs and lows of an interesting life during fascinating times.	
<u>Invisible: The Forgotten Story of the Black Woman Lawyer Who Took Down America's Most Powerful Mobster</u>	Carter, Stephen L.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Bookends</u>	Chabon, Michael	*****	<u>8/27/19</u>	<p>Pleasure. I read for pleasure, and Michael Chabon's short collection titled, <u>Bookends</u>, reminds me how much joy there can be in reading and in sharing what we like with others. For those of us with wide interests, Chabon is a model for following any paths where our interests lie. I think Chabon is one of our finest contemporary writers, and he prose sings in this collection. For the first time, I learned about the writers who have influenced Chabon, and I realized that none of them surprised me. Any reader who appreciates finely written prose can enjoy this collection of brief pieces that reveal the prodigious skill of this talented writer.</p>	
<u>The City of Brass</u>	Chakraborty, S.A.	*****	<u>2/8/19</u>	<p>Adventure. With her debut novel titled, <u>The City of Brass</u>, S.A. Chakraborty begins a series titled, The Daevabad Trilogy. Fans of adventure fantasy novels will find protagonist Nahri as a delightful character, full of magic and mischief. The world Chakraborty creates has a complicated history and lots of long-held resentments among different groups. Nahri finds herself in the middle of conflicts, and on an exciting adventure at the center of</p>	

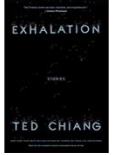
power. She has learned to be a healer, and her special skills are on display in many different contexts. Readers who enjoy big fantasy books with interesting stories should consider starting this trilogy and joining in the ongoing adventure.

<u>The Kingdom of Copper</u>	Chakraborty, S.A.	*****	<u>6/10/19</u>	<p>Siblings. The second installment in S.A. Chakraborty's Daevabad Trilogy is a novel titled, <u>The Kingdom of Copper</u>. Readers who have not read <i>The City of Brass</i> will lose the context for the conflicts in this book. Political conflict is building in Daevabad and sets of siblings are in the middle of the action along with powerful parents. The destruction and violence along with fantasy elements will appeal to those readers who enjoy action and imagination. These six hundred pages provide a transition to next year's finale, a novel titled, <i>The Empire of Gold</i>. Readers like me who've invested time to enter into this imaginary world anxiously await the conclusion of this story.</p>	
<u>Brother</u>	Chariandy, David	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.		
<u>The Perilous Adventures of the Cowboy King</u>	Charyn, Jerome	*****	<u>2/2/19</u>	<p>Bully. TR fans will be dee-lighted by Jerome Charyn's historical novel titled, <u>The Perilous Adventures of the Cowboy King</u>. We find the raucous Teddy Roosevelt in this novel which takes readers to the time he became President. Charyn excels at dialogue in this novel, and the language seems perfectly suited to the time period covered, and never</p>	

				comes across as awkward or clumsy to this reader.	
<u>The Stress Solution: The 4 Steps to Reset Your Body, Mind, Relationships and Purpose</u>	Chatterjee, Rangan	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Cape May</u>	Cheek, Chip	*****	<u>6/18/19</u>	<p>Desire. Chip Cheek's debut novel titled, <u>Cape May</u>, pulls readers into the honeymoon of virgins Henry and Effie in 1957. The couple arrive in Cape May from Georgia at the end of September and see that the resort town has pretty much closed down for the season. Cheek presents their innocence and reveals their desire for sexual intimacy. They cross paths with Clara, who had teased Effie years earlier. Clara is staying in Cape May with her lover, Max, and Max's sister, Alma. Before long, the extended cast are eating, drinking and sailing together. Desire among the characters is like electricity in the air, and Cheek takes the action one step at a time during the rest of the honeymoon, with consequences for the tenure of Henry and Effie's marriage.</p>	
<u>Here and Now and Then</u>	Chen, Mike	*****	<u>4/25/19</u>	<p>Parenthood. Time flies and stuff happens. That's one summary of life. Mike Chen's debut novel titled, <u>Here and Now and Then</u>, presents a typical dad, Kin Stewart, who loves his wife and tries to be a good dad to his daughter, Miranda. Unlike the typical dad, Kin leads two lives. In one, he is a time-traveling secret agent living in 2142. In another, he works in IT in San Francisco where he has been living since the 1990s when he got stranded while on assignment.</p>	

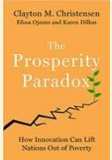
After his time travel colleagues pull him out of San Francisco, he still tries to be a good parent to Miranda, while breaking all kinds of rules. This is a great book for a dad to read with a teenage daughter and have something in common to talk about.

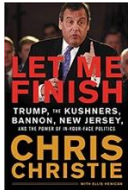
<u>A Single Thread</u>	Chevalier, Tracy	****	<u>9/24/19</u>	<p>Embroidery. If you have any interest at all in the lives of single women in England before the middle of the 20th century, consider reading a novel by Tracy Chevalier titled, <u>A Single Thread</u>. Protagonist Violet Speedwell is thirty-eight years old in 1932 and realizes that she's unlikely to marry, given the deaths of so many men of her cohort during The Great War. Living at home with her cantankerous mother becomes unbearable, so Violet moves to Winchester and tries to make a living as a typist. She joins a group doing embroidery for the cathedral and makes friends and learns how to handle a needle and thread. Meeting a bell ringer turns Violet's life in quite another direction. If any of that sounds appealing to you, pick up this novel, return to the past, and relax to the sound of the bells of Winchester Cathedral.</p>	
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<u>Exhalation</u>	Chiang, Ted	****	<u>6/24/19</u>	<p>Possibility. There are nine short stories in a collection by Ted Chiang titled after one of them, <u>Exhalation</u>. Fans of science fiction often enjoy the ways in which this genre allows speculation about what might be possible, and how the big questions in our own lives can be pondered in the context of that conjecture. Some science fiction writers have a few clever ideas and build clunky prose around their concepts. Chiang's prose is finely written and enhances his clever ideas. From time travel to free will to multiple parallel</p>	
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Blue Moon	Child, Lee	* * * *	<p> worlds to living under constant surveillance and recording, Chiang's speculations will stimulate every reader to think about what is possible and what that means for our lives. </p> <p> Mayhem. The twenty-fourth installment in the Jack Reacher series by Lee Child is a novel titled, Blue Moon. This time out, Reacher does a good deed to help an old man, and one thing leads to another as a week of mayhem unfolds. The old man was on his way to repay a loan from a loan shark affiliated with the town's Albanian gang. Neither Reacher nor the old man understood why the loan shark didn't show up to receive the payment. Within the first few pages, readers learn that a gang war has erupted between the Albanians and Ukrainians, a conflict that Reacher stokes. The body count is high in this novel as Reacher uses all his skills to do the right thing. By the time Reacher leaves town the community is much better off. Fans of this series and any reader who likes character-driven action novels will enjoy this book. </p> <p> Memory. Is truth what really happened or what we remember? As I finished reading Susan Choi's novel titled, Trust Exercise, that's the question I came away with. We meet Sarah and David at age fifteen at the beginning of the book, set in 1982, as a third person narrator describes their relationship and the acting class that helped form them when they were adolescents. The second section of the novel is from Sarah's perspective in the late 1990s, after she has become a successful author. Choi writes with great skill, and she leads readers to the coda of the novel at which time I found myself </p>	
Trust Exercise	Choi, Susan	* * * *	<p> worlds to living under constant surveillance and recording, Chiang's speculations will stimulate every reader to think about what is possible and what that means for our lives. </p> <p> Mayhem. The twenty-fourth installment in the Jack Reacher series by Lee Child is a novel titled, Blue Moon. This time out, Reacher does a good deed to help an old man, and one thing leads to another as a week of mayhem unfolds. The old man was on his way to repay a loan from a loan shark affiliated with the town's Albanian gang. Neither Reacher nor the old man understood why the loan shark didn't show up to receive the payment. Within the first few pages, readers learn that a gang war has erupted between the Albanians and Ukrainians, a conflict that Reacher stokes. The body count is high in this novel as Reacher uses all his skills to do the right thing. By the time Reacher leaves town the community is much better off. Fans of this series and any reader who likes character-driven action novels will enjoy this book. </p> <p> Memory. Is truth what really happened or what we remember? As I finished reading Susan Choi's novel titled, Trust Exercise, that's the question I came away with. We meet Sarah and David at age fifteen at the beginning of the book, set in 1982, as a third person narrator describes their relationship and the acting class that helped form them when they were adolescents. The second section of the novel is from Sarah's perspective in the late 1990s, after she has become a successful author. Choi writes with great skill, and she leads readers to the coda of the novel at which time I found myself </p>	

thinking about the question I note at the beginning of this review. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

<p><u>The Prosperity Paradox: How Innovation Can Lift Nations Out of Poverty</u></p>	<p>Christenson, Clayton M., Efosa Ojomo and Karen Dillon</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>7/3/19</u></p> <p>Lens. Some companies look for growth from places where consumption can be observed. In their book titled, <u>The Prosperity Paradox: How Innovation Can Lift Nations Out of Poverty</u>, Clayton Christensen, Efosa Ojomo and Karen Dillon, offer a different lens to consider. They provide loads of examples of looking for situations of non-consumption and providing innovative solutions that provide expanded markets and stable growth. Along that path, underdeveloped communities can escape from poverty and become self-sufficient. Few business writers understand innovation as well as Christensen, and this book will help many business leaders ask and answer questions about market engagement.</p>	
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<p><u>Let Me Finish: Trump, the Kushners, Bannon, New Jersey, and the Power of In-Your-Face Politics</u></p>	<p>Christie, Chris</p>	<p>***</p>	<p><u>4/25/19</u></p> <p>Scores. There are some words that easily come to mind when one thinks of Chris Christie: blunt, brassy, cocksure, confident, larger than life. All of that is on display in his memoir titled, <u>Let Me Finish: Trump, the Kushners, Bannon, New Jersey, and the Power of In-Your-Face Politics</u>. If you think Christie has some scores to settle in this book, you are correct, and he scores with skill. If you expect the book is all “me, me, me,” you are also correct, but after all, this is a memoir. You’ll read about Bridgegate, the relationship between the Christie’s and the Trumps, and come away feeling exactly the same about Christie as you did before opening the book. Readers interested in public affairs are those</p>	
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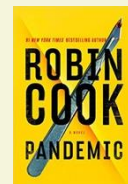
most likely to enjoy this novel. I assume all the Kushners received signed copies, with the compliments of the author.

<u>Open: The Progressive Case for Free Trade, Immigration, and Global Capital</u>	Clausing, Kimberly	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>New Patterns of Power and Profit: A Strategist's Guide to Competitive Advantage in the Age of Digital Transformation</u>	Clemons, Eric K.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Water Dancer</u>	Coates, Ta-Nehisi	*****	<u>10/10/19</u>	Conductor. Treat yourself by reading Ta-Nehisi Coates' debut novel titled, <u>The Water Dancer</u> . I completed reading it within twenty-four hours of its release because the well-told story grabbed me, and Coates' characters, prose and plot are finely written. Protagonist Hiram Walker is a young slave whose life is transformed when he encounters the force of a power he has inherited. Hiram escapes from slavery and becomes a conductor on the underground railroad. I found this to be a powerful and imaginative story with finely written prose that exposes the center of our humanity, our aspirations for a better life for ourselves and those we love.	
<u>We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy</u>	Coates, Ta-Nehisi	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

<u>Run Away</u>	Coben, Harlan	****	<u>4/4/19</u>	<p>Secrets. Thanks to Harlan Coben, even family trauma can be thrilling. In his novel titled, <u>Run Away</u>, Coben takes us into the challenges of the Greene family. Simon and Ingrid Greene are disrupted from their successful lives by their daughter, Paige, who has become a drug addict. To what lengths will a parent go for a child? Coben pulls readers into the Greene family situation, then kickstarts a nationwide set of connections to revealing secrets long held. Most readers will become anxious to keep turning the pages to see the next turn in the exciting story. How many secrets will be exposed and with what consequences? Fans of thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy this one.</p>	
<u>Directorate S: The C.I.A. and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan</u>	Coll, Steve	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Future of Capitalism: Facing the New Anxieties</u>	Collier, Paul	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Let Love Have the Last Word</u>	Common	****	<u>6/24/19</u>	<p>Reflections. The many fans of musical artist and actor Common will provide a natural audience for his book titled, <u>Let Love Have the Last Word</u>. Introspection about his life leads Common to sharing candidly his reflections about life and love. There's an upbeat message in this book that may be inspiring to those readers who can hear the lessons from another's life and apply them to</p>	


one's own situation. In an age when hate and polarization gets loads of attention, it's terrific to spend some time basking in messages about love.

<u>The Last Romantics</u>	Conklin, Tara	****	<u>8/27/19</u>	<p>Siblings. Sometimes siblings have the same childhood, especially when they are close in age. Other times, siblings recall family life in radically different ways. In her novel titled, <u>The Last Romantics</u>, Tara Conklin introduces readers to the Skinner family. The three girls and one boy shared major trauma in childhood: the death of their father, and the depression of their mother for multiple years, a period they named “the pause.” The perspective of the novel comes from the future, giving comfort that the siblings survived. Sorrow and love formed them and changed them. Conklin tells their stories with great skill and insight into human nature.</p>	
<u>Dark Sacred Night</u>	Connelly, Michael	****	<u>2/2/19</u>	<p>Partners. Michael Connelly's novel titled, <u>Dark Sacred Night</u>, features both protagonists Harry Bosch and Renee Ballard. Ballard's skills are underutilized while she works the night shift at LAPD's Hollywood station. After she meets Harry in the wee hours at the station, the two hit it off and begin to work as partners on a neglected case. Connelly develops Ballard a lot in this novel, especially her dedication to the job, and the skills she deploys expertly. Harry Bosch is a beloved character and Connelly sets him up here with a gig for more novels to come. Fans of crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy the plot and characters of this novel.</p>	

<u>Pandemic</u>	Cook, Robin	***	<u>2/8/19</u>	<p>Plodding. Readers who enjoy medical thrillers might be satisfied with Robin Cook's novel titled, <u>Pandemic</u>. If you've heard anything about gene modification using CRISPR/CAS9, this is the book for you. Frequent Cook protagonists Jack Stapleton and Laurie Montgomery are reprised in this book and their relationship has become rocky since Laurie became Jack's boss at work. My expectations of recent Cook novels have been low, and this installment gave me the exact level of entertainment I expected.</p>	
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<u>War of the Wolf</u>	Cornwell, Bernard	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.
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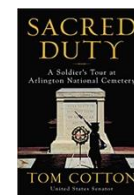
<u>Halsey Street</u>	Coster, Naima	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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[Sacred Duty: A Soldier's Tour at Arlington National Cemetery](#)

Cotton, Tom

[12/16/19](#)



Honor. Fed up with partisan politics? Take a busman's holiday with a non-partisan book by partisan politician Tom Cotton titled, [Sacred Duty: A Soldier's Tour at Arlington National Cemetery](#). Cotton tells us about the revered U.S. Army unit known as "The Old Guard," and the work they do to honor soldiers. During a time period when respect seems scarce, it was a respite to read this account of the honor shown to fallen soldiers.



<u>America's Dark Theologian: The Religious Imagination of Stephen King</u>	Cowan, Douglas E.	****	<u>11/9/19</u>	<p>Questions. Any Stephen King fan who has noted the religious imagery and themes in his writing should consider reading Douglas Cowen's book titled, <u>America's Dark Theologian</u>. Cowan explores all the core questions that King raises in his writing. This invitation to questioning is prevalent throughout King's writing, and he is always skeptical about those who purport to have the answers to life's big questions. Readers who may not know why we love horror may come away from this book with greater understanding.</p>	
<u>Big Business: A Love Letter to an American Anti-hero</u>	Cowan, Tyler	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Melody</u>	Crace, Jim	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A Dangerous Man</u>	Crais, Robert	****	<u>9/3/19</u>	<p>Quick. The eighteenth Elvis Cole and Joe Pike novel by Robert Crais is titled, <u>A Dangerous Man</u>. After a routine bank transaction between teller Isabel Roland and Joe Pike, both their lives get complicated very fast. Joe watches Izzy get abducted from the sidewalk in front of the bank. It's no spoiler that Joe rescues Izzy, but what happens to the abductors and where the story leads will delight those readers who like character-driven crime fiction. The plot moves fast, and the action seems constant. What could be dramatic in other lives becomes just another case for Joe and Elvis.</p>	

<u>Harvest of Secrets</u>	Crosby, Ellen	***	<u>2/2/19</u>	<p>Workmanlike. The ninth installment in the Wine Country Mysteries series by Ellen Crosby is a novel titled, <u>Harvest of Secrets</u>. Protagonist Lucie Montgomery faces more than the usual challenges at her winery in Virginia at harvest time. A storm is coming before the grapes have ripened as far as desired; old human bones have been discovered just outside the family winery, and there's a murder to solve. While part of the structure of the novel is formulaic and the characters are often not fully formed, this novel will appeal to those readers who enjoy mysteries. I finished this book with the same kind of feeling I get after a glass of a moderately priced New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc: workmanlike, tastes exactly as expected, and not much complexity.</p>	
<u>Recursion</u>	Crouch, Blake	*****	<u>7/26/19</u>	<p>Memory. Science runs amok in Blake Crouch's novel titled, <u>Recursion</u>. Using a common science fiction trope, Crouch explores the consequences of time shifting causing the erasure of memories. Many readers can anticipate what happens after false memory syndrome spreads in the populace. Without spoiling the thrilling plot, this is also the story of a hero saving the world from Armageddon. Readers who enjoy thrillers, whether with a sci-fi element or not, are those most likely to enjoy this fast-paced and entertaining novel.</p>	
<u>The Moroccan Girl</u>	Cumming, Charles	*****	<u>6/18/19</u>	<p>Recruited. In a novel titled, <u>The Moroccan Girl</u>, Charles Cumming presents protagonist Kit Carradine, a writer who is recruited by MI6. Kit takes to the work quite well in his novice outing, and Cumming may reprise him, as he has done when writing other</p>	

				novels. Fans of espionage novels will find all the usual elements here: intrigue, deception, danger, betrayal and uncertainty about who is friend and who is foe. Thanks to Cumming's fine writing, the suspense is taut, the characters interesting, and the story captivating.	
Sea of Greed	Cussler, Clive	***	3/6/19	<p>Energy. Kurt Austin and the team from NUMA are back for the fourteenth installment in the NUMA Files series by Clive Cussler in a novel titled, Sea of Greed. A terrific female villain, Tessa Franco, has invested in a method to eliminate reliance on oil as a source of energy. As with all the novels in this series, the technology is intriguing, the action is fast-paced, and the heroes always beat the bad guys. Despite that predictability, this novel and the series can provide satisfying entertainment that doesn't demand much thought.</p>	
The Oracle	Cussler, Clive	****	8/27/19	<p>Girls. The eleventh novel in Clive Cussler's Sam and Remi Fargo series is titled, The Oracle. Set in different parts of Africa, each chapter begins with an African proverb. The Fargo's philanthropy supports a girls' school, situated near where members of a group like Boko Haram are terrorizing the community. True to the series, there's a treasure to be found, and the plot moves quickly as good triumphs over evil. Most readers will fall in love with one of the girls whose courage and skill overcomes all obstacles. Fans of formulaic fiction and this series are those most likely to enjoy this novel. I can't recall Sam and Remi taking a break for delicious food and fine wine in this installment, so</p>	

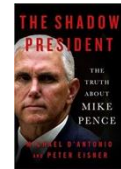
				perhaps they'll find multiple Michelin starred restaurants on their next outing.	
<u>The Titanic Secret</u>	Cussler, Clive	***	<u>12/9/19</u>	<p>Mining. The eleventh installment in the Isaac Bell adventure series by Clive Cussler is a novel titled, <u>The Titanic Secret</u>. Cussler pulls protagonist Dirk Pitt from a different series to start this novel a century after the time when the main action in the novel takes place. Detective Isaac Bell investigates a Colorado mine disaster in 1911 and before long goes on a global adventure to track down the mining of a rare earth element named byzanium. As always, Bell is a terrific investigator who gets into life threatening scrapes with bad guys. Fans of formulaic character-driven fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p>	
<u>The Falconer</u>	Czapnik, Dana	****	<u>7/16/19</u>	<p>Lucy. How does a coming of age debut novel stand out from the many others available to read? Write well and develop interesting and complex characters. That's exactly what Dana Czapnik has done in her novel titled, <u>The Falconer</u>. Set during a senior year in high school in New York City in 1993, we get to meet Lucy, a talented basketball player who is falling in love with her friend, Percy. Czapnik taps into all the questions and concerns that a seventeen-year-old girl faces, especially one whose talent in sports can alienate from her male and female peers. Readers should never underestimate the interior lives of others, and Czapnik reveals much insight about our human condition as she develops the character of Lucy for us.</p>	

[The Shadow President: The Truth About Mike Pence](#)

D'Antonio, Michael and Peter Eisner

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



[The Wolf and the Watchman](#)

Dag, Niklas Natt Och

[7/26/19](#)

Justice. Historical fiction about unfamiliar places can place extra demands on a reader. An author needs to bring the place to clarity in our minds and present characters and plot that keep readers engaged. In his debut novel titled, [The Wolf and the Watchman](#), Niklas Nat Och Dag brings late 18th century Stockholm to life and offers a gripping plot about justice filled with great characters. Protagonist Cecil Winge is an attorney dying of what we know now as tuberculosis, and Mikel Cardell is a watchman. This dynamic pair join forces to seek justice. Along the way, we meet the rich and the poor and are entertained by a complicated plot that I found totally entertaining.

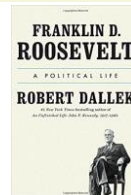


[Franklin D. Roosevelt: A Political Life](#)

Dallek, Robert

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

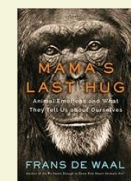


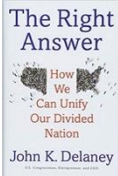


[Mama's Last Hug: Animal Emotions and What They Tell Us about Ourselves](#)

de Waal, Frans


[11/21/19](#)

Observations. Primatologist Frans de Wall shares insights drawn from decades of observations of animal behavior for his book titled, [Mama's Last Hug: Animal Emotions and What They Tell Us about Ourselves](#). He has specialized in comparing human and primate behavior, and the abundant similarities he describes have significant implications. It may be humbling for some readers to accept the evidence that we humans are not as special as we think we are.



				<p>There's a heartwarming story at the core of the book, and most readers will finish this book with a greater appreciation of other animals.</p> <p>Pragmatist. John Delaney announced his campaign for the United States Presidency at the end of July 2017. I've just read his book titled, The Right Answer: How We Can Unify Our Divided Nation, and it reflects a pragmatism that seems refreshing in our polarized political environment. With experience as an entrepreneur and a member of Congress, Delaney brings experience in solving problems and in dealing with frustration. Despite the long tenure of his candidacy, his name doesn't pop up in polls. He may or may not gain traction after debates and early primaries. Whether he does or not, his positive approach to working together and finding solutions to serious problems is worth a fair hearing by those readers and voters interested in public policy and politics.</p>	
The Right Answer: How We Can Unify Our Divided Nation	Delaney, John	*****	6/10/19		
Why Liberalism Failed	Deneen, Patrick J.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
Patsy	Dennis-Benn, Nicole	*****	10/10/19	<p>Hope. Both my parents emigrated to Brooklyn, so when I read Nicole Dennis-Benn's novel titled, Patsy, featuring an immigrant living in Brooklyn, I was receptive to the story. Patsy left her life in Jamaica for a better life in Brooklyn but finds her situation more difficult than she imagined. She left her five-year-old daughter, Tru, behind in Jamaica and Dennis-Benn moves back and forth over the course of a decade as she</p>	

reveals the changing lives of both Patsy and Tru. Hope may be one of the most powerful drivers of human behavior, and the bonds between mothers and daughters take many forms. Life often requires resilience, and love can be a balm for what we do to harm others and to heal our own wounds. I learned only after my father's death that he never wanted to come to the United States. A brother had booked passage and arrangements had been made for him with a relative in New York. That brother broke his leg, and was unable to sail, so my father was told he had to quit his job and go to the US whether he wanted to or not. It took him forty years to see those brothers face-to-face again. Dennis-Benn understands.

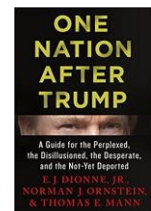
French Exit	DeWitt, Patrick	****	5/24/19	<p>Broke. Fans of dark humor and good writing are those readers most likely to enjoy reading Patrick DeWitt's novel titled, French Exit. Frances Price is a widow living on the Upper East Side of Manhattan with her adult son, Malcolm, and an old cat named Small Frank. Prodigious and carefree spending have made staying in NYC untenable, so where does one go in such a situation? Paris, of course. By what method should they travel? Ocean liner, of course. Pop the champagne and settle in for a very entertaining reading experience.</p>	
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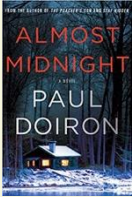
[One Nation After Trump: A Guide for the Perplexed, the Disillusioned, the Desperate, and the Not-Yet Deported](#)

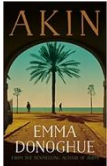
Dionne, Jr., E.J.,
Norman J. Ornstein
and Thomas E. Mann

Unread

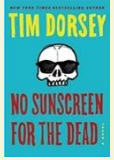

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>Almost Midnight</u>	Doiron, Paul	*****	<p>Vacation. Maine Game Warden Mike Bowditch is on something of a busman's holiday in the 10th installment of this series by Paul Doiron, a novel titled, <u>Almost Midnight</u>. Lots of characters from the earlier novel are back, including a wolf and dog hybrid, Shadow. As with the earlier novels, the protagonist is a complex and engaging character who's easy for readers to like and root for. Doiron's description of the Maine setting will make readers feel the places come alive, and the plots are consistently entertaining. While on vacation when Mike is asked to help a friend, his initial reaction is hesitation. Loyalty wins out, and readers set off with Mike on another rule-breaking exciting adventure.</p>	
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<u>Akin</u>	Donoghue, Emma	*****	<p>Rescue. Prepare yourself to settle into another one of Emma Donoghue's finely written novels, a book titled, <u>Akin</u>. Protagonist Noah is an old man, retired and widowed, and ready for a trip to his birthplace in France to explore questions from the past about his family. Just before his departure, Noah meets his eleven-year-old grandnephew, Michael, whose mother is in prison and who needs a new guardian. A social worker has tracked down Noah and when the choice comes down to Noah or a stranger as foster parent, Noah finds himself agreeing to a trial run, as long as Michael can accompany him to France. What follows is a touching story about the young and the old, the links of family relationships, and a rescue from the past and the present. As always, Donoghue's writing is superb, and most</p>	
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readers will love the story, the insights and the finely written prose.

<u>No Sunscreen for the Dead</u>	Dorsey, Tim	****	<u>3/6/19</u>	<p>Vengeance. Readers who have laughed through the Serge Storms series by Tim Dorsey are those most likely to enjoy the 22nd installment, a novel titled, <u>No Sunscreen for the Dead</u>. The current stop for Serge and Coleman's Florida escapade is The Villages where the guys want to observe seniors in their natural habitat. As Serge gets to know some residents, he becomes a man with a mission: exact vengeance on behalf of those of the greatest generation who have been exploited by others. He recovers their swindled funds and delivers creative justice to the bad guys. If you like wacky humor and can tolerate a lot of violence, this novel will be a funny and entertaining treat.</p>	
<u>Trump Sky Alpha</u>	Doten, Mark	***	<u>10/25/19</u>	<p>Satire. If aspects of contemporary life are not dystopic enough for you, consider reading Mark Doten's satire titled, <u>Trump Sky Alpha</u>. The novel is set one year after President Trump's nuclear war, and the title refers to his huge aircraft available only for the very best people who look terrific. The protagonist is a journalist on an assignment to open the door to the remains of the internet and uncover its secrets. More serious readers of this novel will see its exploration of the use of media, the consequences of disinformation and how hard it can be to determine what is true, especially when distracted by all the noise.</p>	

[My Father Left Me Ireland: An American Son's Search For Home](#)

Dougherty, Michael
Brendan

[11/14/19](#)

Kindred. As he prepared to become a father, Michael Brendan Dougherty freaked out a little about how he would need to tell his daughter who she is and where she comes from. He writes a book titled, [My Father Left Me Ireland: An American Son's Search For Home](#), as letters to his father who has been an intermittent presence in Michael's life. Dougherty's mother and father ended their relationship in Ireland before he was born. While he was raised in New Jersey, his mother spoke to him in Irish and his father visited from Dublin every few years. Facing fatherhood, he wrote letters to his own father that are heartfelt and moving. At some time in our life we answer identity questions for ourselves about who is kindred. If we are fortunate, we also come to understand the sacrifice that parents have made to improve the lives of their children.

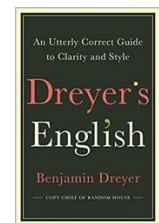


[Dreyer's English: An Utterly Correct Guide to Clarity and Style](#)

Dreyer, Benjamin

[5/24/19](#)

Fun. If you're a regular reader who loves words you should experience delight as you read Benjamin Dreyer's witty, sharp and experienced judgments in his book titled, [Dreyer's English: An Utterly Correct Guide to Clarity and Style](#). If you've ever wondered what different editors do, this book will explain their work for you. Dreyer's writing is playful, clear and reflects a clear understanding of our foibles. The footnotes can be a bit distracting, often because I kept overlooking the marks that would send me to the bottom of the page. The content of the footnotes and text were a joy to read, and whether my usage of the English language will improve as a result of reading this book, only time will tell.



<u>Mean Girl: Ayn Rand and the Culture of Greed</u>	Duggan, Lisa	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>How Schools Work: An Inside Account of Failure and Success from One of the Nation's Longest-Serving Secretaries of Education</u>	Duncan, Arne	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Never Home Alone: From Microbes to Millipedes, Camel Crickets, and Honeybees, the Natural History of Where We Live</u>	Dunn, Rob	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Verdun Affair</u>	Dybek, Nick	****	<u>2/8/19</u>	<p>Quest. Fans of finely written historical literary fiction, especially relating to World War I and its aftermath, are likely to enjoy Nick Dybek's finely written novel titled, <u>The Verdun Affair</u>. Fate brings Tom Combs together with Sarah Hagen in 1921 as she is searching for her missing husband. Dybek uses multiple time periods and finely crafted prose to draw readers into a quest to discover both oneself and a loved one. Truth is, as always, elusive, and subject to multiple interpretations. Dybek's complex structure adds to the difficulty of the quest to decide whether or not a soldier with memory loss is</p>	

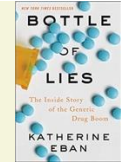
the missing husband, and who will get to decide the truth.

Bottle of Lies: The Inside Story of the Generic Drug Boom

Eban, Katherine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Washington Black

Edugyan, Esi

1/9/19

Freedom. Readers with all kinds of interests are likely to enjoy Esi Edugyan's novel titled, Washington Black. Those who appreciate finely written prose will delight in her superb writing throughout this novel. Readers who enjoy fiction with interesting and well-developed complex characters will find a host of them in this novel, led by protagonist Wash Black. Fans of historical fiction will enjoy the detail with which Edugyan describes the 19th century from Barbados to England to the Arctic. Finally, those readers who enjoy fiction that leads to insights about life will come away from this novel with increased empathy for the suffering of others, with thoughts about the nature of freedom and the nature of slavery.

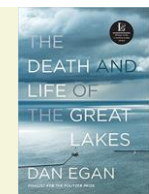


The Death and Life of the Great Lakes

Egan, Dan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

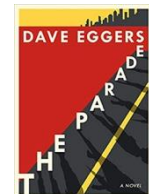


The Parade

Eggers, Dave

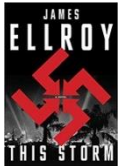
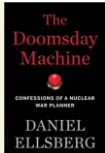
5/28/19

Road. Contractors are working on deadline to complete a road as Dave Eggers draws readers into consideration of the costs of war in his novel titled, The Parade. Set in an unnamed country, the characters Four and Nine react to the situation in which they have found themselves, and Eggers pulls readers into our own emotional reaction as the road



comes to completion. We are all on a road of one sort or another and can be so absorbed in ourselves that we overlook what is happening around us. Eggers demands attention and reaction. Consider giving it to him as you read this novel that leads to personal introspection about important matters.

<u>A Mind Unraveled</u>	Eichenwald, Kurt	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Your Duck Is My Duck</u>	Eisenberg, Deborah	*****	<u>2/2/19</u>	<p>Words. I don't know about you, but words flow in and out of my consciousness all day long. Where they came from and where they are going is sometimes clear, and at other times very obscure. Deborah Eisenberg plucks words from whatever her source is, and constructs them into six playful and quirky short stories, a collection titled, <u>Your Duck Is My Duck</u>. Eisenberg taps into the inner and outer lives of eclectic characters and holds a mirror up to our regular and strange ways of being in the world. The characters are compelling, the stories engaging, and the words are chosen with great skill. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this collection.</p>	
<u>American Dialogue: The Founding Fathers and Us</u>	Ellis, Joseph J.	*****	<u>1/4/19</u>	<p>We. What would our first four United States presidents think about our current situation? In a book titled, <u>American Dialogue: The Founding Fathers and Us</u>, historian Joseph Ellis creates a dialogue of sorts between those founders and the issues we deal with today. By reflecting on our history, past compromises and choices, and the principles underlying our Constitution, readers can gain</p>	

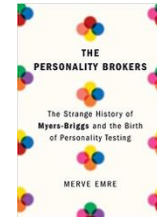
				<p>some perspective on current events. The founders were by no means homogeneous in their views, as anyone who has studied this period knows. Their arguments were thoughtful and principled. The shared objective was to unite different interests to bring meaning to “we the people.” Today, we can use insight about our past to forge unity about those important things we continue to hold in common.</p>	
<u>This Storm</u>	Ellroy, James	****	8/15/19	<p>Staccato. Readers are bombarded by the rhythm of staccato sentences over the course of almost six hundred pages of James Ellroy’s novel titled, <u>This Storm</u>. Set in Los Angeles in 1942, the novel combines complex and interesting fictional characters with some historical characters and events. The pace never lets up and the complexity increases as the cast of characters grows. There’s a noir mood from cover to cover and dialogue and language that fits the setting may grate contemporary readers. Patient readers are rewarded with avarice, vice, corruption and crimes aplenty. The world was crazy in 1942, and Ellroy draws readers into one slice of the world at that time and throws sentence after sentence at us until we are immersed or bludgeoned. I enjoyed the challenge of reading this novel.</p>	
<u>The Doomsday Machine</u>	Ellsberg, Daniel	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

The Personality Brokers: The Strange History of Myers-Briggs and the Birth of Personality Testing

Emre, Merve

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Tell Them of Battles, Kings, and Elephants

Énard, Mathias

3/26/19

Commission. I relaxed into the flow of Mathias Énard's novel titled, Tell Them of Battles, Kings, and Elephants, in which he describes the time that Michelangelo Buonarroti spent in Constantinople designing a bridge for the Sultan that would cross the Golden Horn. This novel is an homage to art and to the artist, and while I read the lyrical English translation, I can only assume that in French the poetry must soar. This is a short and quirky novel which draws from some historical fragments.




Virgil Wander

Enger, Leif

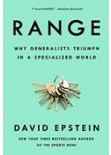

1/4/19


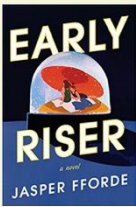
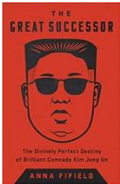
Repair. I've waited a decade for another novel written by Leif Enger, and having read his novel titled, Virgil Wander, I can imagine that it took him all of a decade to write with such perfection. A small Minnesota Lake Superior town struggles for survival between an industrial past that is gone for good and an uncertain future. Protagonist Virgil Wander requires physical recovery and repair following an auto accident. All characters are yearning for hope, dreaming of a better future, and along the way extending love, care and concern for each other. Virgil's cinema is a bright spot in the town's life, and young Bjorn leads the recovery of a sense of community. Readers looking for fine writing and a story of redemption are those most likely to enjoy this finely written novel.




Kaddish.com	Englander, Nathan	*****	4/25/19	<p>Birthright. I laughed my way through much of Nathan Englander's novel titled, Kaddish.com. After all, the premise itself was funny. Protagonist Larry is a secular Jew when his Orthodox father dies. It is Larry's birthright and responsibility to recite the Kaddish for his late father every day for eleven months so that his father can find his way to heaven. He finds a website, kaddish.com, that allows Larry to outsource his responsibility. Two decades later, Larry has become a rabbi, and is drawn to repair his past action: he needs his birthright back. Underneath the humor, there is a serious story here about purpose and obligations. Englander's writing is superb, and the tenderness and humanity of these characters will enrich all readers.</p>	
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[Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World](#)



	Epstein, David	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
Blood Oath	Fairstein, Linda	****	5/9/19	<p>Return. The twentieth installment in the Alexandra Cooper crime fiction series by Linda Fairstein is a novel titled, Blood Oath. I always look forward to finding out the NYC landmark that Fairstein describes for readers, and this time out it's Rockefeller University, one of the country's finest medical research centers. Fans of the series may recall that we left Alex away from her Assistant DA work on a leave of absence. In this installment, she's returned to work and her first case is complex and sensitive. Meanwhile, she's considering whether or not she wants to become the next DA. The familiar cast of recurring characters</p>	

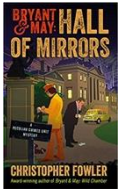

				are tested anew on a case that fans are likely to love.	
<u>Little Boy</u>	Ferlinghetti, Lawrence	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Early Riser</u>	Fforde, Jasper	*****	<u>4/25/19</u>	<p>Winter. Readers who enjoy imaginative dystopian fiction are those most likely to appreciate Jasper Fforde's novel titled, <u>Early Riser</u>. Set in Wales, this is a story of a population who eat hearty as preparation for sleeping through the harsh winter. Fforde adds clever writing, humor, mystery and mayhem to keep readers turning pages. Levels of meaning enhance the reading experience and improve the entertainment value of this novel.</p>	
<u>The Great Successor: The Divinely Perfect Destiny of Brilliant Comrade Kim Jong Un</u>	Fifield, Anna	*****	<u>9/3/19</u>	<p>Insights. Despite the cheeky title of her book, <u>The Great Successor: The Divinely Perfect Destiny of Brilliant Comrade Kim Jong Un</u>, Anna Fifield is not writing a satire about the current leader of North Korea. Fifield's extensive contacts and long experience in covering North Korea combine to provide great insights into Kim and his regime. The book describes the context in which Kim has thrived as a young leader, and how his actions have been more reasoned and reasonable than others claim. If like me, you were never inclined to sell Kim short, reading this book is likely to convince you that Kim's future will be bright.</p>	

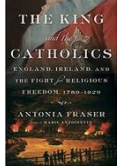
<u>The Vanishing Man</u>	Finch, Charles	****	8/27/19	<p>Dorset. The twelfth novel in the Charles Lenox mystery series by Charles Finch is a prequel titled, <u>The Vanishing Man</u>. Set in London in 1853, young Charles Lenox, fresh off a solved case, is drawn into a new investigation at the request of the Duke of Dorset. A stolen painting brings Lenox into the Duke's orbit, but the investigation leads to a rocky relationship with high society. Fans of the series will enjoy seeing familiar characters in their youth, and mystery lovers will find great characters and an engaging plot.</p>	
<u>Judgment</u>	Finder, Joseph	****	4/4/19	<p>Hardball. Watch out for Judge Julie, the protagonist of a novel by Joseph Finder titled, <u>Judgment</u>. After exercising poor judgment in her personal life, Judge Juliana Brody faces a full court press on her to rule in a certain way concerning a case in her courtroom. Her escapades to avoid being blackmailed demand a reader's full suspension at disbelief: one must forget that the behavior of this person matches that of a Superior Court judge. Once reconciled to the context that judges are people too, readers can join the brisk plot that races to a very satisfying conclusion. Fans of thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
<u>Chocolate Cream Pie Murder</u>	Fluke, Joanne	***	12/20/19	<p>Soapy. The twenty-fourth installment in the Hannah Swensen mystery series by Joanne Fluke is a novel titled, <u>Chocolate Cream Pie Murder</u>. Fans of the series will enjoy the reprise of the large Lake Eden cast of characters and the recipes for sweet goodies that are in every chapter. The soap opera feeling of the recent installments ratchets up in this novel, as the recent marriage of Hannah and Ross has fallen apart and</p>	

				<p>melodrama follows. As with the usual formula, there's a murder and Hannah is in the middle of the action. Perhaps I've exhausted my interest in this series, as I found not a single recipe worth trying. Fans of the series are those readers most likely to enjoy the time spent with familiar characters and desserts.</p>	
<p><u>Christmas Cake Murder</u></p>	<p>Fluke, Joanne</p>	<p>***</p>	<p><u>1/4/19</u></p>	<p>Backstory. The 23rd installment in the Hannah Swensen series by Joanne Fluke is titled, <u>Christmas Cake Murder</u>. While the author left fans with cliffhangers about happenings in Hannah's current life, she diverts attention in this installment to part of Hannah's backstory. Hannah is preparing to open the bakery business, The Cookie Jar, making her dream come true. While that's going on, she agrees to help an elderly Lake Eden resident in hospice care experience again the Christmas Ball from decades earlier, an event marked by special deserts, the area in which Hannah will help. The crime in this case is interesting, the recipes typical, and the backstory interesting for those fans who really enjoy this series. Most of the dialogue is as sweet as the cookie recipes.</p>	
<p><u>World Without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech</u></p>	<p>Foer, Franklin</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>5/24/19</u></p>	<p>Argument. Franklin Foer offers a cogent argument about the threats from Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon, in a book titled, <u>World Without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech</u>. Monopoly power has consequences and what we are gaining in benefits from these giant companies may not be sufficient when weighed against the evidence of what we are losing as individuals and as a society. To what extent are we willing to let these companies think for us? Whether</p>	

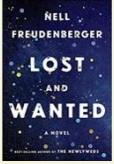
				<p>you're a tech booster or a queasy Luddite, reading this book gives you a foundational way to think about some of the major issues facing our evolving world.</p> <p>Act. Do something. Climate change isn't someone else's problem. We make our earthly home together and each of us can take action that will help respond to the climate crisis. That's much of what Jonathan Safran Foer proposes in his book titled, <u>We Are the Weather: Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast</u>. He writes this as a personal reflection and a call to action. He describes his own hypocrisy when he acts in ways that he knows are different from what he wants to do. An individual action as simple as not eating meat for a meal or two each day can combine with a similar action by others and reduce the number of animals raised for human consumption and the environmental consequences caused by those animals.</p>	
<p><u>We Are the Weather: Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast</u></p>	<p>Foer, Jonathan Safran</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>10/10/19</u></p>		
<p><u>A Particular Kind of Black Man</u></p>	<p>Folarin, Tope</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>9/3/19</u></p>	<p>Home. The finely written debut novel by Tope Folarin titled, <u>A Particular Kind of Black Man</u>, may seem at first to be a familiar story of immigrant assimilation into the culture of the United States. It is that and much more. Protagonist Tunde Akinola can never feel quite "at home." He never fit in to life among the Mormons in rural Utah, where his father's work and skills were undervalued. After his mother left Utah to return to Nigeria, Tunde becomes more adrift. A move to Texas doesn't improve the family's fitting in. Years later, Tunde visits family in Nigeria and his memories of life are questions by different aspects of the life he thought he knew and remembered. Readers who appreciate literary</p>	

			<p>fiction will enjoy Folarin's prose and recognize that this short novel is about much more than another immigrant family trying to fit in.</p>	
<u>The Whisperer</u>	Fossum, Karin	****	<p><u>10/10/19</u></p> <p>Listening. The thirteenth installment in the Inspector Sejer mystery series by Karin Fossum is a novel titled, <u>The Whisperer</u>. Fans of the series will be familiar with the personality and style of Inspector Sejer and enjoy the compassion and empathy he shows to a woman held for a serious crime. Sejer allows protagonist Ragna Reigel tell her story and he listens closely and carefully, showing her respect. Fossum allows readers to enter into Ragna's life in small bits surrounding Sejer's interrogations. Ragna speaks very softly, hence the title, so we can imagine the patience and care Sejer shows her as he gives her time and space to speak up. Readers who enjoy finely written mysteries are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p>	
<u>Beautiful Country Burn Again: Democracy, Rebellion, and Revolution</u>	Fountain, Ben	****	<p><u>1/22/19</u></p> <p>Fiery. Instead of watching the State of the Union address this year, consider reading Ben Fountain's book titled, <u>Beautiful Country Burn Again: Democracy, Rebellion, and Revolution</u>. His view of how we came to this point and where we are going should disturb every reader. Fountain describes that America's first crisis was over slavery and led to the Civil War. Our second crisis was the Depression and that led to the New Deal. He views that the country is now ready for a third great reinvention. To bring readers to that point, this book takes us month my month through the 2016 campaign, along with backward looks to lessons from the past. Fountain writes with great skill and passion.</p>	

				<p>He senses something in the air. Maybe you should read this book to see if you agree.</p> <p>Flashback. The fifteenth installment in the Peculiar Crimes Unit series by Christopher Fowler springs a flashback on readers as we return to the lives of Arthur Bryant and John May in 1969. In the novel titled, <u>Hall of Mirrors</u>, Bryant and May are assigned to be sure that a prosecution witness shows up for trial. The witness insists on spending a weekend at a manor house in the country, where Bryant is a fish out of water. When there's a murder, and the house party is trapped at Tavistock Hall, it's up to Bryant and May to solve the mystery and save their skins, or at least their jobs. Funny as always, and well-plotted, the mystery is interesting and the characters eccentric and terrific as always.</p>	
<u>Hall of Mirrors</u>	Fowler, Christopher	*****	<u>1/22/19</u>		
<u>A Well-Behaved Woman: A Novel of the Vanderbilts</u>	Fowler, Therese Anne	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Crisis</u>	Francis, Felix	*****	<u>12/20/19</u>	<p>Answers. Prolific novelist Felix Francis returns to Newmarket horse racing in his novel titled, <u>Crisis</u>. Protagonist Harrison Foster couldn't care less about horses, racing or gambling, but after his crisis firm's client loses a valuable thoroughbred in a fire, Foster is sent to investigate what happened and why. Before long, Foster finds himself in the middle of the dysfunctional Chadwick family and heats up tension as he explores answers to questions about secrets the Chadwicks don't want revealed. The plot moves briskly, the characters are interesting, and the</p>	

<u>The End of the End of the Earth</u>	Franzen, Jonathan	****	<u>5/24/19</u>	<p>mystery is satisfying to those readers who enjoy this genre.</p> <p>Essays. While I had previously read some of the sixteen essays in the collection by Jonathan Franzen titled, <u>The End of the End of the Earth</u>, each one felt fresh, thanks to his fine writing, and crisp and cogent arguments. I'm a sucker for fine writing in any form, and Franzen's fiction soars. His skill as an essayist is also exceptional, and fans of fine writing are those readers most likely to enjoy this collection.</p>	
<u>The King and the Catholics: England, Ireland, and the Fight for Religious Freedom, 1780-1829</u>	Fraser, Antonia	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War</u>	Freeman, Joanne B.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Witch Elm</u>	French, Tana	*****	<u>1/4/19</u>	<p>Memory. Fans of Tana French's Dublin Murder Squad novels will discover an unexpected treat in a new standalone novel titled, <u>The Witch Elm</u>. Protagonist and narrator Toby is a complex and interesting character whose memory and reliability fade in and out of a great story. French writes with great skill, and I enjoyed her humor as well as the plot twists. The pacing of the novel matched the gradual recovery in Toby's body, mind and spirit from physical trauma early in the story. The setting and supporting</p>	

characters, especially Uncle Hugo, all add to a very satisfying and entertaining novel.

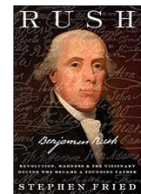
<u>Lost and Wanted</u>	Freudenberger, Nell	*****	<u>6/10/19</u>	<p>Friendship. In her novel titled, <u>Lost and Wanted</u>, Nell Freudenberger gives readers one of the most interesting protagonists in fiction. Helen Clapp is a tenured physics professor at MIT. Her longtime friend and Harvard roommate, Charlotte (Charlie) Boyce, a Hollywood screenwriter, has just died. After Helen receives phone calls from Charlie's phone, the rational persona of Helen becomes a bit shaken. Packed with science and insight, the novel is a story of friendship and love set around a strong and accomplished woman. The prose is finely written and fans of literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p>	
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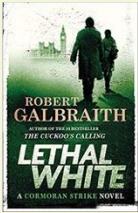
[Rush: Revolution, Madness, and Benjamin Rush, the Visionary Doctor Who Became a Founding Father](#)

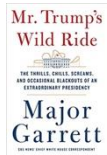
Fried, Stephen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.


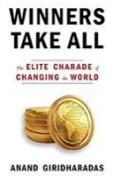
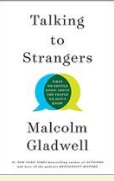



<u>Lethal White</u>	Galbraith, Robert	*****	<u>7/26/19</u>	<p>Falling. There's a lot of falling in the fourth Cormoran Strike novel by J.K. Rowling writing as Robert Galbraith, a novel titled, <u>Lethal White</u>. After every falling, there's getting up again. Protagonists Strike and Robin Ellacott are both developed more in this installment and the tension in their relationships adds to the pleasure of the novel. Fans of the Harry Potter series know that Rowling tells great stories with interesting characters and engaging plots. The Strike series reflects similar elements and I</p>	
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<p><u>Mr. Trump's Wild Ride: The Thrills, Chills, Screams, and Occasional Blackouts of an Extraordinary Presidency</u></p>	<p>Garrett, Major</p>	<p>****</p>	<p>was thoroughly entertained by the 650 pages of this novel.</p> <p>Curated. I really didn't want to read journalist Major Garrett's book titled, <u>Mr. Trump's Wild Ride: The Thrills, Chills, Screams, and Occasional Blackouts of an Extraordinary Presidency</u>. First, I lived through the early Trump Presidency and I have paid attention, so why do I need someone's rehash? Second, I read enough in newspapers and periodicals about Trump, so why should I bother reading this book? Third, we may need distance, more time, to process what has been important or a distraction during this period. Once I started reading this book, I began to appreciate the benefit in reading a curated first draft of how history may consider the early part of the Trump Presidency. Garrett skillfully sidesteps the distractions and selects what he considers the matters of most significance. History may prove Garrett right or wrong in his take, but this reader liked getting perspective from a talented journalist who's been in the scrum all the way through.</p>	
<p><u>The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World</u></p>	<p>Gates Melinda</p>	<p>*****</p>	<p>Lessons. One path to improving life around the world is to respect women, listen to them, and support them in improving their local communities. Melinda Gates shares in her book titled, <u>The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World</u>, snippets of her own life and the lessons she's learned from philanthropic work. This book is packed with inspiring stories to encourage empathy and enough data to please skeptics. I found the ways in which hard questions and analysis combined with active listening at the</p>	

				ground level lead to contributions that produce great outcomes. This book promotes inclusion, acknowledging the dignity of each person, and acting in ways that nurture all that is good.	
<u>Wit's End: What Wit Is, How It Works, and Why We Need It</u>	Geary, James	*****	<u>1/9/19</u>	<p>Showing. Witty readers are those most likely to enjoy James Geary's creative ways of demonstrating wit in his book titled, <u>Wit's End: What Wit Is, How It Works, and Why We Need It</u>. Instead of telling readers all about wit and analyzing it, he shows us what wit looks like in various forms. I found this book to be quick to read and I appreciated the author's cleverness.</p>	
<u>There Will Be No Miracles Here</u>	Gerald, Casey	*****	<u>9/24/19</u>	<p>Perspective. Some memoirs provide vanity bragging about one's life. Casey Gerald takes a different perspective for his memoir titled, <u>There Will Be No Miracles Here</u>. He asks us to stand next to him while we look together at the world around him. By the time he brings us into a dream, readers have become used to seeing everything with Gerald. Often, I found myself releasing what I expected and appreciating the perspective that Gerald writes about with such great skill. Do a search for his TED talk titled, The Gospel of Doubt. That will give interested readers a great introduction to Gerald and prepare one for standing with him and examining the world in which he and we have been living.</p>	
<u>A Terrible Country</u>	Gessen, Keith	*****	<u>2/21/19</u>	<p>Moscow. I was thoroughly entertained by Keith Gessen's novel titled, <u>A Terrible Country</u>. Andrei Kaplan's prospects for work and love in New York have diminished, so he jumps at the chance to spend a few months in the city of his birth, Moscow, caring for his grandmother. Gradually, he understands why</p>	

his grandmother refers to Russia with the phrase that is the title of the novel. There's hockey, activists, and a great novel here for your reading pleasure.

<u>Happiness As Such</u>	Ginsburg, Natalia	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World</u>	Giridharadas, Anand	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know</u>	Gladwell, Malcolm	*****	<u>10/15/19</u>	Structure. In his new book titled, <u>Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know</u> , Malcolm Gladwell uses a structure that has entertained readers of his earlier books. He takes a sociological nugget, in this case our inability to detect truth or deception when we encounter strangers. He selects an example, tells a story, then builds his case with multiple ways of looking at the issue. I listened to the audiobook which contains special features that come across as a mix of podcast and text. As always, Gladwell is observant, thoughtful and knows how to engage readers.	
<u>The Chateau</u>	Goldberg, Paul	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

<u>Leadership: In Turbulent Times</u>	Goodwin, Doris Kearns	*****	<div> <div>3/6/19</div> <div> Context. Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin knows how to present history to general readers: tell great stories to support key points and provide context for the time periods and people. She's spent decades of her life researching and writing about four American Presidents who she calls "her guys:" Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson. In her book titled, <u>Leadership: In Turbulent Times</u>, she uses the lens of leadership to examine the context in which these four men acquired the ability to help the country achieve great things. The presidents come alive through her writing and we understand their humanity and complexity. Their formative experiences in life, especially their struggles, provide them with the mettle to do a great job at leading a country through crisis. Readers who love history that's entertaining to read should consider reading this terrific book. </div> </div>	
<u>A Thousand Small Sanities</u>	Gopnik, Adam	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>On Thomas Merton</u>	Gordon, Mary	****	<div> <div>12/20/19</div> <div> Writers. Most of my impressions of Thomas Merton were set in place fifty years ago, when I first read his works and read about him. Since that time, I've read him from time to time, and even listened to a recording of a retreat he gave to some nuns using "modern" technology: tape recordings he made in the Abbey of Gethsemane and mailed to the nuns. When I saw that the writer Mary Gordon has approached Merton from the perspective of his seven volumes of journals and the totality </div> </div>	

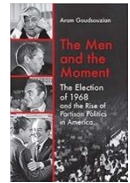
			<p>of his writing, my interest in Merton was renewed. Thanks to Gordon and her finely written book titled, On Thomas Merton, I understand Thomas Merton better as a person, as a writer, and the struggles he faced as a Trappist monk. I found one interesting tidbit that I had not expected to read. Merton's superiors in the Trappist community pressured him to publish as a source of community revenue, and that pressure didn't play well with his struggles to reveal himself through his writing. Thanks to Gordon's empathy with the struggles of a writer, readers can understand Merton's life in new ways.</p>	
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[The Men and the Moment: The Election of 1968 and the Rise of Partisan Politics in America](#)

Goudsouzian, Aram

[10/15/19](#)

Roots. Fans of recent American history are those readers most likely to enjoy the brisk examination of the election of 1968 by University of Memphis professor Aram Goudsouzian in a book titled, [The Men and the Moment: The Election of 1968 and the Rise of Partisan Politics in America](#). He structures the book into chapters featuring the major contenders in the presidential election. Goudsouzian reveals the roots of our current political divide in the people and events of 1968. He captures the essence of the personalities of the key players and offers a text accessible to any general reader.



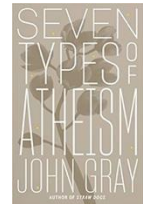
The Infinite Blacktop	Gran, Sara	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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[Seven Types of Atheism](#)

Gray, John

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Shelf of Ennui 2019.



[The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve](#)

Greenblatt, Stephen

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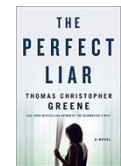


[The Perfect Liar](#)

Greene, Thomas Christopher

[3/6/19](#)

Chilling. Fans of thrillers will enjoy the characters and plot of the latest novel by Thomas Christopher Greene titled, [The Perfect Liar](#). Protagonists Susannah and Max have moved from Manhattan to rural Vermont with her fifteen-year-old son. There are secrets that Susannah and Max keep from each other, and someone seems on the brink of revealing a secret to the world. Greene keeps the tension taut throughout the fewer than three hundred pages of this novel. I'm not often surprised by the time the climax occurs, but this one caught me, and I couldn't be more pleased with that.

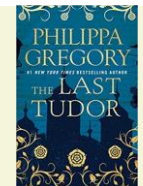


[The Last Tudor](#)

Gregory, Philippa

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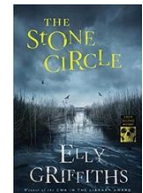


[The Stone Circle](#)


Griffiths, Elly

[9/3/19](#)

Digging. The eleventh Ruth Galloway mystery by Elly Griffiths is a novel titled, [The Stone Circle](#). Both Ruth and DCI Nelson receive letters that remind them of a person important in their past who they assume is dead. Fans of the series will make many connections from earlier novels, while first-



time readers (like me) may be a bit confused by what's really going on. Bones are dug up and identification leads to reopening a cold case. Meanwhile, life in the present takes many dramatic shifts for both Ruth and Nelson whose ties seem to endure against all odds. Fans of character-driven crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.

<u>The Guardians</u>	Grisham, John	*****	<u>11/21/19</u>	<p>Innocence. Most readers know that John Grisham can tell one hell of a story that will engage a reader from the beginning to the end of a book. In his legal thriller titled, <u>The Guardians</u>, the focus is on what it takes to release the innocent from prison. Protagonist Cullen Post is a lawyer working for a group called Guardian Ministries that operates on a shoestring. He's also an Episcopal priest and uses the dog collar judiciously in his prison work. Guardian accepts just a few cases at a time, and Grisham pulls readers into how Post and the group get prisoners released. As expected with Grisham, there's tension, action and great satisfaction in the story being told. After you finish reading this novel, consider making a contribution to one of the groups that does this work pro bono. They need help and there are plenty more true stories like the ones made up in this book.</p>	
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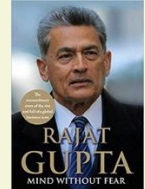
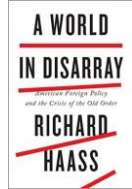
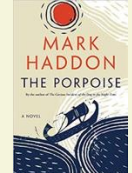
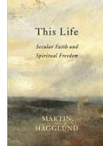
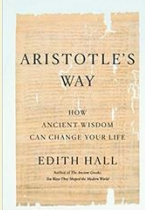
[In Our Mad and Furious City](#)

Gunaratne, Guy

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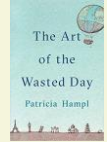
<u>Mind Without Fear</u>	Gupta, Rajat	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A World in Disarray : American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order</u>	Haass, Richard	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Porpoise</u>	Haddon, Mark	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>This Life: Secular Faith and Spiritual Freedom</u>	Hägglund, Martin	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Aristotle's Way: How Ancient Wisdom Can Change Your Life</u>	Hall, Edith	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	


The Parisian Hammad, Isabella ***** 5/9/19

Nablus. Fiction can help readers understand life in a time and place especially through an intense focus on one character's life. In her debut novel titled, The Parisian, Isabella Hammad tells us about life in Nablus, Palestine in the early 20th century. Protagonist Midhat Kamal is the son of a wealthy merchant and attains the moniker in the title after his father sent him to study medicine in Paris in 1914. Midhat finds a



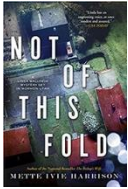


different Nablus after he returns from Paris: British occupation and activists pressing for nationalism. Midhat's life doesn't turn out as he or others expected. Neither has Palestine. Here's one of my favorite lines from late in the novel: p. 547: "When I look at my life," he said, "I see a whole list of mistakes. Lovely, beautiful mistakes. I wouldn't change them."

<u>The Art of the Wasted Day</u>	Hampl, Patricia	****	<u>6/24/19</u>	<p>Leisure. How unscheduled is your life? How much do you go with the flow? Do you daydream much? Is leisure for you a set of structured recreational activities or is it a period of being totally carefree? In her book titled, <u>The Art of the Wasted Day</u>, Patricia Hampl explores leisure and takes readers into episodes from her life, as well as stories from the lives of Michel Montaigne, Gregor Mendel and others. We can discover a lot about ourselves and others when we get off the beaten path mentally and physically and lose ourselves in thought and in the places we go.</p>	
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<u>Bottle Grove</u>	Handler, Daniel	***	<u>9/13/19</u>	<p>Monsters. There be monsters in Daniel Handler's novel titled, <u>Bottle Grove</u>. The beasts are often human, despite the presence of foxes, including a human one named Reynard. Handler uses the tech environment of San Francisco as the backdrop for this comic dark view of contemporary life and marriage. There's love and greed, and a lot of clunky prose on these pages. Every reader open to reflecting about the forces inside and outside us that bring us together or tear us apart will find something to appreciate from this novel.</p>	
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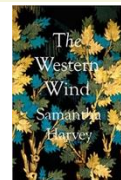
<u>Red Birds</u>	Hanif, Mohammed	****	<u>6/18/19</u>	<p>Weary. The darkly comic war satire titled, <u>Red Birds</u>, by Mohammed Hanif uses multiple narrators to move the story along quickly. Readers weary of our seeming never-ending wars may become even wearier after reading this novel. Major Ellie is an American bomber pilot who bailed out of his plane, parachuted to the desert where he is wandering and lost for eight days. His narration speaks to the foibles of American military intervention. Ellie is found by another narrator, the dog named Mutt, whose observations are the most cogent and philosophical in the novel. It is Mutt who gives us the title, as he observes the last blood drops of those killed in war turning into birds as they die. A teenage boy named Momo narrates the many personas he tries on from his refugee camp as he strives to become an entrepreneur, especially where he sees the most to gain: from warfare and refugee aid. Hanif's prose is skewering, and those readers who can appreciate finely written satire are the readers most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
<u>Fifty Inventions That Shaped the Modern Economy</u>	Harford, Tim	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression – and the Unexpected Solutions</u>	Hari, Johann	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	


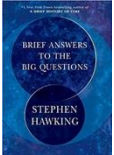
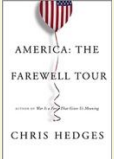
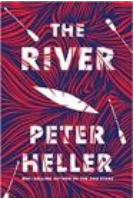
<u>The Lost Man</u>	Harper, Jane	****	<u>6/10/19</u>	<p>Desolate. The outback of Queensland Australia can be a desolate place. In her novel titled, <u>The Lost Man</u>, Jane Harper draws readers into the setting with fine descriptive language, then hooks us with her psychological insights into the family dynamics of three brothers raised in that harsh and unforgiving place. The story involves the mysterious death of one of the brothers. Readers who enjoy surprise endings are those most likely to enjoy this one.</p>	
<u>The Truths We Hold: An American Journey</u>	Harris, Kamala	****	<u>2/21/19</u>	<p>Unity. We're in that time cycle when anyone thinking of or actually running for President of the United States has a book to make a pitch to a small segment of the electorate who read such books. Since I'm one of those readers, and open to hearing a pitch, I read Kamala Harris' book titled, <u>The Truths We Hold: An American Journey</u>. Over the course of over three hundred pages, Harris tells her of her childhood as the daughter of immigrants, her lifelong passion for justice, and the many ways in which she has served the public through various roles. Her pitch is that she is the person who can lead us toward unity through a focus on what we share in common. Even if you are cautious when faced with someone telling you what truth is, consider reading this novel to get to know one of the candidates running for President in 2020.</p>	
<u>Not of this Fold</u>	Harrison, Mettie Ivie	***	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Immigrants. The fourth installment in the Linda Wallheim series by Mettie Ivie Harrison is a novel titled, <u>Not of this Fold</u>. Linda finds herself caught up in what's happening in the "Spanish ward" and gets herself and her husband, Kurt, in some hot</p>	

water with the Mormon power structure. Harrison explores issues of immigration and alienation in this novel and moves along the development of the Wallheim family presented in earlier novels. Fans of the series are those readers most likely to enjoy this installment.

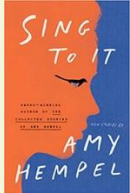

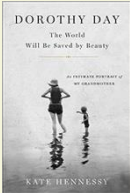
Pulse	Harvey, Michael	****	3/26/19	<p>Creepy. Those who have read previous novels by Michael Harvey know that he can really tell a good story. In his novel titled, Pulse, Harvey takes us back to Boston in the 1970s. His prose brings to life the rawness of the Combat Zone and the racial tensions in the city. We get a crime story with murder, bad cops, and enough foul language to last the year. We also get the creepiest protagonist in a long time, sixteen-year-old orphan Daniel Fitzsimmons. His landlord explores with Daniel how the mind can use energy to send pulses to others to push them in desired ways. Daniel tries the technique on his girlfriend with humorous results. The creepy part comes from what seems to be Daniel's foreknowledge of events. There's something for any eclectic reader in this novel: fascinating characters, thrilling action, crimes, and an otherworldly something. Maybe Harvey will set his next novel back in Chicago where everything is normal.</p>	
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[The Western Wind](#) Harvey, Samantha Unread Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>Grace Will Lead Us Home: The Charleston Church Massacre and the Hard, Inspiring Journey to Forgiveness</u>	Hawes, Jennifer Berry	*****	9/3/19	<p>Ongoing. For most citizens, the tragedy at Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015 was one more in a series of violent episodes in recent years. Thanks to a finely written book by Jennifer Berry Hawes, titled, <u>Grace Will Lead Us Home: The Charleston Church Massacre and the Hard, Inspiring Journey to Forgiveness</u>, interested readers can understand the context and aftermath more thoroughly. The survivors and their families have stories that Hawes tells with great skill, and there are issues with Mother Emanuel church that I didn't know about until I read this book. Fans of Charleston will appreciate the ways in which this book tells the story of how this fine community has engaged in a long healing process.</p>	
<u>Brief Answers to the Big Questions</u>	Hawking, Stephen	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>America: The Farewell Tour</u>	Hedges, Chris	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The River</u>	Heller, Peter	****	5/28/19	<p>Wilderness. I consider cities and sidewalks to be my natural habitat and try to spend as little time as possible any place that might be considered wilderness. I can visit remote places vicariously in novels like the one by Peter Heller titled, <u>The River</u>. Friends since college, Wynn and Jack are on a carefree canoe trip on a river in northern Canada. Both feel at home in the wilderness and have the competence to handle whatever comes their</p>	

way. Heller injects tension early in this well-told story and maintains a thrilling pace over two hundred and fifty pages as he describes a fight for survival against imminent threats to life. I'm less likely than ever to take a wilderness trip after reading this exciting novel.

<u>Sing To It</u>	Hempel, Amy	***	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Voice. Amy Hempel presents readers with an eclectic range of fifteen short stories in a collection titled, <u>Sing To It</u>. Some of the stories are very short and still complete. With great economy, she can capture emotion using just the right words. Her voice can come across as odd and a bit quirky, which may distract some readers. You can find laughter and pain in sentences that follow each other and feel that juxtaposition is perfect. The longest story, Cloudland, surrenders economy for taking us to many places and to different emotions with depth and insight. Fans of finely written literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy the stories in this collection.</p>	
<u>Suicide Club</u>	Heng, Rachel	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Dorothy Day: The World Will Be Saved by Beauty: An Intimate Portrait of My Grandmother</u>	Hennessy, Kate	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

[Joe Country](#)

Herron, Mick

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

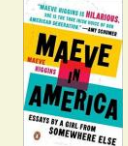


[Maeve in America: Essays by a Girl from Somewhere Else](#)

Higgins, Helen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

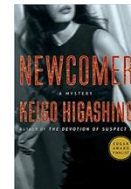


[Newcomer](#)

Higoshiro, Keigo

[11/9/19](#)

Details. Tokyo detective Kyoichiro Kaga claims a well-earned place among the great fictional detectives. In the second novel titled, [Newcomer](#), in this series by Keigo Higoshiro, Kaga has been assigned to a new precinct. Even before he's assigned his first case, Kaga walks through the neighborhood getting to know people and places, constantly noticing things. Thanks to the details that Kaga pays attention to, he unravels the secrets that solve a murder case. Fans of character-based crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.



[Ruskinland: How John Ruskin Shapes Our World](#)

Hill, Andrew

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



[Full Throttle](#)

Hill, Joe

[11/14/19](#)

Variety. I love reading a short story collection with a wide range of settings, and the baker's dozen in the collection titled, [Full Throttle](#), by Joe Hill suited my taste perfectly. There are a few new stories in this collection; most have been published over the past decade or so. Hill succeeds in each of those stories by tapping into some part of human nature and revealing it. Always interesting and imaginative, the stories kept me engaged



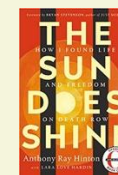
[The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life, Freedom, and Justice](#)

Hinton, Anthony Ray

[9/24/19](#)

for almost a fortnight as I doled out one story a day. Any reader who loves short fiction should consider reading this collection.

Inspiring. A friend couldn't believe that I hadn't read Anthony Ray Hinton's memoir titled, [The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life, Freedom, and Justice](#), so I picked up this inspiring story and am glad I did. Hinton describes his life as a poor black man in the South who finds himself sentenced to death. How he finds hope from that dark place, and how three decades of incarceration transformed his life and the lives of a community of inmates, occupies much of the narrative. By the time he achieves justice for his mistaken imprisonment, most readers will share Hinton's joy and feel renewed hope in the hope and endurance of the individual human spirit.



[The Bride Test](#)

Hoang, Helen

[6/24/19](#)

Breakthrough. The protagonists in Helen Hoang's novel titled, [The Bride Test](#), both need to change their lives. Khai Diep falls on the high functioning end of the autism spectrum. He succeeds at work in California and fails at relationships. Esme Tran wants to be more than a hotel maid in Vietnam. After Khai's mother travels to Vietnam to find a potential bride for Khai, she convinces Esme that the young woman had nothing to lose in coming to America to see if there's a future there for her. Hoang writes from her personal perspective of what life on the autism spectrum is like and offers in this novel a sweet romantic story about the breakthroughs that are necessary in any life to lead to dramatic change. Readers who finish the novel are likely to close the book with a smile.



[The World That We Knew](#)

Hoffman, Alice

10/15/19

Morality. Alice Hoffman explores the forces of good and evil in her novel titled, [The World That We Knew](#). Surrounded by the forces of evil, but unable to escape Berlin in 1941, a mother struggles to protect her twelve-year-old daughter. Our world can turn upside down in an instant and evil can seem victorious. Love can survive loss and even in dire situations, the power of love can prevail. Hoffman's prose is finely written, the character development complex and interesting, and the exploration of morality unblinking at both goodness and evil.



[I Think You're Wrong \(But I'm Listening\): A Guide to Grace-Filled Political Conversations](#)

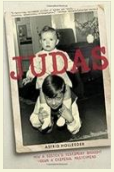
Holland, Sarah
Stewart and Beth A.
Sillers

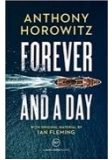
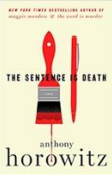
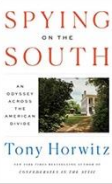
9/13/19

Nuance. Political differences can divide families, churches, workplaces, and neighbors. Polarization has led many of us toward tribalism and to using shorthand that concludes that my team is all good and the other team is all bad. As a balm to heal any wounds from this polarization and a guide to moving ahead, consider reading a finely written and practical book by Sarah Holland (from the left) and Beth Silvers (from the right) titled, [I Think You're Wrong \(But I'm Listening\): A Guide to Grace-Filled Political Conversations](#). Drawn on their personal relationship in exploring areas of difference on their weekly podcast, *Pantsuit Politics*. Holland and Silvers recognize that issues are often nuanced and can't be summarized in a talking point. When we respect others, we listen to them, and when we choose to be gentle and patient, good things follow. The status quo in polarization is creating strangers and we can do better. When we listen and find values we hold in common, we can move



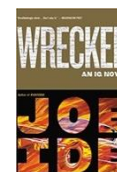
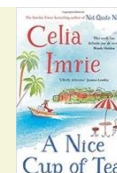

beyond the divisions toward healing and acting in ways that serve the common good.

<u>Judas: How a Sister's Testimony Brought Down a Criminal Mastermind</u>	Holleeder, Astrid	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Comedy Sex God</u>	Holmes, Pete	*****	<u>8/5/19</u>	<p>Journey. The title of Pete Holmes' book, <u>Comedy Sex God</u>, tells the truth about the three topics covered inside. When I first saw the cover, I thought the first two words of the title were adjectives. Not so. Pete tells us about his life in comedy, his experience with sex in ways that will amuse many readers, and his journey toward finding God in his life. All of our lives are meandering journeys in one way or another. Pete was raised as an evangelical Christian and that influenced greatly his coming of age sexually. Later in his life after he abandoned his religious roots, he rediscovered his spiritual life thanks to Ram Dass. As most readers would expect from a standup comedian, a lot of the stories in this book are hilarious. There's sincerity in his spiritual quest that will resonate for fellow pilgrims on that journey.</p>	
<u>The Pandemic Century: One Hundred Years of Panic, Hysteria, and Hubris</u>	Honigsbaum, Mark	*****	<u>7/3/19</u>	<p>Lessons. While I was reading Mark Honigsbaum finely written book titled, <u>The Pandemic Century: One Hundred Years of Panic, Hysteria, and Hubris</u>, there were news stories about people vacationing in the Dominican Republic dying of unknown causes, and a woman who died from a flesh eating bacteria that found an open cut on her leg while she was walking at the beach. Honigsbaum chronicles pathogens most readers have heard about, and the spread of</p>	

				<p>them in well-known events including the deadly 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic, and events I knew nothing about, like the 1930 pneumonic plague in Los Angeles and parrot fever. If you think we've learned lessons from the twentieth century, you should definitely read this book.</p>	
Forever and a Day	Horowitz, Anthony	*****	1/9/19	<p>Origin. Fans of James Bond 007 are those readers most likely to enjoy reading the new prequel to Casino Royale, a novel by Anthony Horowitz titled, Forever and a Day. I especially enjoyed the focus that Horowitz has on the origins of Bond's work as 007. We see where his cigarette case came from, and his preference for martinis. We learn the test that Bond had to pass to become 007 and what his first case entailed. It's clear that Horowitz had fun being true to Ian Fleming and to the character of Bond, and I know I had fun reading this installment in the series.</p>	
The Sentence is Death	Horowitz, Anthony	*****	6/18/19	<p>Hawthorne. Anthony Horowitz reprises protagonist Daniel Hawthorne for a second mystery novel titled, The Sentence is Death. As the character Anthony Horowitz in this novel is writing about private eye Daniel Hawthorne, they are investigating the murder of a divorce lawyer in which the weapon was a pricey bottle of French wine. Horowitz gives readers an entertaining cast of interesting characters, a clever mystery, and just enough plot twists to keep a reader's attention.</p>	
Spying on the South: An Odyssey Across the American Divide	Horowitz, Tony	*****	6/18/19	<p>Olmstead. Renowned American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead spent over a year traveling through the South before the Civil War and wrote about his observations for a New York newspaper. In his book titled, Spying on the South: An Odyssey Across the</p>	

<u>Only Killers and Thieves</u>	Howarth, Paul	*****	<p><u>12/20/19</u></p> <p>American Divide. Tony Horwitz followed Olmstead's route, connecting divisions from the past with current polarization. People and places, past and present, come alive in this book, thanks to Horwitz' fine writing.</p> <p>Survival. Paul Howarth's debut novel, <u>Only Killers and Thieves</u>, takes readers into frontier life in late 19th century Australia. Teenagers Tommy and Billy McBride are forced to grow up quickly when violence and tragedy enters their young lives. Life in an unforgiving landscape is an ongoing battle for survival, and the boys choose to follow different paths in life. Howarth writes with great skill, bringing the setting to life and developing each character with insight into the complexity of human nature and the bonds of relationships.</p>	
<u>Great Risks Had to be Taken: The Jesuit Response to the Second Vatican Council, 1958-2018</u>	Howell, Patrick J.	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Adults</u>	Hulse, Caroline	*****	<p><u>11/9/19</u></p> <p>Foibles. Parts of my funny bones were tickled in just the right ways by Caroline Hulse's debut novel titled, <u>The Adults</u>. Matt and Claire are the divorced parents of seven-year-old Scarlett, and they decide that the best Christmas holiday for Scarlett would be to spend it with both her parents and their current partners, Alex with Matt and Patrick with Claire, at a resort called Happy Forest. What could possibly go wrong when the exes come together with their significant others? They are all adults. One thing happens early in the novel: someone is shot with an arrow.</p>	

			<p>That's not in the Christmas spirit. The sixth member of the holiday party is Scarlett's invisible big purple rabbit, Posey, whose opinions fill Scarlett's head. The foibles of these individuals bring the characters to life, but their predicament can often seem slapstick. Readers looking for some humorous distraction should consider reading this novel.</p>	
Out of the Dark	Hurwitz, Gregg	****	<p><u>7/3/19</u></p> <p>Survival. The fourth Orphan X novel by Gregg Hurwitz is titled, Out of the Dark. Someone in government with a lot of power is taking action to eliminate everyone involved in the Orphan Program. Protagonist Evan Smoak, Orphan X, now known as the Nowhere Man, knows exactly who's behind this effort, and decides to take that person out. This fight involves two opponents with vastly different resources and capabilities. Hurwitz maintains tension throughout a fast-paced plot. Readers who enjoy thrillers are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p>	
Go Ask Fannie	Hyde, Elizabeth	****	<p><u>3/26/19</u></p> <p>Secrets. Each of us is an observer and participant in family dynamics. Sometimes fiction can help us observe family relationships in other people whose nature is just as human as ours and can lead to insight. In her novel titled, Go Ask Fannie, Elizabeth Hyde presents us with a dad, 81-year-old Murray Blaire, and his adult children, Ruth, George and Lizzie gathered together on Murray's farm for a weekend. Gradually, we learn about two other Blaires: a wife and mom, Lillian, and a son and brother, Daniel. Family secrets are at the core of this novel, and the power of the past to be ever-present.</p>	

				Readers looking for a little distance from one's own family dynamics can spend a few enjoyable hours with the Blaire family and all of their dysfunction.	
<u>Wrecked</u>	Ide, Joe	****	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Threats. The third installment in Joe Ide's IQ series is a novel titled, <u>Wrecked</u>. This time out, Isaiah Quintabe, IQ, seems more established in his private investigator business. That feeling of comfort leaves quickly as IQ gets in trouble, and finds himself in the crosshairs of the man who killed his brother, Marcus. IQ isn't working alone and has found a new love interest. Readers who enjoy well-written character-based crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p>	
<u>A Nice Cup of Tea</u>	Imrie, Celia	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>I Might Regret This: Essays, Drawings, Vulnerabilities, and Other Stuff</u>	Jacobson, Abbi	***	<u>3/18/19</u>	<p>Anxieties. Fans of Comedy Central's series, Broad Street, are those readers most likely to enjoy reading co-star Abbi Jacobson's book titled, <u>I Might Regret This: Essays, Drawings, Vulnerabilities, and Other Stuff</u>. This creative artist writes with humor and quirkiness, revealing lots of her anxieties and issues. Failing to sleep in hotel rooms during a roadtrip, bagels she's loved, and love woes are all fodder for Jacobson's reflections. She even includes some of her artwork. Whether she regrets making herself vulnerable through this work is something left unaddressed, as the title indicates.</p>	

<u>Live a Little</u>	Jacobson, Howard	****	<p><u>10/15/19</u></p> <p>Joy. I defy any reader of Howard Jacobson's novel titled, <u>Live a Little</u>, to come away from the book without a feeling of joy. Protagonists Shimi and Beryl are nonagenarians who are approaching the end of life while giving a new loving relationship one more try. Beryl has a sharp word for everybody and enjoys every volley she sends to people nearby. Shimi's popularity among the widows of his cohort doesn't bring him pleasure. He prefers practicing cartomancy at the Chinese restaurant when he's not ruminating about his past. Jacobson brings these opposite types together and encourages them to do what the title of the novel says. My heart was touched by this novel and I laughed and smiled a lot while reading it.</p>	
<u>Cheer Up Mr. Widdicombe</u>	James, Evan	***	<p><u>12/9/19</u></p> <p>Class. Readers with an appetite for wit and satire should consider reading Evan James' debut novel titled, <u>Cheer Up Mr. Widdicombe</u>. The cast of characters face first world problems that apply specifically to the most affluent among us. If Bernie Sanders read this book, he'd be likely to say, "What the hell is wrong with these people?" The title refers to the message to paterfamilias Frank Widdicombe who is bummed that his annual excursion with buddies to France has been scuttled. Readers who are wont to use "summer" as a verb, and you know who you are, are those most likely to see themselves and friends described with pithiness in this novel. Readers who don't summer in an exclusive setting can pick up this novel and glimpse over the walls of class privilege but might be hard pressed to appreciate the humor.</p>	

[Black Leopard, Red Wolf](#)

James, Marlon

[4/4/19](#)

Nose. Talented writer Marlon James opens his Dark Star Trilogy with a novel titled, [Black Leopard, Red Wolf](#). Before a reader opens page one, you should consider the consequences of beginning to read what will be three novels: a commitment to lots and lots of pages. Once you start on this reading adventure, James will pull you into stories from African history and mythology while creating a fantasy world that will consume your time and attention for many hours. Once James presented the character, Tracker, whose nose allows him to find people by following their scents, I was hooked. Once on board, the adventure took me to strange and unfamiliar places, to violence and intense sexuality. The bulk of this first novel is the journey of the nose named Tracker and his search for a missing boy. James empties his imagination with the creatures Tracker encounters on this journey. I felt myself in good hands with Marlon James as he made a world in which I became intrigued, interested and eventually caring. James is a master of voice, and while in this installment the world we see is from Tracker's perspective, the next novel may offer a different voice, another point of view. I look forward to it. After all, I've become hooked.

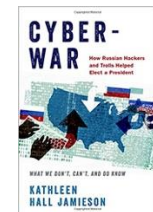


[Cyberwar: How Russian Hackers and Trolls Helped Elect a President What We Don't, Can't, and Do Know](#)

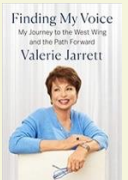
Jamieson, Kathleen Hall


[4/25/19](#)

Sobering. University of Pennsylvania professor Kathleen Hall Jamieson presents a scholarly approach for general readers in her book titled, [Cyberwar: How Russian Hackers and Trolls Helped Elect a President What We Don't, Can't, and Do Know](#). This is a sobering account of all the who, what, how and why from 2016, along with an assessment of how




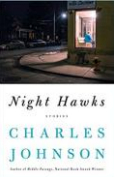
unprepared we are for waging the ongoing Cyberwar. Whether the Mueller Report answered your questions or not about the 2016 Presidential election, Jamieson's book will be of interest to all readers concerned about public affairs and our cyber vulnerabilities.


<u>Finding My Voice: My Journey to the West Wing and the Path Forward</u>	Jarrett, Valerie	****	Optimistic. Valerie Jarrett's memoir titled, <u>Finding My Voice: My Journey to the West Wing and the Path Forward</u> , offers a story of her life that's so conversational that many readers will feel like they are sharing a meal with the author. Jarrett is both confident and self-aware, so she tells us about her life in ways that will connect to a reader's own life experiences. Her extraordinary accomplishments in public service and friendship with the Obamas come across as relatable to our own friendships and our accomplishments, no matter what those are. The tone throughout the memoir is optimistic, and it's clear by the end that anyone who can claim Valerie Jarrett as a friend has lived an enriched life because of her presence.	
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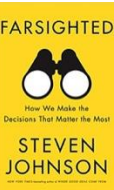
<u>The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Bai</u>	Jin, Ha	****	Poet. Thanks to his fine writing, Ha Jin kept me engaged in his biography titled, <u>The Banished Immortal: A Life of Li Bai</u> . Li Bai lived during the Tang dynasty, in the early part of the eighth century. Readers get to learn about the poet through his poems as well as through the clear description of his life as described by Ha Jin. Since the poet enjoyed many a tippie during his life, I strongly encourage a glass or two of some alcohol while reading this book. When you hear about his drinking exploits, you'll be more	
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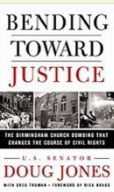
empathetic. Then read a poem and go to sleep.

<u>Treeborne</u>	Johnson, Caleb	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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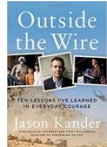
<u>Night Hawks</u>	Johnson, Charles	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Everything Under</u>	Johnson, Daisy	*****	<u>8/27/19</u>	<p>River. Readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction should consider Daisy Johnson's debut novel titled, <u>Everything Under</u>. Give yourself over to the flow of Johnson's prose as she meanders like a river while updating the story of Oedipus to a modern setting. While reading the novel, I was often confused and uncertain about where the story was and where it might be going. Johnson's prose kept me patient and spending time with her on this journey of words was rewarding, if only to remind me to be patient.</p>	
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<u>Farsighted</u>	Johnson, Steven	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Bending Toward Justice: The Birmingham Church Bombing that Changed the Course of Civil Rights</u>	Jones, Doug	*****	<u>5/9/19</u>	<p>Hope. It took decades for the victims of the 1963 bombing at a Birmingham church to get justice. The junior senator from Alabama, Doug Jones, tells this story with vivid prose in his book titled, <u>Bending Toward Justice: The Birmingham Church Bombing that Changed the Course of Civil Rights</u>. Jones was involved</p>	
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			<p>in the case in a major way as a US Attorney in 2001 and 2002. Homegrown terrorism is not a recent phenomenon. Jones takes us into life in Alabama in the 1960s and after, and he leads us down the long road that ended with justice.</p> <p>Poetic. The memoir titled, <u>How We Fight for Our Lives</u>, by Saeed Jones describes a young life that may bear no resemblance to the experience of most readers. That's exactly one of the good reasons to pick up this book and enter into the experience of someone whose life has been different from our own. Another good reason is that Jones' prose is finely written, influenced by his poetry, and packed with candor. This examination of a life is reflective and disarming. Jones writes about many relationships that are fraught with drama, stress, even danger, but the memoir turns warm when he writes about his mother.</p>	
<u>How We Fight for Our Lives</u>	Jones, Saeed	*****	<u>11/14/19</u>	
<u>Enemy of the People: Trump's War on the Press, the New McCarthyism, and the Threat to American Democracy</u>	Kalb, Marvin	*****	<u>3/18/19</u>	

			democracy and its threats should consider reading this measured comparison of our current situation to the ideals we hold.	
<u>Outside the Wire: Ten Lessons I've Learned in Everyday Courage</u>	Kander, Jason	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The White Book</u>	Kang, Han	*****	<u>8/15/19</u> Meditation. Take a breath. Relax. Feel your heart rate drop. Listen to your regular breathing. Once you've reached a calm rhythm, open a copy of Han Kang's novel titled, <u>The White Book</u> , and calmly mediate with her as she riffs on the color white and explores loss and grief. Let your own memories become triggered by this prose and remember in a gentle way. As all the white images drift by, reflect on the fragility of life. Let the words of this finely written book reach you deeply. If any of that sounds like time well spent, by all means read this book.	
<u>The Accomplish</u>	Kanon, Joseph	*****	<u>12/16/19</u> Betrayal. There's a quest for justice at the heart of Joseph Kanon's novel titled, <u>The Accomplish</u> . Protagonist Aaron Wiley picks up the trail of a Nazi war criminal in South America and faces challenges in achieving justice. Aaron may not be able to proceed the way his Uncle Max desired before he died, and wonders if he is betraying his uncle. The criminal's daughter faces choices of loyalty and betrayal as well. With fine writing and great psychological insight, Kanon offers readers an engaging and complicated story about human behavior and the choices we make.	

[She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement](#)

Kantor, Jodi and Megan Twohey

[11/21/19](#)

Process. Investigative journalists Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey describe in their book titled, [She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement](#), the process they followed in revealing sexual harassment by Harvey Weinstein. Most of us are aware of the outline of their story, and this book shows how the story was built one interview at a time, and one research investigation at a time. Whether you think you know a lot or a little about the job of a journalist, this book shows what the work entails, and uses a prominent story as a way to reveal the hard work and diligence it takes to run down a story, as well as the resources required and the willingness to follow the story wherever it goes. In the case of the authors, they had the full support of *The New York Times* as they carried out their work. I was amazed at the efforts Weinstein took to kill their story. I strongly recommend reading this finely written book and then subscribing to quality periodicals that generate the resources to pursue stories effectively.

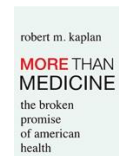


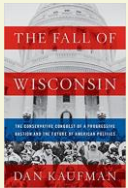
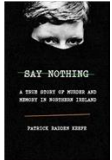
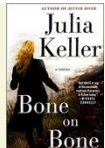
[More Than Medicine: The Broken Promise of American Health](#)

Kaplan, Robert M.

[7/3/19](#)

Evidence. Any reader interested in the subject of healthcare in the United States should consider reading Robert Kaplan's book titled, [More Than Medicine: The Broken Promise of American Health](#). Kaplan's premise is that it's time to rethink healthcare. Instead of overspending as we do in attacking disease after it arrives, we should invest in reducing the occurrence of disease. He calls on those setting public policy to respect the evidence and take actions that foster health.



<u>The Fall of Wisconsin: The Conservative Conquest of a Progressive Bastion and the Future of American Politics</u>	Kaufman, Dan K.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland</u>	Keefe, Patrick Radden	*****	8/27/19	<p>Troubles. Patrick Radden Keefe has written a compelling history of the troubles in Northern Ireland titled, <u>Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland</u>. Keefe uses the story of Jean McConville, a mother of ten, to pull readers away from cold facts about the conflict and into the human impact on particular people. Filled with personal stories, betrayals and violence, this book covers both the past and the present with skill and insight. With Jean McConville in our minds from the early part of the book, Keefe uses the bulk of the book to elaborate on the actions of leaders including Gerry Adams and Margaret Thatcher. When I read about the recordings at Boston College that were made with an expectation of secrecy but were released to be used in criminal prosecutions, I saw one more dimension of betrayal long after the conflict ended. Interested readers should zip through this book quickly as a foundation of knowledge for whatever happens should Brexit proceed and the hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is restored.</p>	
<u>Bone on Bone</u>	Keller, Julia	*****	1/9/19	<p>Epidemic. The eighth novel by Julia Keller featuring protagonist Bell Elkins is titled, <u>Bone on Bone</u>. Fans of the series will look forward to how the former prosecutor will</p>	

				return to life in Acker's Gap following her incarceration. What Bell finds is a community ravaged by drug addiction. Keller approaches this theme with insight and sensitivity, continuing to develop this protagonist's complexity and humanity. Fans will be rewarded by the revelation of a long-held secret by the novel's end. Along the way, Bell plays a part in helping her community with the drug epidemic.	
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[The Cold Way Home](#)

Keller, Julia

[9/24/19](#)

Secrets. The eighth installment of Julia Keller's series of books featuring protagonist Bell Elkins is a novel titled, [The Cold Way Home](#). Set as always in the small town of Acker's Gap, West Virginia, where news spreads at the speed of light, fans will delight in the return to this place and to the reprise of the familiar cast of characters. Keller delves into the past and focuses attention on a long-closed local state mental hospital called Wellwood. While Bell is looking for a missing girl on the grounds of Wellwood, she uncovers a dead body. What follows involves what happened at Wellwood in the past and the secrets that remained buried for years. Readers who like character-driven crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.



<u>Presidio</u>	Kennedy, Randy	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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Death in Provence

Kent, Serena

5/24/19

Fresh. Protagonist Penelope Kite gives herself a fresh start by moving to Provence in a novel by Serena Kent titled, Death in Provence. Her dreams face reality after she discovers a corpse floating in her swimming pool. Beware of starting this novel, since Kent starts a series with this book, and if you're like me, you're likely to want to read each successive installment. The characters are well-drawn, the mystery interesting, and the writing more than acceptable for this genre. Serena Kent is the penname of Deborah Lawrenson and her husband, Robert Rees. The pace of the narrative is relaxed, which seems to suit Penelope's life in Provence and this reader's attitude while reading this genre.

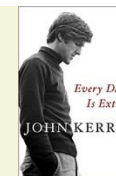


Every Day Is Extra

Kerry, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Thinking and Being

Kimhi, Irad

Unread

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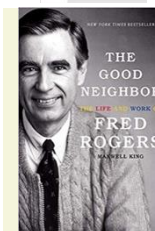


The Good Neighbor

King, Maxwell

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Institute

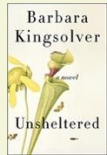
King, Stephen

9/13/19

Evil. If the words that come to your mind when you think of author Stephen King are "horror," "supernatural," or "creepy," and you avoid reading him because that's not the reading experience you're looking for, take



another look at this talented writer and his new novel titled, [The Institute](#). As always, King tells a great story. The characters are interesting, complex, and they resemble us or people we recognize. The new novel starts so gently that some readers may feel lulled into a state of calm. While we are feeling calm, children with special talents are being abducted and abused, locked in a Maine facility that gives the book its title. King explores the evil inside those characters who become used to abusing children to support some distant government official's notion of a greater good. Once the use of a child has been completed, the child is destroyed. King lays all this out, then gives the children agency, and lets them use their power. Both good and evil can be powerful and King offers readers a well written story that resonates for our time.

Unsheltered	Kingsolver, Barbara	*****	<p>Foundations. Many of us crave stability and desire some solid foundation to anchor our lives. In her novel titled, Unsheltered, Barbara Kingsolver explores instability and uncertainty during two time periods: today and 100 years ago. She explores the lives of two families united by a house and their common inability to maintain that house as they face societal change and economic hardship. Kingsolver presents a cast of characters who reflect both time periods and highlights the dramatic divisions and differences between individuals in both eras. In the contemporary plotline, a professional working couple have done everything they thought was right, followed the rules, and find themselves in late middle age with little to show for their efforts, and great uncertainty</p>	
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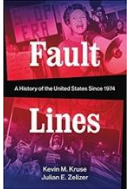
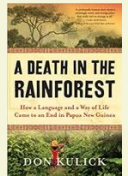


				<p>about finding the means to provide for themselves and their dependents. The plotline from the past includes threads to Darwin and to a scientist neighbor whose naturalist observations encourage a teacher whose boss won't allow him to teach about evolution. Instability is uncomfortable, and the fearful and unstable characters in this novel may disturb some readers. Thoughtful readers will want to talk about this novel with others and share the discomfort.</p> <p>Depression. Can a writer find humor in mental illness while remaining empathetic and providing insight? Read Binnie Kirshenbaum's novel titled, Rabbits for Food, for yourself to answer that question. I found the major depression experienced by the protagonist, Bunny, to be presented with sensitivity and insight, and the humor to be genuine. Bunny is a fascinating and complex character. Kirshenbaum captures the bleakness of treatment for mental health with great insight. While she is institutionalized, Bunny is pressed to sign up for activities for which she has no interest. One item on the list seems ok: time with the therapy dog. Day after day, the therapy dog never shows up. Kirshenbaum shows us in this novel that there is help for all of us in this crazy world, whether the therapy dog shows up or not.</p>	
Rabbits for Food	Kirshenbaum, Binnie	*****	7/26/19		
How to Love the Universe: A Scientist's Odes to the Hidden Beauty Behind the Visible World	Klein, Stefan	*****	2/21/19		<p>Excitement. I remember in college that there were two introductory physics classes: the one for physics majors met for three hours starting at 8am on Saturday mornings; the other was called "physics for poets" and met after lunch for about an hour every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I took neither but</p> 

			<p>realized decades later that the majors spent their Saturday mornings in the late 1960s learning things that were later disproven. For them, and for any reader with eyes open to the world, there's a great book to consider by Stefan Klein. Titled, <u>How to Love the Universe: A Scientist's Odes to the Hidden Beauty Behind the Visible World</u>, this book offers great images, well-written prose and an attitude of excitement about the world. It's never too late to learn a thing or two about particle physics, even if you think you already know it all.</p>	
<u>Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life</u>	Klinenberg, Eric	*****	<p><u>6/24/19</u></p> <p>Shared. Our isolated social bubbles can reinforce the divisions that cause a breakdown in social order. In his book titled, <u>Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life</u>, Eric Klinenberg explores how we can make society stronger by supporting places that bring different people together. Libraries, parks, and welcoming religious and civil organizations can provide places where people can increase interaction and build stronger networks and communities. Through investments in creating these places, we will make our society stronger and more resilient. Any reader interested in public policy and in building a better community and country should consider reading this book and taking action along the lines Klinenberg describes.</p>	
<u>The Ditch</u>	Koch, Herman	****	<p><u>8/5/19</u></p> <p>Marriages. All is not well in the life of the mayor of Amsterdam as presented in the novel by Herman Koch titled, <u>The Ditch</u>. While the mayor gives us his name as Robert Walter, that is not his name, nor is his wife</p>	

			named Silvia. Koch explores the interactions of couples in marriage and exposes the consequences of what is not expressed with clarity. Robert has suspicions. Sylvia has been and will always be a foreigner. Robert's own parents are another study in being both together and apart. A formative experience of Robert's is revealed late in the novel, as well as the meaning of the title of the novel. Koch riffs on trust and distrust in many aspects and patient readers are rewarded by the end of the novel with insights about what has been going on in this entertaining novel.	
<u>Forged in Crisis: The Power of Courageous Leadership in Turbulent Times</u>	Koehn, Nancy	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>If She Wakes</u>	Koryta, Michael	*****	<u>8/5/19</u>	
<u>An American Summer: Love and Death in Chicago</u>	Kotlowitz, Alex	*****	<u>5/28/19</u>	
			Driving. The latest thriller by Michael Koryta is a novel titled, <u>If She Wakes</u> . The title makes reference to the vegetative state of Tara Beckley, who was in a car crash. Protagonist Anny Kaplan is an insurance adjuster looking into the crash, and she knows a lot about driving, thanks to her former career as a stunt car driver. Things are not as they appear, and Koryta drives Amy and readers on a trip that has lots of curves and accelerations. Readers who like well-written thrillers are those most likely to enjoy this novel.	
			Faces. Crime statistics are cold. In his book titled, <u>An American Summer: Love and Death in Chicago</u> , Alex Kotlowitz goes behind the numbers to present readers with rich details about the human lives at stake. Based on over two hundred interviews, the book describes	

the people behind the crime statistics in the violent summer of 2013 in Chicago. Whatever distance each of us may have created between ourselves and those touched by violence, Kotlowitz brings the human faces close to ours in this finely written book. Empathy and understanding are likely to follow from this encounter.

<u>The Mirage Factory</u>	Krist, Gary	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Assault on American Excellence</u>	Kronman, Anthony	*****	<u>10/10/19</u>	<p>Academy. It's time to stop the nonsense at universities. That's the message of Anthony Kronman, former dean of Yale Law School, in his book titled, <u>The Assault on American Excellence</u>. He calls for universities to return to their principles and stop yielding to those pressing for actions that avoid discomforting students and create greater egalitarianism. Perhaps it was the way in which the administration at Yale flip flopped on the issue of renaming Calhoun Hall that set off Kronman. Readers interested in the state of the academy today are those most likely to enjoy reading this book, whether one agrees or disagrees with Kronman. I found lots of clear thinking on these pages, to my delight.</p> <p>Storyteller. The action in William Kent Krueger's novel titled, <u>This Tender Land</u>, takes place in the summer of 1932. The United States is in the throes of the Great Depression. Farmers have lost their livelihoods, and desperate people are living in Hoovervilles where conditions are horrible. Using gorgeous prose, Krueger deploys</p>	
<u>This Tender Land</u>	Krueger, William Kent	*****	<u>10/15/19</u>		

			thirteen-year-old narrator Odysseus O'Banion to draw readers into one pivotal summer when Odie and three other orphans escape from the abusive Lincoln School in Minnesota and take a river journey toward a new life. Readers who love gripping storytelling are those most likely to enjoy this finely written novel.	
<u>Fault Lines: A History of the United States Since 1974</u>	Kruse, Kevin M. and Julian E. Zelizer	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A Death in the Rainforest: How a Language and a Way of Life Came to an End in Papua New Guinea</u>	Kulick, Don	****	<u>10/25/19</u> Isolated. Readers interested in learning about the work of an anthropologist should consider a book by Professor Don Kulick of Uppsala University titled, <u>A Death in the Rainforest: How a Language and a Way of Life Came to an End in Papua New Guinea</u> . Over the course of three decades, Kulick spent time in Papua New Guinea documenting an isolated language, Tayap. Kulick tells us the story of these people and how they live in a changing world, as he takes us behind the scenes to show what an anthropologist does. Reading this book reminded me why my undergraduate major in anthropology never led to graduate school or to fieldwork.	
<u>Immigrant, Montana</u>	Kumar, Amitava	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Milk!: A 10,000-Year Food Fracas</u>	Kurlansky, Mark	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

Certain American States

Lacey, Catherine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

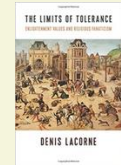


The Limits of Tolerance: Enlightenment Values and Religious Fanaticism

Lacorne, Denis

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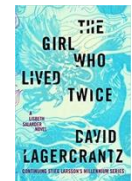


The Girl Who Lived Twice

Lagercrantz, David

9/24/19

Fire. David Lagercrantz continues the late Stieg Larsson's millennium series featuring Lisbeth Salander with a novel titled, The Girl Who Lived Twice. Fans of the series will enjoy the return of Salander and Mikael Blomkvist in another exciting adventure. Both protagonists are on a search for answers and truth and they need each other's help. Both are driven by a fire inside that propels them on their quests. Physical fire also appears and raises the stakes. Larsson's estate made a wise choice with asking Lagercrantz to continue writing this series. I found this sixth installment as well written and engaging as the ones earlier in the series written by Larsson. Readers who like character-driven action novels are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.

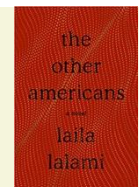


The Other Americans

Lalami, Laila

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Wall

Lanchester, John

5/9/19

Other. What makes people require an “other” to frame our own behavior? In his novel titled, The Wall, John Lanchester offers a future that some will consider dystopian and others anticipate as likely. Rising sea levels led an island nation to build a concrete barrier around its territory. Protagonist Joseph Kavanagh works as a defender with one mission: to ensure that the Others don’t breach his section of the wall. Lanchester is a terrific storyteller, and his creativity in this novel captivated me. This novel falls within the long tradition of imaginative fiction and the telling of stories that engage readers.

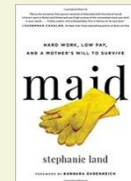


Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive

Land, Stephanie

3/18/19

Poverty. Most readers don’t have a clue about what it is like to be poor in the United States today. Thanks to Stephanie Land’s finely written memoir titled, Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive, there’s no excuse for not gaining an understanding about people usually out of sight and out of mind. Life is a daily peril, one illness or accident leading toward financial catastrophe. The amount of time Land spent proving her need to social service providers took away from her time spent working hard as a maid for minimum wage. Making too much money as a maid could lead to the loss of more valuable housing or nutritional support payment. I feel much better informed about one aspect of poverty in contemporary American life, and I’m thinking again about the advantages of a universal basic income.



Afternoon of a
Faun

Lasdun, James

8/27/19

Complicity. Have you ever reflected on an episode from your past and felt differently about it in light of current mores? James Lasdun's short novel titled, Afternoon of a Faun, offers readers a perspective about sexual relationships and the stories we repeat to ourselves over time. A journalist has been accused by an old friend that he sexually assaulted her years ago. Lasdun uses an unnamed narrator to relate the action in the present and in the 1970s when the alleged abuse occurred. We participate as readers in determining who the victims are and of what. Lasdun understands the nature of complicity and uses that insight to increase the power of this novel.

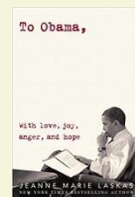


To Obama: With
Love, Joy, Anger,
and Hope

Laskas, Jeanne Marie

3/18/19

Empathy. Have you ever wondered what people write in letters to the President of the United States? Are you curious about how those letters are handled, and what responses are made? If so, you're the reader most likely to enjoy Jeanne Marie Laskas' book titled, To Obama: With Love, Joy, Anger, and Hope. Laskas reprints selected letters sent to President Obama during his term in office. She focuses on the process used to select ten letters to the President that were selected every day from the huge amount of incoming mail and given to him so he had one more way of keeping in touch with everyday people and their concerns. The individual voices of the letter writers tell great stories about these people, often in just a few sentences. The responses consistently convey the message that the letter writer had been heard. This empathy lifted my spirits as I read this engaging and interesting book.



[Agent Running in the Field](#)

le Carré, John

[11/9/19](#)

Anger. Prolific spy novelist John le Carré taps into the prevailing emotion of anger throughout contemporary life in his novel titled, [Agent Running in the Field](#). Protagonist Nat has put in his time in the field for Britain's Secret Intelligence Service running agents, and he seethes as he sees the signals that he might become sidelined. One advantage of his recall to London is the chance to play more badminton at his club, where he's champion. He begins regular matches with Ed, a player half his age and both men enjoy the competitiveness of their contests. Over beer, Ed expresses anger about Brexit, Trump, and his job. Nat bumps into many of the elements of the toxic angry political environment in his new role where he has been placed in charge of a small group of spies. With great writing skill, le Carré moves the story along swiftly, allowing the anger to flow, and leading the interesting cast of characters toward a very satisfying resolution. Fans of le Carré and spy fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

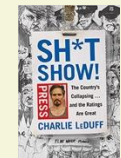


[Sh*t Show!: The Country's Collapsing . . . and the Ratings Are Great](#)

LeDuff, Charlie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



[The Undressing](#)

Lee, Li-Young

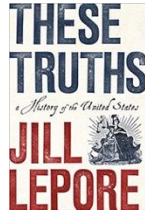


[3/18/19](#)

Contemplation. When was the last time you read a poem? How about a collection of poems? Every time I open a collection of poems, I vow to read more poetry. A fine collection I can recommend to any reader is Li-Young Lee's book titled, [The Undressing](#). These poems are grounded in God, love and spirituality, although the words may not

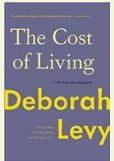


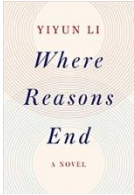
always convey that. This book can be a source for well-spent contemplation. These are words of love, peace, and passion in the context of the refugee experience and violence around the world. We want to understand why we are here, and these poems can lead us toward such understanding.

Revenant Gun	Lee, Yoon Ha	*****	1/22/19	<p>Finale. Sometimes when a trilogy comes to an end, a reader can wish and hope for another installment. When I closed the 400th or so page of Yoon Ha Lee's third installment in his <i>Machineries of Empire</i> series, I felt it came to a satisfying ending, and I hope to read not another word. The final novel titled, Revenant Gun, couldn't stand alone. Readers who enjoy science fiction or fantasy are those readers most likely to be patient enough to devote the time to the three novels in this series.</p>	
Inhuman Resources	Lemaitre, Pierre	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
Unto Us a Son Is Given	Leon, Donna	*****	4/19/19	<p>Inheritance. The twenty-ninth installment in the Commissario Guido Brunetti series by Donna Leon set in Venice is titled, Unto Us a Son Is Given. For the first time in my memory, we have an extended one on one conversation between Guido and his father-in-law, and a request for help from the older man to the younger. Leon explores in this novel the things we do for love and the essence of inheritance. There's an adult adoption at the core of the story, and the ebb and flow of friendship across decades. Longtime fans may be surprised by what</p>	


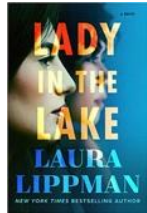
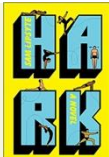
				<p>Guido is reading. Readers who enjoy character-based crime novels with complex and interesting characters are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p> <p>Gallop. Don't blink while reading Jill Lepore's book titled, These Truths: A History of the United States. If you blink, you might miss a major episode in American History because Lepore writes at a galloping pace. Believe it or not, this almost thousand-page book manages to be concise while still being comprehensive. I can't think of something important that she skipped. No matter how much you think you know about American History, it can be helpful for a fresh examination through the scholarship of a contemporary historian.</p>	
These Truths: A History of the United States	Lepore, Jill	*****	8/15/19		
The Topeka School	Lerner, Ben	*****	11/14/19	<p>Language. Ben Lerner demands readers of his novel titled, The Topeka School, to go deep or go home. When Lerner unveils the interior lives of characters, we see the ways in which the forms of language shape ourselves and our environment. As he shifts perspective, Lerner demands our eyes follow his as we look to the past and see the trajectory toward our divisive present from multiple points of view. Words matter and Lerner shows us why. Fans of finely written literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
America, Compromised	Lessig, Lawrence	*****	6/18/19	<p>Corruption. Something is rotten in the United States and Lawrence Lessig explores what that might be in a book assembled from the Berlin Family lectures he delivered. Titled, America, Compromised, this book describes the various ways in which some of America's core institutions have become corrupted.</p>	

Lessig does not ascribe our current condition to bad apples, but rather to the gradual ways in which compromises have led to a decline in trust and a culture of corruption. Money is the usual cause of a diversion by institutions from their original purpose toward some compromise that leads to corruption. Lessig gives loads of examples. Readers interested in public policy are those most likely to be receptive to Lessig's concerns.

<u>The Cost of Living</u>	Levy, Deborah	*****	<u>12/9/19</u>	<p>Brisk. The short book by Deborah Levy titled, <u>The Cost of Living</u>, allows readers to sample her fine prose while eavesdropping on a few selected episodes from her life. Levy calls this “a working autobiography,” and it is a glimpse into the writer’s observations about living in our world with interesting other people. All of a writer’s life can become source material, and in this book, Levy takes us behind the curtain to spend time with her memories and observations. I finished the book wanting to meet her mother and I smiled when I finally reached the phrase that became the title of this book. Fans of literary prose are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p> 
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<u>Where Reasons End</u>	Li, Yiyun	*****	<u>7/16/19</u>	<p>Words. Where does a writer go to grieve? After Yiyun Li’s 16-year-old son committed suicide, the writer turned to words. In her novel titled, <u>Where Reasons End</u>, Li imagines conversations between a mother and her dead son. The novel captures grief with all its confusion, sadness and attempts to find a way to stay in touch with a lost loved one. The intensity that Li captures in her writing will resonate for any reader who has experienced deep grief. Every odd conversation is a way of reaching for a connection that can never be</p> 
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made again. The prose is finely written and readers open to falling into the grieving process are those most likely to appreciate this novel.

Good Riddance	Lipman, Elinor	*****	8/27/19	<p>Yearbook. The high school class of 1968 dedicated its yearbook to teacher June Winter Maritch. The action in Elinor Lipman's novel titled, Good Riddance, begins after June's daughter, Daphne Maritch, throws away her late mother's yearbook. A dumpster-diving neighbor, Geneva, retrieves the yearbook and approaches Daphne with her plan to make a documentary based on the yearbook. Hijinks follow, as Lipman weaves a romantic story and peeks inside family dynamics. Readers looking for light entertainment are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
Lady in the Lake	Lippman, Laura	*****	8/5/19	<p>Reporter. The location for Laura Lippman's latest standalone novel titled, Lady in the Lake, is Baltimore, as usual, and the time period is mostly the 1960s. Protagonist Maddie Schwartz has just left a twenty year marriage and frees herself to do something meaningful with her life. She wheedles her way into a job at a Baltimore newspaper, and proves her worth as an investigative reporter helping solve a mystery. The novel is packed with a cast of fascinating characters, and the great story that Lippman writes even includes a surprise twist.</p>	
Hark	Lipsyte, Sam	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

Become America:
Civic Sermons on
Love,
Responsibility,
and Democracy

Liu, Eric

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Most Fun We
Ever Had

Lombardo, Claire

9/3/19

Losses. I was primed to think favorably about Claire Lombardo's debut novel titled, The Most Fun We Ever Had. Lombardo sets the novel in her hometown, Oak Park, Illinois, where I live now, and I've lived in this village longer than anywhere else. The gingko leaves on the cover are from a tree in Oak Park that plays an important role at multiple points in the novel. Because Lombardo presents a large ensemble of characters, this is a long novel as she never rushes to develop interesting characters and reveal their secrets, their loves and their losses. Lombardo moves us forward and backward in time as the narrative demands, and I found myself enjoying every new dimension more than the last. Every family has its ups and downs, and in this extended family we get to feel the loves and losses with depth and insight. Lombardo gives readers a messy family for our messy times. Patient readers are rewarded with embracing the fullness of life and the ways in which the answer to most questions involves love.

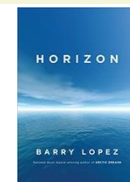


Horizon

Lopez, Barry

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>Killing with Confetti</u>	Lovesey, Peter	*****	<u>8/15/19</u>	<p>Wedding. The eighteenth installment in Peter Lovesey's mystery series featuring Bath head of CID Peter Diamond is a novel titled, <u>Killing with Confetti</u>. Fans who love character-driven crime fiction that's well-plotted are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series. After his son has become engaged to the daughter of a prominent criminal, George Brace, the Deputy Chief Constable, selects Peter Diamond to be in charge of security for the wedding. Lovesey drops lots of great clues and structures a terrific and engaging story. As always, Diamond chafes under his boss Georgina's management, and skirts expected norms and rules in doing his effective work.</p>	
<u>The Coddling of the American Mind</u>	Lukianoff, Greg and Jonathan Haidt	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.		
<u>The Italian Party</u>	Lynch, Christina	*****	<u>6/10/19</u>	<p>Siena. Christina Lynch takes readers to Tuscany in her novel titled, <u>The Italian Party</u>. Set in the 1950s, protagonists Scottie and her husband, Michael, have moved to Siena as newlyweds, bringing along their respective secrets and hiding new ones in plain sight. Lynch explores truth and lies, while we vicariously eat, drink, watch the Palio and can't wait to see what happens next to this cast of interesting characters.</p>	
<u>Severance</u>	Ma, Ling	*****	<u>12/9/19</u>	<p>Routine. I enjoyed the deep insight into contemporary life on the pages of Ling Ma's debut novel titled, <u>Severance</u>. Protagonist Candace Chen came to the United States from China as a little girl. Most of the action in this</p>	

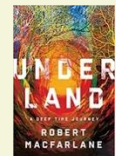
humorous and satiric novel takes place while Candace is working in New York as a young adult following the death of both parents. Her routine is constant: work for a Manhattan publisher monitoring the production of specialty books in China, followed by watching movies in a basement apartment in Brooklyn. A global disease called Shen Fever is killing people everywhere, but Candace seems immune and continues her routine. Readers will recognize Candace as a representative of her age cohort and as the child of immigrants who wanted the best for her. We root for her as she does what's necessary to survive the Shen Fever.

Guide. Readers could find no better nature guide than Robert MacFarlane, and his book titled, [Underland: A Deep Time Journey](#), takes us on a global tour of what is and has been beneath the surface of the earth. On one page we're thinking about the moment of creation, on another we're peering at cave paintings and thinking about that part of the past, and then we find ourselves wondering about our stewardship of the earth and what lies ahead for our planet. He takes us to the Paris catacombs and to a place where nuclear waste is stored. MacFarlane's writing is as beautiful as the world he calls on us to notice. I haven't experienced this much awe since reading Carl Sagan. Most readers will finish this book as I did: feeling a closer connection to those and what has come before us.

[Underland: A Deep Time Journey](#)

MacFarlane, Robert

[9/13/19](#)



The Spy and the Traitor: The Greatest Espionage Story of the Cold War

Macintyre, Ben

2/8/19

Gripping. Sometimes a difference between fiction and non-fiction is that the real-life version can seem to demand way too much suspension of disbelief. In his true story titled, The Spy and the Traitor: The Greatest Espionage Story of the Cold War, Ben Macintyre tells us about the life of Oleg Gordievsky, a Russian spy and the child of KGB agents. Beginning in 1973 he was working secretly for MI6 and played a key role in defusing cold war tensions. His dramatic extraction from Russia kept my heart beating rapidly as I read of his ordeal. Readers interested in international relations, especially espionage, are those most likely to appreciate this gripping story.



The Water Cure

Mackintosh, Sophie

12/9/19

Protection. Sophie Mackintosh's debut novel is titled, The Water Cure. Some undescribed catastrophe hit the mainland, so parents named King and Mother have taken their daughters, Grace, Lia and Sky, to an island for protection. The daughters are subjected to a variety of therapies to keep them pure, including keeping their hands in frozen water and sweating in a sauna until unconscious. Taught to fear strangers, especially men, the daughters live in isolation with ways of living to which they have become accustomed. This situation can't endure, so after King disappears, and strangers arrive on the island, the therapies for protection fall aside and unmet needs are confronted. Readers are left to ponder big questions from this novel about gender, cults, and the stories we can be led to believe and the ways we can live when prompted that this is the way things are.



Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America

MacLean, Nancy

1/22/19

Assault. Sometimes a historian stumbles into a trove of documents and can connect the dots about past events. After Nancy MacLean ran across economist James Buchanan's voluminous and overlooked files, she unraveled the secret plan developed by wealthy members of the radical right to shape America in specific ways. In her book titled, Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America, MacLean describes the history of a libertarian movement and the planned and careful ways in which a minority became the arbiters of how our democracy operates. While MacLean considers these actions as an assault on democracy, some readers will see this book as documentation of the success of a very long plan. Any citizen interested in learning about political power in the United States should consider reading this book.

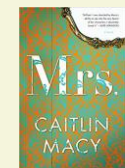




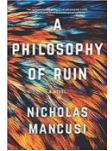
Mrs.

Macy, Caitlin

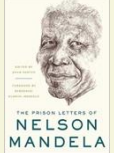
4/19/19


Connections. Caitlin Macy set her novel titled, Mrs., on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, just after the financial crisis, and offers a cast of characters including the old rich and the new rich. One connection among the characters involves their children who attend what all the elites know is the best private school. Backstories and past connections among characters provide depth to the novel in which Macy delivers great insight into the lives of the wealthy in Manhattan. There's a group of school moms who provide the bitchy equivalent of a Greek chorus. At the core there's a smaller cast of characters of deep complexity and secrets. Macy uses multiple points of view to draw us into this world. While lots of readers will

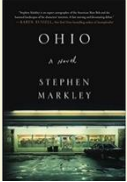


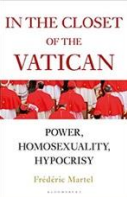
				<p>enjoy this novel, it seems tailor made for book clubs, especially ones with school moms.</p> <p>Transparency. You already know what Rachel Maddow thinks about the fossil fuel industry by the subtitle of her book titled, <u>Blowout: Corrupted Democracy, Rogue State Russia, and the Richest, Most Destructive Industry on Earth</u>. Inside this book, you'll find over 400 pages describing corruption and malfeasance in the oil and gas business around the world. Maddow offers pride of place to Rex Tillerson and his calm demeanor while he enters into lucrative and shady partnerships with Vladimir Putin. Maddow calls for action including transparency, the elimination of subsidies, and steps to reduce the corrupt influence of this business on democracy.</p>	
<u>Blowout: Corrupted Democracy, Rogue State Russia, and the Richest, Most Destructive Industry on Earth</u>	Maddow, Rachel	****	<u>10/15/19</u>		
<u>Landfall</u>	Mallon, Thomas	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A Philosophy of Ruin</u>	Mancusi, Nicholas	****	<u>9/13/19</u>	<p>Nihilism. What's it all about, Alfie? Philosophy should help steer us toward a deeper understanding of the meaning of life. In his debut novel titled, <u>A Philosophy of Ruin</u>, Nicholas Mancusi offers a brisk and exciting narrative that hovers around what happens if one's philosophy is nihilism. If life is meaningless, how would we live? Protagonist Oscar Boatwright is a philosophy professor whose life has begun to unravel. Mancusi pulls readers into caring for Oscar and other characters as they struggle. Often dark, at times funny, the novel propels readers toward an expected ending. Mancusi</p>	

writes with great skill and many readers after enjoying this initial outing will look forward to more fine prose from this author.

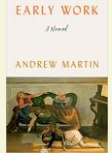
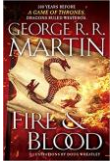
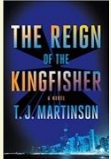
<u>The Prison Letters of Nelson Mandela</u>	Mandela, Nelson	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Notes from the Fog</u>	Marcus, Ben	*****	<u>3/18/19</u>	<p>Mordant. In each of the baker's dozen of stories in a collection by Ben Marcus titled, <u>Notes from the Fog</u>, readers are likely to wince or laugh and experience a focused barb at contemporary life. Few readers will finish these stories feeling that they've read it all before. Marcus' originality comes across as fresh and alert to the consequences of trends in modern life. Fans of literary fiction who appreciate fine writing are those readers most likely to appreciate these short stories.</p>	
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<u>Ohio</u>	Markley, Stephen	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>In the Closet of the Vatican: Power, Homosexuality, Hypocrisy</u>	Martel, Frédéric	*****	<u>10/15/19</u>	<p>Scandal. While I read Frédéric Martel's almost six-hundred-page book titled, <u>In the Closet of the Vatican: Power, Homosexuality, Hypocrisy</u>, I found myself wondering why people were willing to talk to him and reveal the many examples of scandal and misbehavior that he reveals about the Catholic clergy. For whatever reason, they did as he conducted loads of interviews for this book over a long period of time and chronicles a story that most readers will find both sad and scandalous. I kept thinking about the reality that humans do stupid stuff and that</p>	
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goodness and evil exist side by side within each of us. After a while, though, I found the hypocrisy overwhelming, so I paced myself over several weeks while I read this book. Many readers will finish the book anxious for dramatic reform in the Catholic church and sad that such reform is highly unlikely during our lifetime.

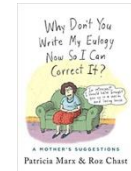
Early Work	Martin, Andrew	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
Fire and Blood	Martin, George R.R.	*****	1/22/19	<p>Prequel. Please don't quiz me to differentiate all the characters and dragons in the Game of Thrones prequel by George R.R. Martin, a novel titled, Fire and Blood. Westeros fans have been pressing Martin for the next installment and this 700-page diversion is likely to meet with mixed reviews. Structured as a history, I think it is also book one of another series. The cult of Martin wants him to write faster, and I expect even he has some trouble keeping all the characters straight. For readers who like the world of Westeros, here's another hefty installment with intrigue, treachery, battles and dragons. I read it in Chicago waiting for Winter to come and was well entertained.</p>	
The Reign of the Kingfisher	Martinson, T.J.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

[Why Don't You Write My Eulogy Now So I Can Correct It?: A Mother's Suggestions](#)

Marx, Patricia and Roz Chast

[5/9/19](#)

Gift. Sample a page or two of the book titled, [Why Don't You Write My Eulogy Now So I Can Correct It?: A Mother's Suggestions](#), and you'll know whether this is the right gift for any mother in your life. Patricia Marx's text presents things her mother has said over the years, and cartoonist Roz Chast provides terrific illustrations. It's clear that both women present this short book out of love for their mothers. Whether it resonates with you or the mother in your life depends on the nature of your relationship and how much humor has been in your family dynamics.



[The Winter Soldier](#)

Mason, Daniel

[6/10/19](#)

Atmospheric. Readers who enjoy descriptive historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy Daniel Mason's novel titled, [The Winter Soldier](#). Set during World War I in Austria and Poland, the novel tells a story of war and medicine. The protagonist is a twenty-two-year-old medical student named Lucius Krzelewski, whose limited training has not prepared him for the field medicine he is called on to practice. Thanks to the expertise of Sister Margarete at the field hospital to which he is assigned, Lucius learns quickly how to care for wounded soldiers. Mason's finely written prose makes every setting atmospheric, appropriate to the time and place described. Mason presents the condition of PTSD with insight and wisdom. Mason's prose brings beauty to grim settings.



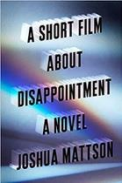

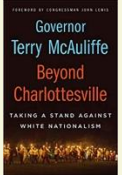
[Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity](#)

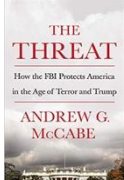
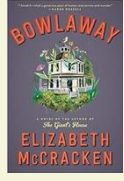
Mason, Lilliana

Unread



Shelf of Ennui 2019.


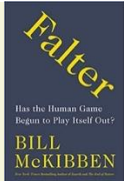


A Short Film About Disappointment	Mattson, Joshua	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
Costalegre	Maum, Courtney	*****	8/15/19	<p>Refuge. Courtney Maum's novel titled, Costalegre, assembles many elements inside a compact work. War is looming in Europe in 1937 and wealthy art patron Leonora Calaway is arranging for artists and her art to be transported to Mexico where she has a resort named, <i>Costalegre</i>. Almost as an afterthought, she pulls her fifteen-year-old daughter, Lara, out of school to join the eclectic group in their refuge in Mexico. It's Lara's point of view that controls the narrative, and she so longs for attention from her mother that readers can feel her anguish. Maum breaks tension with humor and presents the lives of artists with vivid imagery. Maum presents privilege and longing in a lush setting and she writes about losing and finding ourselves as we live in this world of conflict, anxiety and uncertainty.</p>	
Beyond Charlottesville: Taking a Stand Against White Nationalism	McAuliffe, Terry	*****	9/13/19	<p>Racism. For those readers who can set aside partisan politics (there must still be at least a minyan of us left who can do that), former Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe's book titled, Beyond Charlottesville: Taking a Stand Against White Nationalism, helps us reflect about racism in the United States and what to do about it. The death of Heather Heyer and two Virginia state troopers during the violent "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville grabbed national attention. McAuliffe describes that event from his perspective at the time as governor and calls on citizens to</p>	

				<p>unite in a fight against racism, hate and extremism. Even if you read this book as a fierce partisan, consider what tangible steps you can take toward addressing racism in our divided nation whether you agree with McAuliffe or not.</p> <p>Service. Chances are that any reader will come to Andrew McCabe's book titled, <u>The Threat: How the FBI Protects America in the Age of Terror and Trump</u>, with positive or negative views about the former acting FBI director. I opened the book expecting him to tell his side of a story that plastered the news and to attack President Trump. Instead, I read a finely written account of a life of government service and how the Federal Bureau of Investigation does its job. He describes the well-controlled processes followed by the Bureau and takes readers inside the investigative process. Any reader interested in public policy should read this book and reflect on the state of our government and its institutions. He spends very little time promoting himself and many pages talking about the investigative process and the importance of doing things by the book.</p>	
<u>The Threat: How the FBI Protects America in the Age of Terror and Trump</u>	McCabe, Andrew	*****	3/6/19		
<u>Bowlaway</u>	McCracken, Elizabeth	*****	4/4/19		

			<p>life for most readers as she brooks no question or objection about her abilities as a woman to do as she pleases. McCracken goes wild in this novel, and readers are enriched as a result, thanks to her fine writing. I had to look up many words while reading this novel because McCracken uses terminology suited to each time period we visit. I also had to learn what candlepin bowling is and saw that it's available in Chicago. Readers whose taste leans toward the quirky are those most likely to enjoy this novel. Treat your wild side with this novel and leave behind no regrets.</p>	
Truth in Our Times: Inside the Fight for Press Freedom in the Age of Alternative Facts	McCraw, David E.	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers Who Brought the American Ideal West	McCullough, David	****	6/24/19 <p>Cutlers. Readers who enjoy history that's lively and well-written should consider David McCullough's book titled, The Pioneers: The Heroic Story of the Settlers Who Brought the American Ideal West. McCullough focuses on the movement west in the settlement of the Northwest Territory, the place that became the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. McCullough tells of the Cutler family, especially Manasseh Cutler, a Massachusetts minister, whose efforts led to the settlement of this region, and whose leadership ensured that three key provisions were included in what Congress approved: freedom of religion, a prohibition of slavery in the territory, and universal education. Cutler's son, Ephraim embodied these values, and ensured his father's values would continue.</p>	

			<p>McCullough tells the story of this time in American history through the Cutlers and through a few other significant characters. As a result, readers are brought into the time and place in a very readable narrative.</p> <p>Turing. Intelligent and thoughtful readers are those most likely to appreciate Ian McEwan's novel titled, Machines Like Me. Many of us wonder about how different the world might have been if certain events turned out differently. In the 1980s setting for this novel, among other changes, Great Britain loses the Falklands War, and Alan Turing lives. Protagonist Charlie inherits some money and uses it to purchase Adam, an early automated human life form. McEwan riffs on the Turing test, and allows readers to consider how the full cast of characters measure up to living a good life and being a good human.</p>	
Machines Like Me	McEwan, Ian	*****	7/3/19	
The Reservoir Tapes	McGregor, Jon	****	7/3/19	<p>Connected. The quirky exploration of an ordinary place and a missing girl that Jon McGregor began with his novel titled, <i>Reservoir 13</i>, continues with a new book titled, The Reservoir Tapes. McGregor offers fifteen perspectives of members of this small community. In this second novel, McGregor helps readers see how a tragedy can fade into the background life of any community. The village we met in the first novel seems very different in the second. McGregor first presented this narrative on BBC Radio 4, and some readers may want to receive the text in audio rather than print form. I found that hearing helped me appreciate McGregor's skill in capturing the cadences of everyday speech, while connecting the pieces to allow</p> 

				<p>us to gain insight into how people reveal their inner selves. While this novel stands on its own, when read in conjunction with the earlier novel, a reader can appreciate the breadth of McGregor's writing expertise.</p> <p>Chapleton. After every chapter of Patrick McGuinness' novel titled, <u>Throw Me to the Wolves</u>, I found myself liking it more, thanks to the many ways in which the author succeeds. At the core, this is a crime novel: a dead body, a suspect, two detectives. That only provides the structure in which McGuinness struts his stuff. His prose is finely written, and he allows his characters to surprise readers with humor, psychological insight, and reflections about memory and childhood. The suspect in the murder is a neighbor of the victim, a retired public school teacher. One of the detectives went to that school, Chapleton, and knew the suspect as a teacher. McGuinness exposes the impact of tabloids in contemporary society, and the ways in which anyone who seems different can be held suspect. The action alternates between the present and thirty years earlier at Chapleton. Fans of literary fiction will be delighted by the prose. Readers who love complex characters will revel in this cast. Those who love crime fiction will find a satisfying investigation and engaging mystery.</p>	
<u>Throw Me to the Wolves</u>	McGuinness, Patrick	*****	7/16/19		
<u>Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to Play Itself Out?</u>	McKibben, Bill	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

[The Chain](#)

McKinty, Adrian

[7/26/19](#)

Diabolical. Fans of action thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy the clever plot and fast pace of Adrian McKinty's novel titled, [The Chain](#). The life of protagonist Rachel O'Neill seems to finally turn in the right direction, given successful chemotherapy for cancer and completing her divorce from an immature husband. Instead, her thirteen-year-old daughter has been kidnapped. Raising the ransom required was a stretch, but more insidious was the other condition: the requirement that Rachel kidnap someone else's child to continue a long running chain of serial abductions to enrich the diabolical kidnappers. We may think our morality is certain and fixed, but what would most parents do to save one's child? McKinty puts that question before all readers and leaves us with a well-told and memorable story to think about as we ponder what we would do.



[Saudi America:
The Truth About
Fracking and How
It's Changing the
World](#)

McLean, Bethany

[1/4/19](#)

Transitions. Financial reporter Bethany McLean has written a compact and engaging book about the energy industry titled, [Saudi America: The Truth About Fracking and How It's Changing the World](#). She describes the transition from what seemed to be "peak oil" in the United States, to the expensive and creative ways in which fracking has reduced reliance on foreign energy sources. McLean tells us about the people, the money, and the science. Whatever you think you know about fracking, read this book, and you're likely to want to learn even more.



The Good Detective

McMahon, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

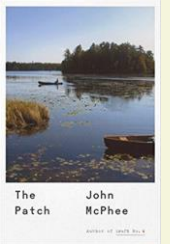


The Patch

McPhee, John

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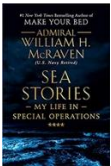


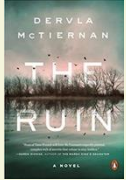
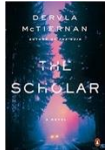
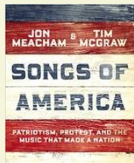
Sea Stories: My Life in Special Operations

McRaven, William H.

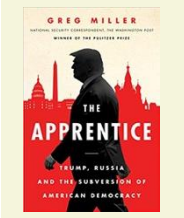
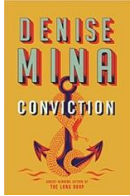
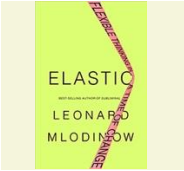
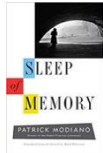
9/13/19


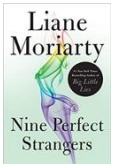
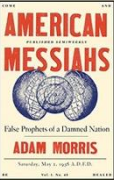
Iterative. Retired US Navy Admiral William H. McRaven has written a terrific book titled, Sea Stories: My Life in Special Operations, about the thirty-seven years he served as a Navy SEAL. Each anecdote builds on the prior one in some form or another, supporting the iterative process of building on past experience. I recall talking to one of my bosses many years ago who was apprehensive about an important meeting. I calmed him with the reminder that all kinds of experiences brought him toward this meeting, and he is as prepared as he could possibly be. McRaven's life was one layer of experiences built on another, and by the time a reader reaches the story of the raid that killed Osama bin Laden, we know how he will approach this mission. Most readers will finish this book offering thanks to McRaven and the thousands of others whose valuable service deserves recognition and gratitude.

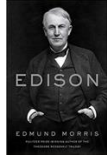



<u>The Ruin</u>	McTiernan, Dervla	****	<u>10/25/19</u>	<p>Links. The debut novel by Dervla McTiernan is titled, <u>The Ruin</u>. Set in Galway, the novel links two cases of detective Cormac Reilly: the recent death of Jack Blake, and two decades earlier when as a rookie policeman he met Jack with sister Maude at the death of their mother. Sure in Ireland the past is always present and the ghosts never go away. Fans of crime fiction will find the cases compelling, the characters interesting, and the writing satisfying.</p>	
<u>The Scholar</u>	McTiernan, Dervla	****	<u>12/16/19</u>	<p>Galway. The second novel in the Cormac Reilly series by Dervla McTiernan is titled, <u>The Scholar</u>. The work lives of Cormac and his girlfriend, Dr. Emma Sweeney, intersect at the beginning of this novel after Emma finds a body at Galway University and calls Cormac who's the first officer to arrive on the scene. As an investigation and mystery case develops, McTiernan pulls us back to observe her writing with admiration as she taps into the doubts and insecurities faced by many characters. Fans of crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p>	
<u>Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music That Made a Nation</u>	Meacham, Jon and Tim McGraw	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Instructions for a Funeral</u>	Means, David	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

<u>The First Conspiracy: The Secret Plot to Kill George Washington</u>	Meltzer, Brad	****	11/9/19	<p>Spies. In a pause from writing fiction, prolific novelist Brad Meltzer paired up with researcher Josh Mensch to write an engaging work of non-fiction titled, <u>The First Conspiracy: The Secret Plot to Kill George Washington</u>. Meltzer takes us to New York during the American Revolution and the shifting loyalties between those supporting the English monarchy and those in revolt for independence. While Washington tries to train and equip a ragtag group of soldiers into a fighting force, there are active plans to take out Washington himself. Plenty of historians have written about what a close-run thing the Revolutionary War was. Meltzer adds this book as another easy read that describes true stories of that era that will enlighten and entertain readers.</p>	
<u>Same Same</u>	Mendelsund, Peter	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Martin Buber: A Life of Faith and Dissent</u>	Mendes-Flohr, Paul	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Finding Again the World: Selected Stories</u>	Metcalf, John	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

<u>The Apprentice: Trump, Russia and the Subversion of American Democracy</u>	Miller, Greg	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Conviction</u>	Mina, Denise	*****	<u>8/5/19</u>	<p>Podcast. I share an interest in podcasts with Anna McDonald, the protagonist of Denise Mina's novel titled, <u>Conviction</u>. After hearing a podcast episode about a true crime, Anna and the plot take off. It turns out that Anna was very familiar with the crime described on the podcast. For almost four hundred pages, Mina writes with clever wit and readers learn about a secret from Anna's past and the efforts she takes to come to terms with solving a mystery and finding out the truth about something that changed her life.</p>	
<u>Elastic: Flexible Thinking in a Time of Change</u>	Mlodinow, Leonard	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Sleep of Memory</u>	Modiano, Patrick	*****	<u>3/26/19</u>	<p>Places. Life goes on in the small moments just as well as in the great events. Patrick Modiano explores the nature of our recollections in a novel titled, <u>Sleep of Memory</u>. After I finished the book, I thought of the closing line spoken by the nihilist played by Greta Garbo at the end of the tumultuous 1932 movie, <i>Grand Hotel</i>: "people come, people go, nothing ever happens." That line followed lots of large and small happenings. Modiano takes us into recollections of the small moments from the past, in neighborhoods of Paris, where a person can seem to be departed from the</p>	

<u>The Widows</u>	Montgomery, Jess	****	<u>2/2/19</u>	<p>world after moving from one neighborhood to another. This is an atmospheric novel, very focused on place, and a gentle way for readers to think about places and memory.</p> <p>Mining. In a finely written debut novel by Jess Montgomery titled, <u>The Widows</u>, the protagonists Lily and Marvena are connected through the Sheriff of a small Ohio coal mining town, Daniel Ross. Set in the 1920s, the novel is packed with interesting characters and plot momentum involving violence, greed, loss, and restraint. Lily and Marvena are also connected in a battle for justice, a cause for which these two widows are formidable warriors. Readers who enjoy historical fiction and well-developed complex characters are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
<u>Nine Perfect Strangers</u>	Moriarty, Liane	****	<u>2/21/19</u>	<p>Spa. One recipe for a novel: conjure up some interesting people and put them in an unusual place. In her novel titled, <u>Nine Perfect Strangers</u>, Liane Moriarty puts a cast of very interesting characters in a wellness spa called Tranquillum House. All is not as it appears at this health resort, and the lives of the characters have levels of depth that take a while to reveal. Over the course of more than 450 pages, Moriarty reveals who these people are and what is really going on at Tranquillum House. You may never go to a spa again.</p>	
<u>American Messiahs: False Prophets of a Damned Nation</u>	Morris, Adam	***	<u>10/25/19</u>	<p>Audience. Throughout American History religious leaders have arisen to present an alternative message to receptive followers. In his book titled, <u>American Messiahs: False Prophets of a Damned Nation</u>, Adam Morris surveys a wide range of these leaders, some well-known and others obscure. General</p>	

			<p>readers may find the narrative a bit bland while those knowledgeable in history and religion may find that the narrative leaves many gaps. I enjoyed hearing about people I never knew, like Cyrus Teed in the nineteenth century, and some I enjoyed learning more about, like Father Devine in the twentieth century. Some self-proclaimed messiahs were benign and others dangerous. Any reader with interest in both history and religion will find these stories interesting.</p>	
<u>Edison</u>	Morris, Edmund	*****	<p>Prolific. Edmund Morris' biography titled, <u>Edison</u>, was published after the author's death. Were he alive, I would have asked him why he chose a structure for the book that was as difficult as its subject. While most biographies proceed chronologically, Morris goes backward, mostly, and organizes in the following categories: botany, defense, chemistry, magnetism, light, sound, telegraphy, and natural philosophy. The prolific and talented Edison explored all those areas, and he patented inventions at a great clip throughout his life. Despite the challenging structure, most readers will find Edison a great subject and Morris a fine presenter of the complex and voluminous material of a highly productive life.</p>	
<u>The Tattooist of Auschwitz</u>	Morris, Heather	*****	<p>Hope. For those readers who look to fiction to explore the scope of human behavior, consider reading Heather Morris' finely written novel titled, <u>The Tattooist of Auschwitz</u>. Protagonist Lale Sokolov arrives at the concentration camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1942. Because of his language skills, he is selected to work as a tattooist to mark numbers on prisoners. Morris sets up</p>	

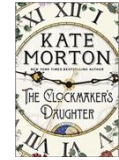
			<p>the contrast between the evil behavior of the Nazis and Lale's ways of helping others and fostering hope in himself and others. This is a love story between Lale and Gita, a woman he meets in the camp. Based on a true story, Morris draws readers into horror and hope in ways that affirm our ability to express love and survive against all odds.</p> <p>Endearing. Jan Morris calls her book titled, <u>In My Mind's Eye</u>, "a thought diary." Wherever those thoughts come from, they are finely written, endearing and certainly eclectic. Some of the daily diary entries are short, and others are finely developed essays. Most are quips that will cause readers to smile and become charmed by this talented author who still amazes in her nineties. Could there be something magical in the water in Wales?</p>	
<u>In My Mind's Eye</u>	Morris, Jan	*****	12/9/19	
<u>The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations</u>	Morrison, Toni	*****	8/15/19	<p>Prowess. If the occasion of Toni Morrison's death leads you to read or reread her fiction, by all means do it. A few days before her death, I read a collection titled, <u>The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations</u>, and she has been on my mind in recent weeks. I love her novels, and this collection reveals that same clear voice in personal ways and with vision and deep thought. Whenever and however Morrison spoke, attention must be paid by those willing to learn a thing or two. On some pages, we hear Morrison the teacher, on others, the editor, and on others the award-winning author. Her prowess appears throughout, and I finished reading this collection inspired and perhaps a tiny bit wiser.</p> 

The Clockmaker's Daughter

Morton, Kate

11/21/19

Voices. Fans of big and complicated historical mysteries are those readers most likely to enjoy Kate Morton's novel titled, The Clockmaker's Daughter. Some readers may become unsettled with the pacing of the novel, as Morton shifts voices and time periods just as a reader settles into one of the puzzle pieces. It can feel like starting over with a new voice, and it is. Patient readers will be rewarded by the gradual reveal, and with an engaging mystery packed with interesting characters.



Ghost Wall

Moss, Sarah

3/26/19

Abuse. What did you do on your summer vacation? In Sarah Moss' novel titled, Ghost Wall, protagonist Silvie joins her family in the countryside in the north of England for her father's favorite leisure activity: an Iron Age reenactment. In addition to her father's obsession with this unusual activity, he also beats her. In this dark context, Silvie becomes aware that there may be a better way of life outside the ghost wall that her father has built for their family. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this short novel.

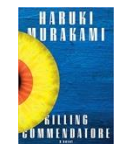


Killing Commendatore

Murakami, Haruki

6/10/19

Painting. One reading of Haruki Murakami's novel titled, Killing Commendatore, may lead to one or two more for devoted fans. For me, once through was more than enough. An unnamed painter leaves a relationship and moves to the home of a famous artist where he finds a painting in the attic. What follows is a detachment from the world and a journey of discovery into ideas and metaphors and a search for understanding. Loneliness drags on for dozens of pages in this long novel, and ghostly and otherworldly figures become



1,000 Books To
Read Before You
Die

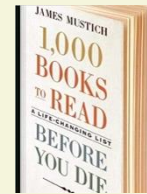
Mustich, James

* * * *

1/4/19

commonplace. Patient readers who enjoy literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

Temptation. I should never have picked up a copy of James Mustich's book titled, 1,000 Books To Read Before You Die. In recent years, I've been reading at the pace of about a book a day. My focus has been to try to drink from the fire hose of newly published books and try to select an eclectic sample to match my interests. I was curious to see how many of Mustich's selected 1,000 I've read during my six decades of reading. While I did not read everything Mustich had to say about each book he selected and referenced (actually about 6,000 altogether), I turned every page and was alarmed by how many authors he chose who were totally unfamiliar to me. I think I've read over a third of his selections. Now I am tempted toward the two-thirds. I sensed a kindred spirit in Mustich when I read his take on diversity in reading appetite: "No matter their pedigree, inveterate readers read the way they eat – for pleasure as well as nourishment, indulgence as well as education, and sometimes for transcendence, too. Hot dogs one day, haute cuisine the next." (p. ix) Any reader looking for something interesting to read can use this book to fulfill reading appetites of all sorts. Will I abandon my focus on new books and turn toward the past to recover what I've missed along the way? Time will tell.

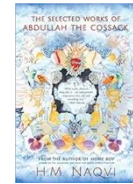


The Selected Works of Abdullah the Cossack

Naqvi, H.M.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Best People: Trump's Cabinet and the Siege on Washington

Nazaryan, Alexander

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



We Can Save Us All

Nemett, Adam

12/20/19

Princeton. Readers will need to be patient while getting into Adam Nemett's debut novel titled, We Can Save Us All. The setting is Princeton University, but this is not one of the eating clubs with which you may be familiar. The USV, Unnamed Supersquadron of Vigilantes, is more like a cult, in a climate changed near future, with a plan to make a difference. Our near future might get the superheroes we deserve, and the USV just might be the ones who accomplish what the title demands. I enjoyed the fine writing and the scope of creativity by the author. It's an odd book that may put off some readers, but I liked this complex story with quirky characters living in a complicated world with conviction and passion.

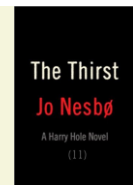


The Thirst

Nesbo, Jo

Unread

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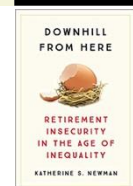


Downhill from Here: Retirement Insecurity in the Age of Inequality

Newman, Katherine S.

3/6/19

Reality. There's no shortage of big issues to worry about from global climate change to terrorism. For a sober reality check on the inability of most Americans to ever stop working before death, read Katherine S.



Newman's book titled, [Downhill from Here: Retirement Insecurity in the Age of Inequality](#). Most Americans over age 55 have no retirement savings. The financial crisis wiped out home equity for many. Social Security will cover a little over a third of pre-retirement income. Pensions have either been diminished or eliminated. What's at the bottom of the hill of aging? Poverty. Newman tells a lot of personal stories that pack a wallop in this book, especially of those people who thought they were doing the right things and now face the reality that promises made to them have been broken. Readers interested in public policy, especially those who would like to retire one day should consider reading this book and gaining a sober reality check about the future.

[The Heavens](#)

Newman, Sandra

[4/25/19](#)

Dreams. Do we change, or is it reality that changes? Where did we come from and where are we going? Protagonist Kate is as confused as the rest of us about life, as described in Sandra Newman's novel titled, [The Heavens](#). In New York in 2000, Kate meets Ben at a party, and they hit it off. While she sleeps, Kate dreams of 16th century London where she lives as Emilia. After each dream, her return to New York introduces her to an altered reality from the one she left before sleep. While Ben loves Kate, he finds her changes unsettling and disturbing. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

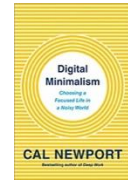


Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World

Newport, Cal

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Victorian Fairy Tales

Newton, Michael

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Darkening Age: The Christian Destruction of the Classical World

Nixey, Catherine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Strike Your Heart

Nothomb, Amélie

3/26/19

Jealousy. Some fiction writers enjoy writing hundreds and hundreds of pages to flesh out stories about our human condition. Amélie Nothomb condenses lots of insight about life into a novel of just over one hundred pages titled, Strike Your Heart. Protagonist Diana is the firstborn child of a beautiful woman named Marie. Their relationship, marked by Marie's jealousy of Diana, provides the core of this finely written novel. Alienated from Marie, Diana finds relationships with other women and those are fraught with turmoil. I expect that any book club that selects this novel with lead to revelation of one's own maternal and sibling relationships and an extra glass of wine or two.

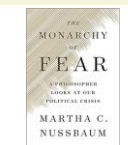


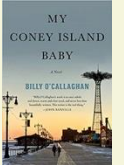
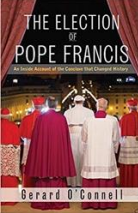

The Monarchy of Fear

Nussbaum, Martha C.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>My Coney Island Baby</u>	O'Callaghan, Billy	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Election of Pope Francis: An Inside Account of the Conclave That Changed History</u>	O'Connell, Gerard	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Shadowplay</u>	O'Connor, Joseph	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

[The Flatshare](#)

O'Leary, Beth

[7/26/19](#)

Fun. Summer vacation is a perfect time to pick up a novel that's pure fun. The romantic comedy titled, [The Flatshare](#), by Beth O'Leary fit that bill for me. After Tiffy broke up with her boyfriend, she needed to move. Leon needed some extra cash, so he offered his apartment for someone to share. The unusual arrangement involved using the flat during shifts. Since Leon works nights and stays with his girlfriend on weekends, the new flatmate would use the apartment on weekends and on weeknights after Leon leaves for work. Tiffy was ok with this, and Leon's girlfriend interviewed her and told Leon to go ahead. An unusual aspect of sharing involved the one bed: one person used the left side and the other the right. Given that backdrop as structure, O'Leary lets us fall for all the interesting characters and their adventures. Readers who are looking for light reading are those most likely to enjoy this entertaining novel.



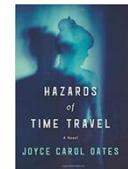
<u>Henry, Himself</u>	O’Nan, Stewart	****	<u>8/5/19</u>	<p>Seasons. We spend most of our time in the ordinary routines of life. In his novel titled, <u>Henry, Himself</u>, Stewart O’Nan reprises characters from earlier novels. We get to observe the everyday life of protagonist Henry Maxwell and his wife, Emily, as they go through the change of seasons and do what most of us do: fall into our typical patterns, and stumble into new people, places and things that tend to surprise us and shake us out of our routine. O’Nan offers readers a portrait of a guy in Pittsburgh who could be any one of us. Readers looking for lots of action and drama won’t find it here. What patient readers will find is a good man living a good life and well-written prose.</p>	
<u>Gray Day: My Undercover Mission to Expose America's First Cyber Spy</u>	O’Neill, Eric	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>None of My Business</u>	O’Rourke, P.J.	***	<u>3/26/19</u>	<p>Yuks. The latest humorous commentaries on contemporary American life by P.J. O’Rourke are contained in a new book titled, <u>None of My Business</u>. O’Rourke’s wit and funny observations are often entertaining, and it won’t take a reader very long to zip through these three hundred pages. I found his usual curmudgeon dialed down a bit in this book, and that his stride seemed best on a subject like bitcoin where his writing soars. Readers looking for an entertaining diversion should consider reading this book.</p>	

Hazards of Time Travel

Oates, Joyce Carol

1/22/19

Paths. From the discomfort of the present, Joyce Carol Oates projects to the future and revisits the past in a finely written dystopian novel titled, Hazards of Time Travel. A high school valedictorian in the future uses her commencement speech to exert independence and ask her classmates a series of question. Her behavior doesn't suit the norms of society, so she finds herself sent to the past for rehabilitation in 1950s Wainscotia, Wisconsin. Oates doesn't need to tell readers about all the details of both past and future: she makes the settings atmospheric and we fill in the gaps. Our young female protagonist becomes our eyes and ears in both settings. We have many paths projecting from today toward the future. Oates offers one that should scare every reader.



Becoming

Obama, Michelle

1/4/19

Conversational. Place politics aside, and listen to Michelle Obama's conversational story of her life in her memoir titled, Becoming. From describing her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to life in the White House, she tells her story in ways that are very personal, revealing, and come across as genuine. Her optimism fills every chapter of this book, even when she takes a swipe or two. Whether as daughter, student, lawyer, boss, spouse, mother or first lady, she communicates with wit and candor. Hers is an American story, and I enjoyed every page.

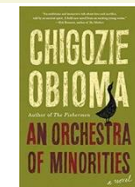


An Orchestra of Minorities

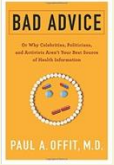
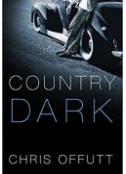
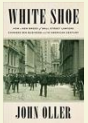
Obioma, Chigozie

3/18/19

Sorrow. The omniscient narrator of Chigozie Obioma's novel titled, An Orchestra of Minorities, is the guardian spirit of protagonist Chinonso. Obioma allows this chi to weave slowly the life story of Chinonso, a



naïve chicken farmer, whose life choices toward joy lead to sorrow and pain. Nonso falls in love with a woman named Ndali, who is from a very wealthy family who consider Nonso too far beneath them in station to be worthy enough for the lovers to marry. I was delighted by all the twists and turns in Nonso's life, and the ways in which Obioma uncovers the dimensions of good and evil in the world and in ourselves. Many pages explore the process of forgiveness. For those readers who find that some of the sections of the novel seem to move too slowly, I encourage you at those times to focus on the fine descriptive language throughout the novel and wait for momentum to resume.

<u>Bad Advice: Or Why Celebrities, Politicians, and Activists Aren't Your Best Source of Health Information</u>	Offit, Paul A.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Country Dark</u>	Offutt, Chris	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>White Shoe: How a New Breed of Wall Street Lawyers Changed Big Business and the American Century</u>	Oller, John	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

The Library Book

Orlean, Susan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

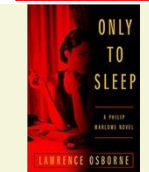


Only to Sleep

Osborne, Lawrence

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

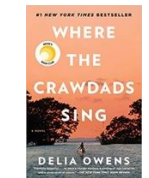


Where the Crawdads Sing

Owens, Delia

7/3/19

Marsh. While I've noted that Delia Owens' debut novel titled, Where the Crawdads Sing, has been on the best seller list for almost a year, I didn't settle down to read it until a few days ago. Owens offers readers the full life of protagonist Kya Clark, who lived for six decades in the marsh on the coast of North Carolina. The setting is described with such care that most readers will visualize the place where Kya lives. For much of the plot, there's a mystery to solve, and Owens fills the space around that core with pulling readers deeper into understand all the complexity of this interesting protagonist who battles for survival in a difficult environment.



Gingerbread

Oyeyemi, Helen

5/28/19

Imaginative. Readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction are those most likely to appreciate the prose in Helen Oyeyemi's novel titled, Gingerbread. Oyeyemi tests impatient readers who may feel confused at times, but attentive and patient readers will be rewarded by the author's rich imagination and great skill at choosing just the right words for very sentence. There's joy in this novel that can become contagious and elements of folklore or magic that can lead to transcending our ordinary lives.

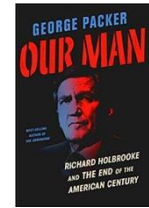


Our Man: Richard Holbrooke and the End of the American Century

Packer, George

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Matriarch: Barbara Bush and the Making of an American Dynasty

Page, Susan

7/26/19

Beloved. Susan Page has written a terrific biography of the late former First Lady Barbara Bush titled, The Matriarch: Barbara Bush and the Making of an American Dynasty. With access to decades of personal diaries and interviews with scores of people, Page offers readers a comprehensive look at this beloved woman who led a large family whose public service was exemplary. This book is no hagiography, as Page presents achievements alongside shortcomings. As with many women of her time, Barbara Bush has been undervalued and underestimated. A reader will come away from this book with a perspective about whether her husband and her son would have been elected Presidents of the United States were it not for her.



The Fork, the Witch, and the Worm

Paolini, Christopher

12/9/19

Return. Fans of Christopher Paolini's Inheritance Cycle and the Eragon stories are those readers most likely to enjoy the return to Alagaësia with the three stories collected in a book titled, The Fork, the Witch, and the Worm. I especially enjoyed the excerpt from the memoir of Angela the herbalist. For readers who thought Paolini could only write massively long books, here's an example of the author's ability to tell great stories efficiently.



<u>The Caregiver</u>	Park, Samuel	*****	<p>Daughter. Can a child ever truly understand the lives of one's parents? Samuel Park explores that question and others in a finely written novel titled, <u>The Caregiver</u>. Protagonist Mara Alencar grew up in a Rio de Janeiro favela knowing some aspects of her mother Ana's life, but not understanding critical actions during her childhood. Now working as a caregiver in Los Angeles for a woman named Kathryn who suffers with stomach cancer, Mara finds herself being treated as a daughter by her employer and questioning her past and that of her mother. Park moves the action between past and present as we gradually learn about the lives of these fascinating characters. I'm usually skeptical of a man's ability to write with insight about female characters. In this case, Park seemed to understand the mother-daughter relationship extremely well. He also understood what Kathryn was facing with cancer. Park died of stomach cancer not long after he finished writing this novel.</p>	
<u>The Dutch House</u>	Patchett, Ann	*****	<p>Conroys. Fans of finely written prose with deep and complex characters are those most likely to enjoy Ann Patchett's novel titled, <u>The Dutch House</u>. In addition to the members of the Conroy family, who we get to know over the course of five decades, we also see the depth and richness of their family home. Any reader who has lived in a home that was more than a place to live will delight in the magic of this house and why it attracts some and repels others. There's a sibling relationship at the center of this novel and Patchett captures the intensity of that special bond with great skill. Each of us has someone in our extended</p>	

family who does something that we just can't understand. Many of the characters in this novel do exactly that and we love them all the more because of their behavior. I loved every minute I spent with the Conroy family and imagined living in the house during good times and bad.

Minorities. Eboo Patel offers readers a robust defense of religious diversity in his book titled, Out of Many Faiths: Religious Diversity and the American Promise. Following Patel's argument, there are commentaries on the subject by others. This book is part of a series called, Our Compelling Interests. Patel describes his view of what the American promise is, and how minorities enhance the common good. Diversity is a great strength in the life of our country, and religious diversity is of special value. If you believe that the United States is a Judeo-Christian nation, you should read this book and reflect on what our future should be like.

Alienation. Many children of immigrants feel alienation not only from their parents who grew up in a different place but also from their peers, whose family lives can seem more homogenous. In the eleven short stories in the collection by Neel Patel titled, If You See Me, Don't Say Hi, the characters struggle with identity and with finding ways to escape dysfunction of many types. There's loneliness in these stories, anxiety about family expectations, and couples who are out of sync. The intimacy that Patel creates with just a few paragraphs in these stories leads to insights about human behavior that may be enlightening to many readers.

Out of Many Faiths: Religious Diversity and the American Promise

Patel, Eboo

11/9/19



If You See Me, Don't Say Hi

Patel, Neel

2/2/19



<u>The Paris Diversion</u>	Pavone, Chris	****	<u>6/10/19</u>	<p>Plans. The action in Chris Pavone's novel titled, <u>The Paris Diversion</u>, takes place on a single day. Multiple characters have big plans for the day and the expectation of receiving significant financial rewards when those plans are executed. Pavone lays out the action sequentially, draws readers to a point of tension, then shifts from one setting to another to layer on the complexity of what's happening among multiple characters. The scheming is complicated, the characters competent and interesting, and the plot thrilling.</p>	
<u>The Dante Chamber</u>	Pearl, Matthew	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Can American Capitalism Survive?: Why Greed Is Not Good, Opportunity Is Not Equal, and Fairness Won't Make Us Poor</u>	Pearlstein, Steven	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Bob Honey Who Just Do Stuff</u>	Penn, Sean	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A Better Man</u>	Penny, Louise	*****	<u>10/25/19</u>	<p>Fear. The Chief Inspector Gamache series by Louise Penny is one of those rare cases in which new installments continue to get better. One of the best novels yet, the fifteenth in the series, is titled, <u>A Better Man</u>. Armand</p>	

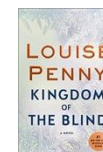
Kingdom of the
Blind

Penny, Louise

1/22/19

Gamache's suspension from the Sûreté du Québec has ended, and to the surprise of politicians who wanted him retired, Gamache has returned in a demoted role, head of homicide, a role he shares with his son-in-law Jean-Guy Beauvoir, who will soon be leaving Canada to work in the private sector in France. Penny uses this installment to explore fear in many forms, which she does with great skill. The mystery at the heart of this story keeps many readers guessing among lots of possibilities until the very end of the book, to great satisfaction. Along the way, a full cast of familiar characters supports the action. Gamache draws on a lifetime of experience to use his psychological insights to solve a complicated case and to assume his demoted job with skill and sensitivity. Loyal readers will savor this installment, and any crime fiction reader can start this series anyplace and find good writing and terrific characters.

Drugs. The fourteenth novel in the Chief Inspector Gamache series by Louise Penny is titled, Kingdom of the Blind. While this installment can stand on its own, first time readers will understand context better by holding this book in queue while reading the last two installments. The action in this novel begins as Gamache remains suspended from his job pending an investigation. Dangerous drugs from the case that led to his suspension are about to hit the streets of Montreal. Gamache coolly implements a risky plan to save lives. Penny continues to develop interesting characters with this installment and contrasts gritty city life with the tranquility of Three Pines. Crime fiction can



become formulaic and is often poorly written. Penny crafts some of the best contemporary fiction in this genre and the current novel was a delight to read.

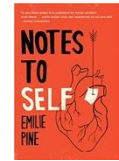
<u>Yes We (Still) Can: Politics in the Age of Obama, Twitter, and Trump</u>	Pfeiffer, Dan	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Need</u>	Phillips, Helen	*****	<u>11/21/19</u>	<p>Bizarre. Things are not as they appear for both the characters in and readers of Helen Phillips novel titled, <u>The Need</u>. Protagonist Molly is not the only parent who, while at home with young children, hears footsteps in the house. Is she just sleep deprived or is there something more sinister at play? A long day with children can be bizarre for any number of reasons, but Phillips pulls readers into her speculative and thrilling story and demands that we follow her images and story wherever it leads. Patient readers are rewarded with a bizarre and entertaining story.</p>	
<u>Disappearing Earth</u>	Phillips, Julia	*****	<u>12/20/19</u>	<p>Anguish. The debut novel by Julia Phillips titled, <u>Disappearing Earth</u>, opens with the disappearance of two sisters. Set in Kamchatka, Russia, the novel describes that area with finely written prose and draws readers into a year of anguish during which no progress seems to be made on finding the missing girls. Readers who enjoy literary fiction and the exploration of an unfamiliar place are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	

Notes to Self

Pine, Emilie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

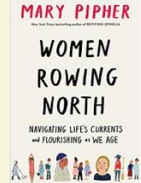


Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing As We Age

Pipher, Mary

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Visible Empire

Pittard, Hannah

Unread

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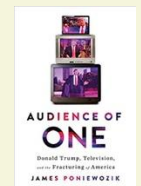


Audience of One: Donald Trump, Television, and the Fracturing of America

Poniewozik, James

11/9/19

Window. Journalist James Poniewozik, television critic for *The New York Times*, tells two stories in his book titled, Audience of One: Donald Trump, Television, and the Fracturing of America. The first story flows from job as TV critic: he relates the role of television in American life and how it has evolved from the beginning of the medium to the present. The second story involves using television as a window into gaining a deeper understanding of Donald Trump. Poniewozik projects how television helped form the character of Trump through what he watched as a child, to his self-promotion as a businessman, through his fame via *The Apprentice*, and then on to politics through Fox News. I found that Poniewozik described the evolution of television with insight, and he uses his observations of the changes in television over decades as one way to explain increased polarization among Americans and



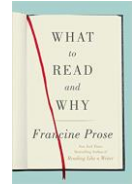
				to offer a view about how television made Donald Trump.	
<u>Lanny</u>	Porter, Max	*****	<u>6/24/19</u>	<p>Interest. There's a lot of interest in a small village outside London in the eponymous protagonist of Max Porter's novel titled, <u>Lanny</u>. We learn of Lenny through the viewpoints of multiple characters, but not from Lanny himself. He is recognized as a very special young man by his parents, by an artist neighbor and by a version of the Green Man, a spirit called Dead Papa Toothwort. Porter writes in an unusual way, especially when he tries to let readers hear all that Dead Papa Toothwort is listening to at the same time as village life is being conducted, something unlike hearing snippets of multiple conversations in a busy restaurant. Fans of unusual literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
<u>The Travelers</u>	Porter, Regina	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Radical Markets: Uprooting Capitalism and Democracy for a Just Society</u>	Posner, Eric and E. Glen Weyl	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>How to Break Up with Your Phone: The 30-Day Plan to Take Back Your Life</u>	Price, Catherine	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

What to Read and Why

Prose, Francine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

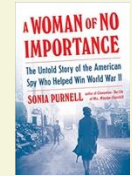


A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II

Purnell, Sonia

Unread

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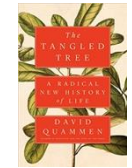


The Tangled Tree: A Radical New History of Life

Quammen, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Night Agent

Quirk, Matthew

3/6/19

Mole. Fans of spy fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy a novel by Matthew Quirk titled, The Night Agent. Protagonist Peter Sutherland is an FBI agent whose latest assignment is a special desk in the White House Situation Room. Before long, Peter is in the middle of a spy network that includes a highly placed Russian mole. Peter's late father was suspected of being a Russian spy, so the FBI has never fully trusted Peter. The characters are interesting, the plot twists exciting and the resolution very satisfying.

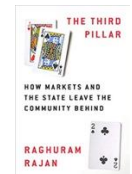


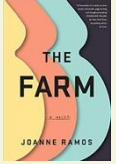
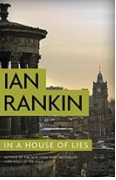
The Third Pillar: How Markets and the State Leave the Community Behind

Rajan, Raghuram

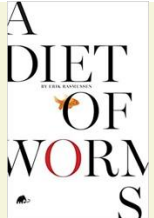
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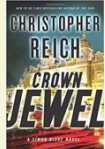


<u>The Farm</u>	Ramos, Joanne	****	7/26/19	<p>Surrogate. What does it mean to be a mother? Joanne Ramos explores that question as well as the consequences of income inequality in her novel titled, <u>The Farm</u>. The Farm is what the residents call the rural and isolated estate named Golden Oaks where they are isolated while awaiting the birth of babies. Rich people outsource all sorts of unwelcome tasks, and in the case of Golden Oaks, they outsource the birth of their children. Women are selected to be hosts and are well compensated to live in isolation and tight surveillance while they carry the progeny of the mega rich. Many of these surrogates have made this choice as a way to provide a better life for themselves and their families. Ramos can be provocative in this novel and yet makes the arrangements seem perfectly normal and mutually beneficial. As we get to know the characters, we understand the consequences of the choices that are made.</p>	
<u>In a House of Lies</u>	Rankin, Ian	****	2/21/19	<p>Consequences. The twenty-second installment in the John Rebus crime series by Ian Rankin is a novel titled, <u>In a House of Lies</u>. All the familiar characters are back for this novel, the fifth since Rebus was forced to retire from the Edinburgh police. After the remains of a private detective who disappeared a decade ago are uncovered, Siobhan Clarke thinks her mentor, John Rebus, might help her solve this cold case. Some events from the past have serious consequences in the present if they come to light, and Rebus, aware of the risks, tries to use the case to press his own agenda. Fans know that that agenda includes Big Ger Cafferty. If none of this makes sense to you,</p>	

consider reading this novel or this series anyway. The writing is great, especially for those readers who like crime fiction.

<u>A Diet of Worms</u>	Rasmussen, Erik	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>The Mastermind: Drugs. Empire. Murder. Betrayal.</u>	Ratliff, Evan	*****	<u>4/4/19</u>	<p>Gripping. Investigative journalist Evan Ratliff tells the story of criminal genius Paul Calder Le Roux in a book titled, <u>The Mastermind: Drugs. Empire. Murder. Betrayal.</u>. Were this fiction, I would have stopped reading after a few pages. Instead, knowing that the story is true, I was engrossed from beginning to end in a tale of terror and chaos. Le Roux's crimes helped fuel our American opioid crisis, and the book describes how that happened using doctors and pharmacies who were ensnared by Le Roux. The pages flew by as I read Ratliff's finely written account of a global criminal enterprise.</p>	
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<u>Crown Jewel</u>	Reich, Christopher	*****	<u>6/24/19</u>	<p>Schemes. The second novel by Christopher Reich to feature protagonist Simon Riske is titled, <u>Crown Jewel</u>. This time out, Riske accepts a job to investigate unusual losses at a casino in Monte Carlo. A cover story for Riske's arrival at the scene is a car race in which he gets to drive the car of a billionaire client that returned to Riske's shop at an opportune time. Following a chance meeting with a German heiress, Riske agrees to help solve her problem as well. Thanks to Reich's great pacing, the schemes twist and turn, with Riske in the middle of everything. Fans of</p>	
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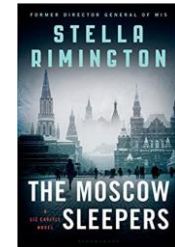
<u>Prisoner: My 544 Days in an Iranian Prison—Solitary Confinement, a Sham Trial, High-Stakes Diplomacy, and the Extraordinary Efforts It Took to Get Me Out</u>	Rezaian, Jason	*****	<u>3/18/19</u>	<p>action thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> <p>Harrowing. A memoir can introduce readers to individuals similar to us in some ways and different in others. In his book titled, <u>Prisoner: My 544 Days in an Iranian Prison—Solitary Confinement, a Sham Trial, High-Stakes Diplomacy, and the Extraordinary Efforts It Took to Get Me Out</u>, Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian tells us the harrowing story of his ordeal in Iran during 2014 and 2015. While he writes from the perspective of his life after he returned home to the United States, I marveled at his description of how he dealt with imprisonment in Iran. He seemed to maintain hope humor and discipline while being anguished at his predicament. There's a love story here, lots of humor, and a clear view of life from the inside of Iran.</p>	
<u>Democracy: Stories from the Long Road to Freedom</u>	Rice, Condoleezza	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Losing Earth: A Recent History</u>	Rich, Nathaniel	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Hits and Misses</u>	Rich, Simon	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

The Moscow Sleepers

Rimington, Stella

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



It's Great to Suck at Something: The Unexpected Joy of Wiping Out and What It Can Teach Us About Patience, Resilience, and the Stuff that Really Matters

Rinaldi, Karen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

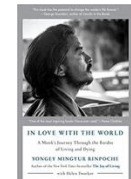


In Love with the World: A Monk's Journey Through the Bardos of Living and Dying

Rinpoche, Yongey Mingyur

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Dawson's Fall

Robinson, Roxana

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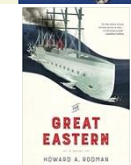


The Great Eastern

Rodman, Howard

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Normal People

Rooney, Sally

5/9/19

Relationship. The protagonists of Sally Rooney's novel titled, Normal People, are well-developed and interesting characters struggling with relationships in contemporary life. Marianne and Connell are, as the title says, normal people. They come from different backgrounds, fall in love and



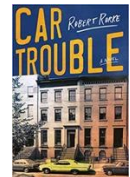
			meander in and out of sync with each other, just as other normal people do. Their dialogue seems familiar. Marianne communicates her truth with clarity. Connell seems reluctant and often regrets not saying what he could have. As readers, we come to know Marianne and Connell better than they seem to know themselves, and we want to shout at them to avert a direction that we know will be perilous. Readers may not like Connell and Marianne, but we recognize them, the ups and downs of their lives and the nature of their relationship. Love endures, but come on people, take the right steps to keep it alive.	
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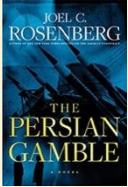
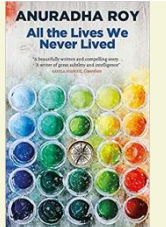
Car Trouble

Rorke, Robert

6/24/19

Himself. In his debut novel titled, Car Trouble, Robert Rorke presents the teenage life of protagonist Nicky Flynn in Brooklyn in the 1970s. The center of much attention throughout the novel is Nicky's father, Patrick, an alcoholic the family calls, "himself." One of Patrick's quirks is to buy beater cars at police auctions and run them into the ground. The descriptions of the cars, life in Brooklyn, and family dynamics are all finely written. My own coming of age in Brooklyn came to mind often as I read this novel, especially when triggered as Rorke describes the sounds of crossing the Marine Parkway Bridge from Brooklyn to Rockaway. One of my fondest memories in the 1960s was driving as a pre-teen with my own father, also known as himself, in a 1953 Mercury with a claw-footed bathtub on the roof, secured by ropes that went through the passenger door handle, leaving me trapped in a death seat should peril occur. Readers with a connection to Brooklyn will find special interest in this



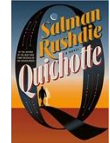
<u>The Persian Gamble</u>	Rosenberg, Joel C.	*****	<u>5/9/19</u>	<p>book, as will anyone affected in any way by alcohol abuse.</p> <p>Stakes. Fans of exciting thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy the second novel by Joel C. Rosenberg to feature former U.S. Secret Service agent Marcus Ryker titled, <u>The Persian Gamble</u>. The cliffhanger from <i>The Kremlin Conspiracy</i> kicks off the new novel and the action never stops. Ryker, assassin Oleg Kraskin and CIA station chief Jenny Morris scramble to get out of Russia alive. Meanwhile, the North Koreans are plotting to sell nuclear weapons to Iran. What could possibly go wrong with that? The action is fast paced from beginning to end.</p>	
<u>You Know You Want This</u>	Roupenian, Kristen	*****	<u>2/21/19</u>	<p>Satisfying. There are twelve finely written short stories in a collection by Kristen Roupenian titled, <u>You Know You Want This</u>. Not all of the stories are as terrific as Cat Person, the story that went viral after it appeared in The New Yorker in 2017. I find the key to many great short stories involves the efficient development of interesting and complex characters. Roupenian wastes few words in sharing characters whose behaviors will draw in readers, whether we recognize ourselves or others in those characters or not. The writing is superb and any reader who likes well-written short stories should consider reading this collection.</p>	
<u>All the Lives We Never Lived</u>	Roy, Anuradha	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

Quichotte

Rushdie, Salman

9/24/19

Satire. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to revel in all the levels of delight that can be found on the pages of Salman Rushdie's novel titled, Quichotte. Rushdie structures the novel as a story in a story. Part of the novel pays homage to Cervantes by updating that classic satirist with a skewering take on contemporary life. Words ricochet from racism to reality television to the opioid crisis. In more subtle ways, Rushdie explores family separation and the things that can alienate us from close family members. For every three references that made me chuckle, I'm sure two passed me by in the writer's exuberance and my inattention. Smart readers can open these pages to be treated with respect and then lean toward understanding the importance of reconciliation in our lives.



Best of Enemies: The Last Great Spy Story of the Cold War

Russo, Gus and Eric
Dezenhall

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

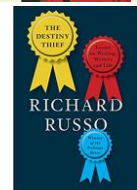


The Destiny Thief: Essays on Writing, Writers and Life

Russo, Richard

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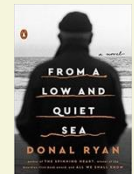


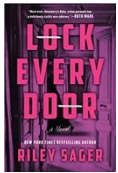
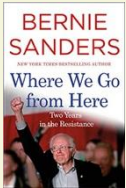
From a Low and Quiet Sea

Ryan, Donal

11/21/19

Stories. The finely written prose of Donal Ryan in his book titled, From a Low and Quiet Sea, weaves together three stories that will pull empathy out of every reader's heart and propel us toward recognition of what we need to atone for in our own lives as we journey toward redemption. I love the gentle ways in which Ryan sneaks up on us, pulling us in



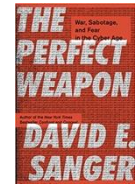
				<p>with our leaning toward compassion for these characters. By the time most readers can see what Ryan has done, he's finished, and leaves us to marvel at his handiwork. Readers who enjoy literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this well-crafted work of great fiction.</p> <p>Bartholomew. Fans of thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy Riley Sager's novel titled, <u>Lock Every Door</u>. Protagonist Jules Larsen gets a lucrative job at just the right time as a house sitter for a unit in the Bartholomew, a prestigious and mysterious New York building. While the rules for her residency are strict, the pay is great, and the digs are spectacular. After a fellow house sitter from another apartment disappears, Jules starts to investigate the mysteries of the Bartholomew. Readers are treated with her thrilling adventure. Next time you walk by one of those signature exclusive residences, you may speculate on what's going on inside.</p>	
<u>Lock Every Door</u>	Sager, Riley	****	<u>11/14/19</u>		
<u>Where We Go from Here: Two Years in the Resistance</u>	Sanders, Bernie	***	<u>2/8/19</u>	<p>Movement. In his book titled, <u>Where We Go from Here: Two Years in the Resistance</u>, Bernie Sanders does a calendar review of 2017 and 2018 and selects those things that reinforce the progress made on Sanders' ideas becoming mainstream, and examples of success in opposition to a government that he claims works for the rich instead of all the people. This chronology of what has happened lays out what's coming next, setting the stage for Bernie to throw his hat in the ring for President in the 2020 election. Fans of Sanders and prolific readers about current events will find all Bernie's recurrent themes covered in this book.</p>	

The Perfect Weapon: War, Sabotage, and Fear in the Cyber Age

Sanger, David

2/21/19

Cyberwar. Any reader interested in public affairs should consider reading David Sanger's book titled, The Perfect Weapon: War, Sabotage, and Fear in the Cyber Age. Sanger is the national security correspondent for The New York Times, and he offers not a word of fake news in this finely written book. The threat of cyberwarfare is real, and America and its citizens are vulnerable. You may not sleep well after reading this book, but you will be better informed about a serious threat to our lives. Be afraid.

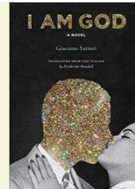


I Am God

Sartori, Giacomo

Unread

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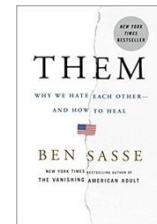


Them: Why We Hate Each Other--and How to Heal

Sasse, Ben

2/8/19

Neighbors. Ben Sasse, junior United States Senator from Nebraska, has written a book titled, Them: Why We Hate Each Other--and How to Heal, that he says is not about politics. Having read the book, I'm willing to take him at his word. His book suggests a solution to our hyper-partisan polarization: love your neighbor. He calls for building community at the local level, and that strong communities will lead to unity and a reduction in hate. He suggests that we root ourselves in some real physical space and find common ground with our neighbors.

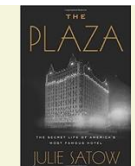


The Plaza: The Secret Life of America's Most Famous Hotel

Satow, Julie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



The Piranhas: The Boy Bosses of Naples

Saviano, Roberto

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Aug 9 – Fog

Scanlan, Kathryn

6/24/19

Collage. I know I've never before read anything like Kathryn Scanlan's book titled, Aug 9 – Fog, and I'm guessing that most readers haven't either. Fifteen years ago, Scanlan bought a diary at an estate sale. The diary was written by an octogenarian woman over the course of several years. I was reminded of refrigerator poetry and what impressions can be made from assembling different words. Scanlan doesn't transcribe the diary; she curates it in pieces, carefully selecting what words and phrases will best reveal the diarist and her life. The result is an odd book that will appeal to adventurous readers.

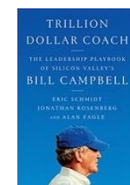


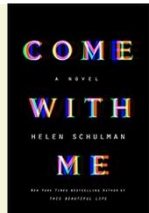
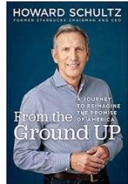

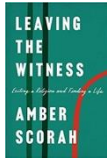
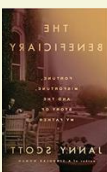
Trillion Dollar Coach: The Leadership Playbook of Silicon Valley's Bill Campbell

Schmidt, Eric,
Jonathan Rosenberg
and Alan Eagle

10/15/19

Tribute. Three current or former Google executives offer a touching tribute to their late friend, mentor and coach in a book titled, Trillion Dollar Coach: The Leadership Playbook of Silicon Valley's Bill Campbell. Eric Schmidt, Jonathan Rosenberg and Alan Eagle found trust, love, caring and friendship in Bill Campbell who helped them succeed in work and in life. In addition to relating their personal experiences with Bill, the trio interviewed about eighty others who were impacted by him. Managers and executives will find the stories engaging and the lessons compelling.



<u>Come With Me</u>	Schulman, Helen	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>From the Ground Up: A Journey to Reimagine the Promise of America</u>	Schultz, Howard	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Pure Hollywood: And Other Stories</u>	Schutt, Christine	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Leaving the Witness: Exiting a Religion and Finding a Life</u>	Scorah, Amber	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Beneficiary: Fortune, Misfortune, and the Story of My Father</u>	Scott, Janny	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

[The World Doesn't Require You](#)

Scott, Rion Amilcar

12/20/19

Creative. The fictional town of Cross River, Maryland links the short stories in the collection by Rion Amilcar Scott titled, [The World Doesn't Require You](#). This town was founded by those who led a successful slave revolt, and this alternative history is written with great skill and creativity. There's some magical realism on these pages, and a lively cast of characters across a long time frame. Each story is told with great care, and Scott provides such depth of understanding about loneliness that it might take your breath



away. Readers looking for well written and creative stories should consider reading this collection.

<u>The Island of Sea Women</u>	See, Lisa	*****	<u>4/4/19</u>	<p>Divers. Clear your calendar to spend as many hours as you need to read Lisa See's novel titled, <u>The Island of Sea Women</u>. This book tells us the story of the lives of two best friends from the island of Jeju, Mi-ja and Young-sook, who have been trained in the tradition of Haenyeo women from their youth as skilled divers to reap bounty from the sea. While the novel is packed with love and the joys of friendship, the brutality of life in Korea in the 1940s can be challenging to read. Tragedy strikes Mi-ja and Young-sook in different ways and their strengths are tested by the sea and by life's circumstances. Most readers will want to talk to a friend about this novel or discuss it in a book group.</p>	
<u>Seven Days</u>	Senecal, Patrick	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Raymond E. Brown and the Catholic Biblical Renewal</u>	Senior, Donald	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Once Upon a River</u>	Setterfield, Diane	****	<u>3/6/19</u>	<p>Thames. A river is both constant and changing. Close your eyes for just a moment while meandering down a river and you may lose a sense of where you are. From the beginning to the end of Diane Setterfield's novel titled, <u>Once Upon a River</u>, the Thames is present, constant and changing. The action starts dramatically at the Swan, an inn on the</p>	

Thames that's the locus for community storytelling, on the longest night of the year, when a drenched stranger barges through the door of the inn carrying what looks like a doll and he collapses to the floor. What looked like a doll then appears to be a dead girl who then revives despite not registering a heartbeat when checked. No one knows who she is. After that dramatic opening, Setterfield calms readers down and sets us on a meandering journey forward and backward in time as three different families believe they know the identity of the girl. Impatient readers may find the diversions tedious, but for those readers who are patient with a large cast of characters and who have plenty of time to let the tale spin out, there's a well-told story here and some entertaining hours spent by the Thames.

Standing for Reason: The University in a Dogmatic Age

Sexton, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.


John Sexton
Standing for
Reason The
University in a
Dogmatic Age

The Right Side of History: How Reason and Moral Purpose Made the West Great


Shapiro, Ben


5/28/19

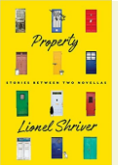
Values. Is Western civilization heading toward collapse based on the rampant abandonment of long-held values? That's the question that Ben Shapiro explores in his book titled, The Right Side of History: How Reason and Moral Purpose Made the West Great. Many readers may be skeptical of Shapiro as he explores selectively the importance of Judeo-Christian values over hundreds of years. A contemporary culture in which moral relativism and individualism dominate may be leading us toward decline. Shapiro calls for paying attention to moral

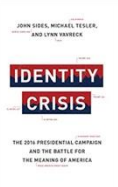
THE RIGHT SIDE
OF HISTORY

How Reason and Moral
Purpose Made the West Great
BEN SHAPIRO

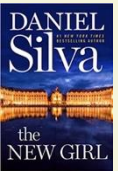
purpose and finding ways to work together for the common good.

<u>Restless Souls</u>	Sheehan, Dan	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Human Archipelago</u>	Sheikh, Fazal and Teju Cole	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Property: Stories Between Two Novellas</u>	Shriver, Lionel	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America</u>	Sides, John, Michael Tesler and Lynn Vavreck	***	<u>3/26/19</u>	<p>Ripe. If it's not too soon for you to stand back and examine the 2016 United States Presidential election, consider reading a book titled, <u>Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America</u>, by John Sides, Michael Tesler and Lynn Vavreck. Using lots of data and charts, the authors describe an electorate ripe with the conditions necessary to elect President Trump. While I think the authors provide a comprehensive view of the conditions at play in that election, it's still a bit too soon for me to look back at that time, and to think that any valuable perspective can be gained at this time. Political junkies and data nerds are those readers most likely to enjoy this book.</p>	
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<u>The New Girl</u>	Silva, Daniel	****	<u>7/26/19</u>	<p>Headlines. The nineteenth Israeli spy novel by Daniel Silva featuring protagonist Gabriel Allon is titled, <u>The New Girl</u>. Fans of the series will love the latest installment, as Silva takes recent news from the Middle East and</p>	
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			incorporates those topics and issues into this novel. While any reader who loves spy thrillers can read this book as a standalone novel, those who have read the entire series will appreciate all the nuances of the large cast of characters who are reprised in this installment. As usual, the plot is engaging, the characters complex and the good guys prevail in the end.	
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The Island Dwellers

Silverman, Jen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

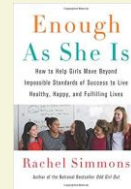


Enough As She Is: How to Help Girls Move Beyond Impossible Standards of Success to Live Healthy, Happy, and Fulfilling Lives

Simmons, Rachel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Team of Vipers: My 500 Extraordinary Days in the Trump White House

Sims, Cliff

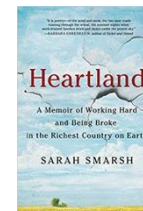
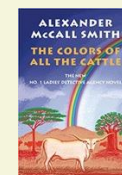
4/4/19

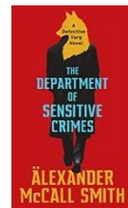

Perspective. How often have you thought about being a fly on the wall in the White House? If once or more, consider reading a book by Cliff Sims titled, Team of Vipers: My 500 Extraordinary Days in the Trump White House. He was that fly on the wall. This inside perspective by a low-level White House staffer doesn't gossip or attack President Trump. Sims gives his perspective on what he observed and what he thinks it meant. He affirms what most of us already know: many of the people around President Trump fight with each other and pursue individual agendas. The expected dysfunction is



supported by many anecdotes, which come across as believable. Political junkies of any stripe are those readers most likely to enjoy this book.

<u>The Rosie Result</u>	Simsion, Graeme	*****	<u>8/15/19</u>	<p>Project. The third installment in the Don Tillman series by Graeme Simsion is titled, <u>The Rosie Result</u>. Time has flown since the last installment. Don and Rosie's son, Hudson, is on the brink of high school, and Don shifts his focus from work to parenting and takes on the project lead role for what is the Hudson project. The project involves achieving the right result by following the right process. Hudson has his own ideas and Don and Rosie know that he has to find his own way in the world, with or without an autism assessment. As with the earlier novels, the characters are endearing, the plot interesting, and the humor frequent. Plus, there's a cocktail bar.</p>	
<u>Into the Raging Sea: Thirty-Three Mariners, One Megastorm, and the Sinking of El Faro</u>	Slade, Rachel	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Adèle</u>	Slimani, Leila	*****	<u>2/8/19</u>	<p>Dismal. Some protagonists provide positive role models for readers: these are lives we want to emulate. Other characters make us glad that people like them are not part of our lives. In her novel titled, <u>Adèle</u>, Leila Slimani introduces readers to the title character whose dismal life is rooted in sex addiction. Lives that can appear enviable from an outside perspective may be miserable to those who know the truth. Addictions often become obsessive and overpowering. Spending even a</p>	

			<p>short time with Adèle, I found my mood descending and I needed to take a pause. The writing and the insights into this desolate character kept me reading to the end. Readers with any interest in troubled characters and the consequences of addiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
<p><u>Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth</u></p>	<p>Smarsh, Sarah</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>9/24/19</u></p> <p>Poverty. Any reader interested in getting perspective about poverty and our national class divide should consider reading Sarah Smarsh's finely written memoir titled, <u>Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth</u>. Smarsh blends her personal story with reflections and observations about life in America. I found myself thinking about choices and the challenges of breaking out of poverty, as well as the rewards of hard work. The lives of women dominate this narrative including the imagined unborn daughter of the author who is addressed in a quirky way in the text. Nonetheless, whether a reader experienced poverty or is merely curious, this memoir is likely to stimulate reflections about life in our contemporary culture.</p>	
<p><u>The Colors of All the Cattle</u></p>	<p>Smith, Alexander McCall</p>	<p>****</p>	<p><u>2/8/19</u></p> <p>Politics. The nineteenth installment in the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series by Alexander McCall Smith is a novel titled, <u>The Colors of All the Cattle</u>. Smith gives readers the familiar gentle pace of a plot filled with familiar characters, while he introduces surprising new developments. This time out, apprentice mechanic, Charlie, does some effective detective work for Mma Ramotswe. Believe it or not, Grace and Phuti have a fight. Most surprising of all, is that Mma Ramotswe is convinced that she should run for the city</p>	

				<p>council on a platform to stop a property from being developed next to a cemetery. Who's her opponent? Violet Sephotho. If none of that makes sense to you, you haven't been reading this series, in which case you should treat yourself. Fans will laugh while reading this installment, and finish the book as always, filled with good feelings.</p> <p>Wolf. Prolific novelist Alexander McCall Smith kicks off a new series with a novel titled, <u>The Department of Sensitive Crimes</u>. Protagonist Ulf Varg (translated: Wolf Wolf) leads a team of detectives in Malmö, Sweden, whose focus is as the title indicates. Instead of what readers usually experience in Scandinavian crime fiction, with Smith at the helm, readers will laugh and bask in the good parts of human nature. As always, the characters are complex humans and engaging for readers. Before you know it, Smith has gotten you to think deeply about something, once you stop laughing.</p>	
<p><u>The Department of Sensitive Crimes</u></p>	<p>Smith, Alexander McCall</p>	<p>*****</p>	<p><u>7/16/19</u></p>		
<p><u>To the Land of Long Lost Friends</u></p>	<p>Smith, Alexander McCall</p>	<p>*****</p>	<p><u>12/16/19</u></p>	<p>Tricky. I might have missed it, but there wasn't time for relaxing with a cup of bush tea in the twentieth installment of Alexander McCall Smith's #1 Ladies Detective series, a novel titled, <u>To the Land of Long Lost Friends</u>. The pace of life in Botswana remains placid, although Mma Ramotswe has to navigate some tricky family issues in this installment. Smith pulls long term fans back into a familiar setting and cast of characters, lays out a storyline slowly, and then wraps it all up in a quick jolt. It's always comforting and relaxing spending time with Precious Ramotswe and her enduring goodness and kindness to others.</p>	

The Maze at Windermere

Smith, Gregory Blake

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

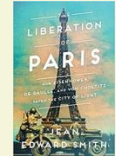


The Liberation of Paris: How Eisenhower, de Gaulle, and von Choltitz Saved the City of Light

Smith, Jean Edward

11/14/19

Decisions. I love to read a short work by a prominent historian that enlightens me about a single topic. In his book titled, The Liberation of Paris: How Eisenhower, de Gaulle, and von Choltitz Saved the City of Light, award-winning historian Jean Edward Smith describes the decisions that were made to liberate Paris in 1944 and the consequences of those decisions. Readers who enjoy history, especially those who love Paris, will read in this book how Paris was liberated and what that meant for the city we see today as well as how saving Paris led to a longer war. I closed the book wondering what would have happened to Paris in 1944 if Ike and Mamie Eisenhower hadn't lived there in the 1920s and 30s.

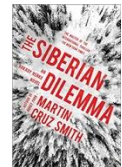


The Siberian Dilemma

Smith, Martin Cruz

12/9/19

Bears. The ninth novel by Martin Cruz Smith to feature Moscow investigator Arkady Renko is titled, The Siberian Dilemma. Fans of character driven crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series. Renko leaves Moscow to find his girlfriend Tatiana who's been away for over a month and her absence is giving Renko agita. Outside his urban element, Renko encounters new threats, including bears of various types. Smith includes many elements of contemporary Russian life: oligarchs, corrupt politics and the risks to journalists as they do their work.



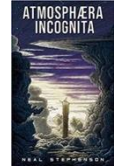
<u>Marilou Is Everywhere</u>	Smith, Sarah Elaine	***	<u>10/25/19</u>	<p>Outsider. Sarah Elaine Smith's debut novel it titled, <u>Marilou Is Everywhere</u>. Protagonist Cindy Stoa is coming of age in rural Pennsylvania as an outsider. She and her two brothers have been living on their own since their mother abandoned them. After Cindy's brother Virgil's girlfriend, Jude, disappears, the siblings begin spending time with Jude's mom, Bernadette. While at first in her alcoholic haze, Bernadette doesn't register the presence of Cindy, before long she begins to mistake Cindy for the missing Jude. Missing her own mother, Cindy falls into a situation where she is being loved in a home with affluence. Smith offers this story using finely written prose that will be savored by those readers who can overlook a lot of the quirky aspects of this novel.</p>	
<u>Permanent Record</u>	Snowden, Edward	****	<u>12/16/19</u>	<p>Context. Edward Snowden's memoir titled, <u>Permanent Record</u>, gives readers some context for why he revealed government secrets. By telling his side of the story, Snowden helps readers understand how his conscience was formed, how his assessment of right and wrong influenced his actions, and why the revelations he made became a logical next step despite the personal consequences. Whether you consider Snowden a hero or a criminal, you may want to listen to his side of his story before you close the book on him.</p>	
<u>The Briefing</u>	Spicer, Sean	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

[Atmosphæra Incognita](#)

Stephenson, Neal

[8/15/19](#)

Tower. Fans of Neal Stephenson who have become accustomed to feasting for many days over his epic novels will be as surprised as I was with the snack size novella titled, [Atmosphæra Incognita](#). Packed into this little book is a plot about the building of a giant tower and the technical obstacles overcome to reach significant heights. I recall Frank Lloyd Wright designed a mile-high skyscraper that was never built. Stephenson's imagination exceeds such a modest effort. Stephenson's architecture of this story includes great precision and longtime readers will see a master at work on these pages.

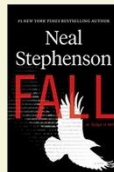


[Fall; or, Dodge in Hell](#)

Stephenson, Neal

[6/18/19](#)

Paradise. Patient readers looking for escape into a gigantic novel this summer should take a look at Neal Stephenson's new book titled, [Fall; or, Dodge in Hell](#). While some characters are reprised from an earlier novel, which may appeal to Stephenson fans, new readers can take this standalone novel and be well-entertained. Stephenson explores the afterlife, and presents a contemporary version of Milton's Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. Readers are entertained by adventures in parallel worlds: the world of the flesh, meatspace, and the afterlife, bitworld. Myth lovers and any readers who love a complicated meandering and fantastic story are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



[Kopp Sisters on the March](#)


Stewart, Amy


[10/25/19](#)

War. The fifth installment in Amy Stewart's series featuring the Kopp Sisters is a novel titled, [Kopp Sisters on the March](#). Set in 1917 when the United States is preparing to enter World War I, Stewart sends the sisters from New Jersey to Camp Chevy Chase, a National Service School, outside DC. The purpose of




the training camp for women is to train them how to help in the war effort. Constance uses her experience as sheriff, while Norma pitches the military on using messenger pigeons in battle, and Fleurette enlivens the camp with entertainment. Readers who enjoy historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.

<u>The Lager Queen of Minnesota</u>	Stradal, J. Ryan	*****	<p>Sisters. I was unprepared to be blown away by J. Ryan Stradal's novel titled, <u>The Lager Queen of Minnesota</u>. Many finely written novels hold up mirrors to human behavior in ways that offer great insight into our human condition. This novel does that in spades. Additionally, Stradal gently delves into family dynamics that involve estrangement, income inequality and the deep desire to work at doing a job that is recognized and rewarded. The dynamics between sisters Edith and Helen are revealed in gradual ways throughout the novel. One came to beer early in life, and the other later, in different ways. But don't think of this as a book about beer. This is in the category of the finest novels: it's an exploration of what it means to lead a good life. Since the novel is set in Minnesota, it's no spoiler to reveal that leading a good life has something to do with being nice. Every few years there seems to be a novel that captures the issues of the day. For 2019, and for me, this is that novel.</p>	
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<u>Olive, Again</u>	Strout, Elizabeth	*****	<p>Unfiltered. Fans of the memorable character Olive Kitteridge from a collection of stories with that title by Elizabeth Strout will be delighted that Olive has returned in another connected story collection titled, <u>Olive, Again</u>. Olive continues to speak her</p>	
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mind, bluntly, unfiltered, and often without awareness about the impact of her words on others. In other words, Olive is older, but not mellower. Beneath her crotchety veneer, there is deep love and kindness that comes out with each story in this collection. Best of all are the things Olive comes to realize over time, and what she never quite learns about herself. Strout leads readers to think about aging and the things we can learn and reflect about as we get older. The setting in Maine brings current rural life there in vibrant images in these stories. Strout writes with great skill, and I loved the return of Olive even more than I enjoyed meeting her over a decade ago.

<u>Off Season</u>	Sturm, James	****	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Stress. I don't read many graphic novels and I try to stay on the lookout for ones that I think will be interesting and satisfying to read. I thoroughly enjoyed James Sturm's novel titled, <u>Off Season</u>. The book covers the stress and strain in a marriage, set during the divisive election year of 2016. The words and images combine to present a well-told story, and the mood is enhanced by the shades of gray throughout the book. For readers who don't ever think to read graphic novels, consider this one. For fans of the genre, you may find this novel to be very satisfying.</p>	
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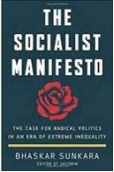

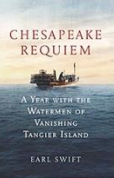

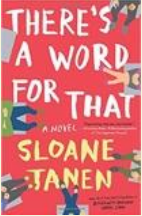
[Every Other Weekend](#)




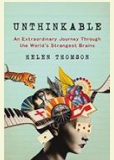
Summerfield, Zulema
Renee

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>The Socialist Manifesto: The Case for Radical Politics in an Era of Extreme Inequality</u>	Sunkara, Bhaskar	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>How Change Happens</u>	Sunstein, Cass	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Chesapeake Requiem: A Year with the Watermen of Vanishing Tangier Island</u>	Swift, Earl	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Things to Make and Break</u>	Tan, May-Lan	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>There's a Word for That</u>	Tanen, Sloane	***	<u>8/5/19</u>	Inheritance. After I finished reading Sloane Tanen's novel titled, <u>There's a Word for That</u> , I thought of something a psychiatrist said after pointing toward his copy of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: "we're all in there somewhere." Tanen uses the members of multiple generations of the Kessler family to describe aspects of inheritance and help readers laugh at our lifelong foibles. Protagonist Marty Kessler is a 75-year-old movie producer heading to rehab because he's hooked on opioids. A fellow resident at the rehab in Malibu is Bunny Small, a 70-year-old writer to whom Marty had been married briefly	

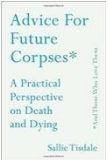
				decades earlier. Tanen defines some German words at the beginning of chapters to support the meaning of the book's title. I felt mildly entertained and found Tanen's prose enjoyable both in dialogue and exposition. Maybe all the dysfunction in the relationships was just tiring.	
<u>Democracy May Not Exist, But We'll Miss It When It's Gone</u>	Taylor, Astra	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Efficiency Paradox: What Big Data Can't Do</u>	Tenner, Edward	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Liar's Candle</u>	Thomas, August	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Unthinkable: An Extraordinary Journey Through the World's Strangest Brains</u>	Thomson, Helen	****	<u>10/10/19</u>	Envy. Have you ever wished that you had a better memory? Be careful what you wish for. One of the nine interesting brains that Helen Thomson explores in her book titled, <u>Unthinkable: An Extraordinary Journey Through the World's Strangest Brains</u> , involves a man who remembers every single detail of his life. Other examples include hearing music that isn't "there," and one doctor who feels his patients' pain. Thomson writes with real verve and proposes ways that our more typical brains can work better for us. The biology is fascinating, the cases compelling, and the overall text cogent and thoughtful.	

Advice for Future Corpses (and Those Who Love Them): A Practical Perspective on Death and Dying

Tisdale, Sallie

11/21/19

Candid. Someone I knew while I was in college would sit down at the breakfast table every morning and say, “Here we are one day closer to the grave.” While that may have somewhat morbid and definitely not been a cheery start to the day, it was certainly accurate and reflected an awareness of the certainty of death. That awareness is made candid and useful for every cogent person in a book by Sallie Tisdale titled, Advice for Future Corpses (and Those Who Love Them): A Practical Perspective on Death and Dying. Drawn from her experience in nursing and palliative care, Tisdale explains with clarity what to expect with dying. She includes lots of helpful tools to improve communication about the process of dying and in making one’s wishes well known. Read it today, since you are now one more day closer to your grave and you should be prepared.

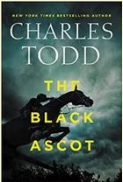


The Black Ascot

Todd, Charles

8/27/19

Hiding. Inspector Ian Rutledge is back and he’s breaking more Scotland Yard rules in the novel by Charles Todd titled, The Black Ascot. A murder suspect, Alan Barrington, in a case that happened at the 1910 Ascot race has been missing for over ten years, and Rutledge gets permission to try to track him down. Fans of this popular crime series know that despite his nightmares from his World War I experience, Rutledge will doggedly investigate this case, and discover where Barrington has been hiding. Readers who enjoy character-driven crime fiction with engaging plots are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.

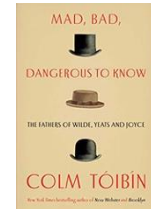


Mad, Bad, Dangerous to Know: The Fathers of Wilde, Yeats and Joyce

Toibin, Colm

11/9/19

Influencers. I'm willing to hazard a guess that more books have been written about the relationships between mothers and daughters than fathers and sons. Colm Toibin has written a brisk and interesting book titled, Mad, Bad, Dangerous to Know: The Fathers of Wilde, Yeats and Joyce, about William Wilde, John Butler Yeats and John Joyce, the fathers of writers Oscar, W.B. and James respectively. Toibin brings to life the marvelous imperfections of these interesting fathers and the ways in which they influenced the lives of their sons and how they show up in the writers' work. Fans of Irish Literature are those readers most likely to enjoy this finely written book that walks us through Dublin and offers great insight into complex relationships.



Flights

Tokaczuk, Olga

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

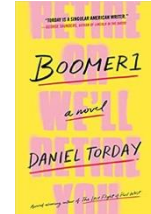


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Torday, Daniel

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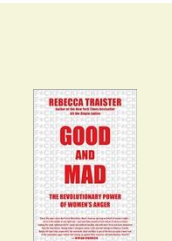


Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger

Traister, Rebecca

1/22/19

Release. I am a man very uncomfortable with anger, both my own and others. Rebecca Traister has become comfortable with her anger and has found healthy ways of releasing her rage. In her book titled, Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger, Traister asks readers to listen to the source of women's anger. She asks women to remember the feeling, and to put rage into action.



				Traister explores women's history and the forces of subjugation. I encourage any reader, male or female, uncomfortable with aspects of modern life, to listen to Traister's fine writing, and consider ways in which anger and being mad can lead to good. I'm on board.	
<u>I Was Told There'd Be Sexbots</u>	Troost, J. Maarten	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>A Shot in the Dark</u>	Truss, Lynne	*****	<u>3/6/19</u>	Clever. Lynn Truss kicks off a new crime fiction series set in the 1950s featuring Brighton Police Constable Twitten with a novel titled, <u>A Shot in the Dark</u> . Constable Twitten is a delightfully annoying smart aleck who rubs his colleagues the wrong way. Truss combines humor and satire with a traditional police procedural plot and produces a novel that was very entertaining to this reader. The more you know about Brighton and crime novels, the funnier this book will be for you.	
<u>The Man That Got Away</u>	Truss, Lynne	*****	<u>12/9/19</u>	Brighton. Lynne Truss returns to Brighton with the second Constable Twitten novel titled, <u>The Man That Got Away</u> . The humor in this novel exceeds the first installment and will appeal to those readers who enjoy a good spoof of the crime mystery genre. The full cast of characters will amuse most readers and as Twitten settles into Brighton, he becomes even more loveable and perhaps even a bit flexible.	
<u>An Elderly Lady Is Up to No Good</u>	Tursten, Helene	*****	<u>1/22/19</u>	Villain. The protagonist of a group of related stories by Helene Tursten titled, <u>An Elderly Lady Is Up to No Good</u> , is an elderly woman named Maud. For those readers who cheer for the bad guy, Maud will be the ideal villain.	

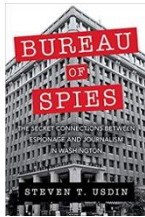
				Who could possibly think Maud is up to no good? Read these terrific stories to meet a fascinating character who behaves in unexpected ways. You may never look at an elderly woman in the same way again.	
<u>The 7 1/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle</u>	Turton, Stuart	****	<u>4/19/19</u>	<p>Complicated. Fans of murder mysteries who are bored with plots that are simple to solve are those most likely to enjoy Stuart Turton's complicated debut novel titled, <u>The 7 1/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle</u>. Protagonist Aiden Bishop is trapped inside Blackheath House. He can be released only after he identifies the killer of Evelyn Hardcastle. Aiden has eight days to do this, and over the course of each day he inhabits the body of one house guest. The creativity and twists will delight those mystery readers who can be patient with the complicated exposition.</p>	
<u>Accessory to War: The Unspoken Alliance Between Astrophysics and the Military</u>	Tyson, Neil deGrasse	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Unquiet</u>	Ullmann, Linn	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Mind and Matter: A Life in Math and Football</u>	Urschel, John and Louisa Thomas	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

Bureau of Spies:
The Secret
Connections
between
Espionage and
Journalism in
Washington

Usdin, Steven T.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

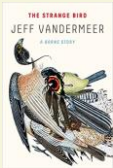


The Strange Bird

VanderMeer, Jeff

4/25/19

Perspective. Jeff VanderMeer adds another perspective to the world he created in his novel titled, Borne, in a smaller novel titled, The Strange Bird. Fans of the earlier novel are those readers most likely to enjoy this creative and imaginative addition. The bird was built in a laboratory from a variety of parts: avian, human and who knows what. Where does this creature fit in the world? She knows captivity and searches for the place where she truly belongs. VanderMeer explores captivity and freedom and raises questions about the world we create.

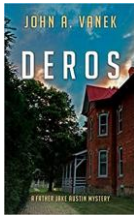


Deros

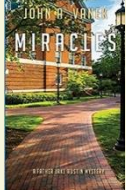
Vanek, John A.


1/9/19

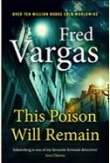
Jake. The debut novel by John A. Vanek features a strange title, Deros, and a daring choice for a protagonist these days: a Catholic priest. Let's get the title out of the way first: it stands for Date of Expected Return from Overseas. Protagonist Father Jake Austin is a war veteran who trained as a physician, and finds himself assigned to his hometown of Oberlin, Ohio. Vanek portrays Jake as a normal healthy guy, troubled by his wartime service, and prepared to fill in at a parish for an ailing pastor and work at a local hospital. Jake arrives in Oberlin just in time to attend his high school reunion and the stuff that happens then provides the plot for this first novel in a planned series featuring Father



Jake. I enjoyed the story and the development of several characters.

<u>Miracles</u>	Vanek, John A.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
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<u>Halibut on the Moon</u>	Vann, David	*****	7/3/19	<p>Insight. One reason we read fiction is to gain insight into human nature, to understand people just like us, and people who are very different from us. In his novel titled, <u>Halibut on the Moon</u>, David Vann pulls readers into a family for whom mental illness defined their world. Readers become swept up in the swings from depression to euphoria, and in the sensation of being out of control. Vann captures the pain of mental illness with insight and writes with great skill.</p>	
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<u>This Poison Will Remain</u>	Vargas, Fred	*****	9/24/19	<p>Recluses. What was I thinking? I'm usually reluctant to pick up a crime novel by a prolific writer I've overlooked out of fear that I may add yet one more series to my reading queue. I read a review of French novelist Fred Vargas' ninth Commissaire Adamsberg series, a book titled, <u>This Poison Will Remain</u>, and I decided to read it. I was pulled into this gripping story of revenge and justice populated with two different recluses: the spider variety and a nun. Adamsberg is a detective in the tradition of the greats: overflowing with instinct; respectful of his team; and a detective who follows a meandering path until he achieves resolution. Now that I've been bitten by Vargas with this novel, I'll be on the lookout for her next installment in this series.</p>	
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The Trouble with Women Artists: Reframing the History of Art

Vieville, Camilie and Laura Adler

Unread

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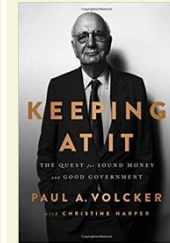


Keeping At It: The Quest for Sound Money and Good Government

Volcker, Paul

2/21/19

Cogent. If you know about Paul Volcker, you will be glad to read his memoir titled, Keeping At It: The Quest for Sound Money and Good Government. If you think you've heard the name Volcker, but can't remember much about him, you must read this book. The former chair of the Federal Reserve reflects on his life of service in this memoir, and he highlights three critical principles that he has followed throughout his life: stable prices, sound finance and good government.



No Good Alternative

Vollmann, William T.

9/24/19

Absolution. The second volume of William T. Vollmann's carbon ideologies treatise is titled, No Good Alternative. Having come to grips with nuclear energy in the first part, Vollmann now turns his attention to natural gas, oil and coal. Vollmann explores our reliance on fossil fuels and the consequences of that for our planet. He writes with passion and empathy, asking for absolution from future generations over what this generation has done, explaining as the title indicates, we were not able to find another way. Through both volumes, Vollmann tries to listen and learn and understand why.



On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous

Vuong, Ocean

10/10/19

Poetic. If your mother were illiterate, and you knew that a letter to her would never be read or understood, what would you write? We're shown what we could write in the debut novel by Ocean Vuong titled, On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous. Using finely written prose, Vuong's skill as a poet shines in this



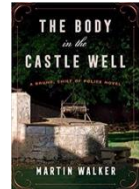
			exposition about life as it is, unvarnished, conveying one's trust. What does it take to be heard? There's tenderness on these pages, and also the violence of life in a society where class, race and masculinity become toxic for the narrator of the novel, a man in his late twenties named Little Dog. The revelations in the novel can be dramatic and are always reflective, insightful and finely written.	
<u>Sacred Liberty: America's Long, Bloody and Ongoing Struggle for Religious Freedom</u>	Waldman, Steven	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Dreamers</u>	Walker, Karen Thompson	****	<u>4/4/19</u> Sleep. Some writers have the ability to tap into core emotions like fear and write fiction that takes readers from caution to insight about those emotions. In her novel titled, <u>The Dreamers</u> , Karen Thompson Walker explores what happens when people begin to fall asleep and not wake up. They are alive and dreaming, but they cannot be awakened. It begins in a college community in Santa Lora, California and there is fear about a virus spreading this condition everywhere. It's easy to become afraid when we're confused about what happened in the past and what is a premonition about the future. We can wonder how our community would respond to the spread of a virus. We can dream with the characters in this novel and think about what is read and what is imagined. Fans of good creative writing are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.	

The Body in the Castle Well

Walker, Martin

7/16/19

Artworks. Fans of the Bruno Chief of Police series by Martin Walker will enjoy a return to the Dordogne in the fourteenth book in the series, a novel titled, The Body in the Castle Well. You already know from the title that the crime in this installment involves someone found dead in a well. The plot required a lot of building before we finally got to sit down to eat and drink with Bruno and his friends. An authenticator of artworks has a house full of works that he wants to be seen by others after he dies. The Americans descend on Bruno because the deceased belonged to an influential family. The full cast of familiar characters returns for another interesting adventure in a special place. Take a virtual vacation in the mythical French town of St. Denis, and savor everything the region and this novel have to offer.

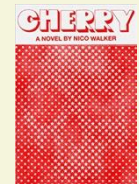


Cherry

Walker, Nico

1/4/19

Addicted. The debut novel by Nico Walker titled, Cherry, takes readers into the lives of characters addicted by opioids. Walker develops these characters with skill and helps readers understand the complexity of lives and the choices individuals make every day. There's darkness and wit in this novel, side by side, including war experience and PTSD. If you know addicts, you will recognize the characters in this novel. If you are far removed from the American opioid crisis, congratulations, and use this novel as a way to understand the ways in which drug addiction takes over one's life. Walker's voice is blunt and unblinking and may offend some readers.

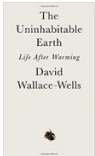


The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming

Wallace-Wells, David

4/25/19

Alarm. How ready are you for severe weather events, climate refugees, food shortages and increasing civil unrest? After reading David Wallace-Wells' book titled, The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming, you're likely to wish you were more prepared. Packed with loads of data, the book tells a horror story about what scientists predict as likely if average temperatures continue to rise. In summary: a horror show will follow. I don't know what it will take for the United States and the world to take climate change seriously. This book may have no impact. Any informed citizen open to listening to some evidence should consider reading this book. What each of us decides to do in this area is up to us, but we need to find ways to be better informed, and this book represents one more way to pay attention to this critical topic.

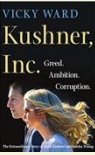



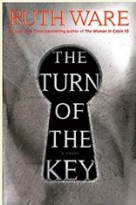
Kushner, Inc.: Greed. Ambition. Corruption. The Extraordinary Story of Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump


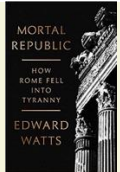

Ward, Vicky

7/16/19

Character. Most observers of the Kushner and Trump families will acknowledge that the pursuit of self-interest is the first priority or overriding value of the members of these families. In her book titled, Kushner, Inc.: Greed. Ambition. Corruption. The Extraordinary Story of Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump, journalist Vicky Ward describes the formative experiences of Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump and chronicles the ways in which they enrich themselves and their families as they attain positions of great influence in the Trump Administration. Ward presents their actions for readers to come to our own assessment of personal character. While sources are not disclosed, most readers will conclude that Ward talked to lots of



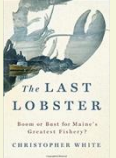
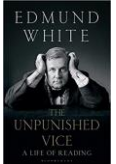



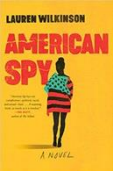
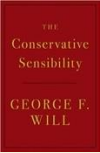
			people who confirmed her account of their actions.	
<u>Rusty Brown, Part 1</u>	Ware, Chris	****	10/15/19	<p>Inexplicable. I worked hard while reading Chris Ware's graphic novel titled, <u>Rusty Brown, Part 1</u>. Some of the panels are very small, and the text required me to ratchet up to 2.5x readers and a bright light. On and between the covers of this unusual book, readers can become immersed in the highs and lows of life. This is a story of the struggles of life and love. By calling this volume one, Ware is preparing loyal readers to anticipate continuing the story. This book is way beyond my ability to explain, so I suggest that any interested reader pick up the volume and sample what Ware has to offer.</p> 
<u>The Turn of the Key</u>	Ware, Ruth	*****	11/9/19	<p>Story. My prescription for you on the next cold and windy night is to pour a few fingers of a fine single malt for yourself and sit in a comfortable chair with a copy of Ruth Ware's novel titled, <u>The Turn of the Key</u>. Ware eases us into the story of Rowan Caine written in the form of Rowan's letter to her attorney from prison where she awaits trial for murder. The action builds slowly, so sip at leisure. Once the action builds, you will soon forget there is a beverage at your side. Ware uses the whole gothic toolbox for this novel: a remote setting in the Scottish Highlands, a young woman accepting a lucrative job as a nanny, loads of red herrings, spooky settings, superstitions and ghosts, and a bit of romance. While the early exposition might seem plodding, seeds are planted, and the second half of the novel races toward an exciting end well before your glass of scotch is consumed. The setting at Heatherbrae House</p> 

				<p>blends the horrors of smart home technology with a house that was the place for tragedy in the past.</p> <p>Audience. As I kept reading Cecelia Watson's book titled, <u>Semicolon: The Past, Present and Future of a Misunderstood Mark</u>, I found myself wondering about her intended audience. After fifty pages or so, I concluded that I wasn't the target reader, but I slogged through to the end. Are there really enough readers who truly care about punctuation? I expected something a bit jauntier than what's on offer in this book. I truly didn't know that the semicolon is controversial. I didn't know that there have been periods of popularity followed by periods of aversion whether following or violating contemporary rules of grammar. I know some editors who would appreciate this book, but they may be too busy to take the time to read it. Sample a few pages to see if you might be the targeted reader for this book.</p>	
<u>Semicolon: The Past, Present and Future of a Misunderstood Mark</u>	Watson, Cecelia	***	11/21/19		
<u>Mortal Republic: How Rome Fell into Tyranny</u>	Watts, Edward J.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Fight Like a Mother: How a Grassroots Movement Took on the Gun Lobby and Why Women Will Change the World</u>	Watts, Shannon	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

<u>Still Life with Monkey</u>	Weber, Katharine	*****	<p>Quality. Slowly and tenderly Katharine Weber pulls readers into the lives of Duncan and Laura Wheeler. In a novel titled, <u>Still Life with Monkey</u>, Weber explores the balance between the will to live and the desire to die. She taps into questions about the quality of life, and our ability to adapt to change. Duncan is a successful architect who became paralyzed following an auto accident in which one of his assistants died. Duncan is broken physically and mentally by the accident, and Laura, who works as an art conservator, wants to do all she can to repair her husband. She brings a trained monkey helper into the house, a capuchin named Ottoline. With finely written prose and insight into human nature, Weber takes us into the Weber lives and draws us into answering for ourselves key questions about the quality of life. She could have gone from insight to melancholy at any turn, but the quality of the writing keeps the novel crisp and cogent.</p>	
<u>Mrs. Everything</u>	Weiner, Jennifer	*****	<p>Choices. The place of women in society from the middle of the twentieth century until now is the subject of Jennifer Weiner's novel titled, <u>Mrs. Everything</u>. Sisters Jo and Bethie Kaufman grew up in Detroit and Weiner describes key episodes in their lives and the choices they made with intention or out of necessity. Constrained and defined by others, both women survived what life threw at them. Along the way, readers are pulled into people, places and situations that may cause discomfort, but reflect aspects of the times described. The life we imagine for ourselves is often different when reality sets in and choices are made. Weiner's prose and insight</p>	

into human nature lead readers toward introspection. Contemporaries of the main characters will want to tell their own stories of this era after reading the book, so for the right book club, this novel will generate robust conversation.

<u>Paris in Stride</u>	Weiner, Jesse Kanelos and Sarah Moroz	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Chosen Wars: How Judaism Became an American Religion</u>	Weisman, Steven R.	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Last Lobster</u>	White, Christopher	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Unpunished Vice: A Life of Reading</u>	White, Edmund	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>The Nickel Boys</u>	Whitehead, Colson	*****	<u>8/15/19</u>	Elwood. It seemed that I had finished reading Colson Whitehead's novel titled, <u>The Nickel Boys</u> , just minutes after I started. I was hooked by the story of Elwood Curtis and his diversion from the road to college to serving time at the Nickel Academy, a reform school. Whitehead exposes evil in his exposition of individuals and the institution and the community. Within a handful of pages, readers will become incensed by scandalous behavior and injustice at an institution whose mission entails reform. Whitehead's fine	

			<p>prose soars on the pages of this novel, and the powerful story is enhanced by a well-crafted plot and complex and interesting characters. If the finest fiction reveals the depths of human behavior and draws readers into feeling deeply, this novel does that expertly.</p> <p>Recipe. Consider whether or not this set of ingredients will suit your taste in reading: a smattering of politics, race and gender, layered with a Cold War conflict set in Burkina Faso, and very compelling characters. That's all in the novel by Lauren Wilkinson titled, American Spy. Protagonist Marie Mitchell has always wanted to be an intelligence officer. As a black woman working at the FBI, she isn't often picked for the exciting work. When approached with the chance to play a role in bringing down the communist president of Burkina Faso, Marie is all in. Wilkinson structures all the motivation in the novel as family-based. Marie narrates her life as an agent as a personal story with her two sons as the intended future audience. She is also working under the shadow of her late sister, whom she admired greatly. The prose is finely written and readers who enjoy literary fiction with well-developed characters and an interesting plot are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>	
American Spy	Wilkinson, Lauren	*****	<p>5/24/19</p>	
The Conservative Sensibility	Will, George F.	*****	<p>7/16/19</p>	

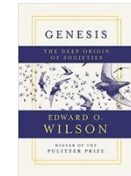
			<p>soundbites, Will lays out principles of conservatism in this book, and a philosophy to which he measures our current state of affairs. He uses Madison, Hamilton and other founders as the touchpoint for his analysis about government. Any reader looking for a greater understanding of what conservatism means will find a persuasive view expressed in this book. I came away from the book with insight about why conservatives want a smaller government and a weaker executive branch.</p>	
<p><u>What the Hell Do You Have to Lose: Trump's War on Civil Rights</u></p>	Williams, Juan	Unread	Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<p><u>Supper Club</u></p>	Williams, Lara	****	<p><u>9/3/19</u></p> <p>Appetite. I found Lara Williams' debut novel titled, <u>Supper Club</u>, to be very odd. A group of women formed a club at which they satisfy their appetites. The hungers are real and the ways in which desires are fulfilled kept me scratching my head, unsure whether to laugh or cry. I mostly laughed but recognized that I was reading about deep depression and the ways in which making connections with others in contemporary society can be difficult. Each of us engages with the world in a unique way. Protagonist Roberta is fully herself in this novel, and as we get to know her, we come to understand her engagement, no matter how different it is from our own. Williams' prose is finely written, and I can say with certainty that I've never read a novel quite like this one.</p>	

Genesis: The Deep
Origin of Societies

Wilson, Edward O.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

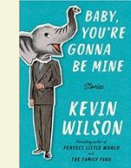


Baby You're
Gonna Be Mine

Wilson, Kevin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

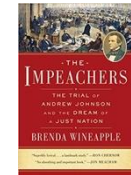


The Impeachers:
The Trial of
Andrew Johnson
and the Dream of
a Just Nation

Wineapple, Brenda

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

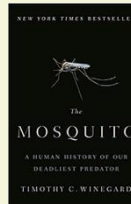


The Mosquito: A
Human History of
Our Deadliest
Predator

Winegard, Timothy C.

11/14/19

Deet. After reading Timothy C. Winegard's book titled, The Mosquito: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator, I checked to see if we had mosquito repellent with deet in the house. Have you ever known something but experienced pleasure when someone else plays back to you what you know in a more coherent narrative? That was my experience on reading this book. I already know about how disease killed people over many centuries, and how in some wars there were more casualties from disease than from battle. Thanks to Winegard, I was able to follow a coherent narrative presenting the mosquito as human's most powerful enemy across many centuries. I also read this book when Eastern equine encephalitis was spreading in the United States. That explains my search for deet. So far, so good.



We the
Corporations:
How American
Businesses Won
Their Civil Rights

Winkler, Adam

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

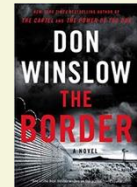


The Border

Winslow, Don

6/10/19

Conclusion. Don Winslow wraps up his Power of the Dog trilogy with a doorstopper of a novel titled, The Border. Fans of the series are those readers most likely to feel that this is a great conclusion to a thrilling series. Some political partisans may find that certain fictional characters Winslow presents in the novel portray President Trump and members of his extended family in ways that are biased. Less sensitive readers will find an exciting thriller packed with action centered around the war on drugs. Fans of the series will see consistency in the reprised characters and stories of new characters that will resonate for most readers. Winslow also brings to life the struggles of those addicted to drugs as well as those fleeing violence in Central America.



Golden State


Winters, Ben H.

6/18/19

Lies. In his novel titled, Golden State, Ben Winters describes a society in which lying is a crime. Protagonist Laszlo Ratesic works for the state in a role called a Speculator, and his job is to investigate anomalies. The surveillance state records everything in multiple ways, so getting to the truth should be based on evidence contained in the record. Laz learns over the course of this novel that if something can be done, it will be done, and his worldview becomes turned upside down when faced with alternate truth. Can records be altered? Wouldn't that be a lie? How can we discern truth? If any of this sounds



interesting to you, you're likely to enjoy this novel.

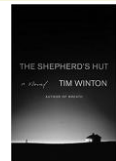
<u>Frankissstein</u>	Winterson, Jeanette	****	10/25/19	<p>Hybrid. Should your book club select Jeanette Winterson's novel titled, <u>Frankissstein</u>, be prepared to open more wine as questions explored in the novel will lead to more questions. She weaves two stories: the familiar Mary Shelley story and a contemporary story featuring a transgender doctor who works in cryogenics. Questions arise about the purpose of the body, the meaning of life, defining our identity and following our desires. Will we be a hybrid of body and machine? After the second glass of wine at book club, let the likely conversation about sexbots meander toward laughter. Then ask another deep question.</p>	
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[The Shepherd's Hut](#)


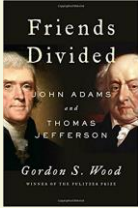

Winton, Tim


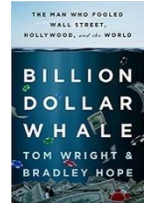

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



<u>Reader, Come Home: The Reading Brain in a Digital World</u>	Wolf, Maryanne	****	12/20/19	<p>Neuroscience. What happens in my brain when I read? That's the question that led me to opening Maryanne Wolf's book titled, <u>Reader, Come Home: The Reading Brain in a Digital World</u>. Some of my reading is through printed books, some through digital text and some by listening to audiobooks. Wolf describes in this book the impact of screens on our brains and her presentation will cause readers to think about the meaning of deep reading and to assess one's ability to maintain or increase our intellectual capabilities. Wolf writes for a general audience in a style that's engaging and interesting. Now that I've read this book, I know that my brain achieved</p>	
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				positive outcomes from the process, and I am pleased to recommend this book to your brain as well.	
<u>Siege: Trump Under Fire</u>	Wolff, Michael	***	<u>8/5/19</u>	<p>Bannon. After all the dirt dished in Michael Wolff's 2018 book titled, <i>Fire and Fury</i>, I was surprised that a second volume titled, <u>Siege: Trump Under Fire</u>, would follow so quickly. In the same way that political insiders talk to Bob Woodward knowing he will write about what they say whether flattering or not, it seems that Wolff has no shortage of people willing to dish dirt on the record. One obvious source, Steve Bannon, shows up throughout this book. Political junkies of any partisan stripe are those readers most likely to buy, if not actually read, this book.</p>	
<u>Friends Divided: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson</u>	Wood, Gordon	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Red at the Bone</u>	Woodson, Jacqueline	****	<u>11/21/19</u>	<p>Immersive. The novel by Jacqueline Woodson titled, <u>Red at the Bone</u>, packs a wallop inside a compact two hundred pages. Woodson plants us into an extended family and uses their voices and the atmosphere of their lives to explore race, teenage pregnancy, and finding our place in the world. The multiple voices in the novel scramble us in time and focus us on what's important. Woodson explores love and loss with great insight. The humanity of the characters in the novel will remain with most readers long after the last page is turned.</p>	

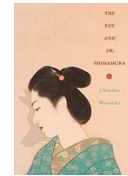
<u>Godsend</u>	Wray, John	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	
<u>Billion Dollar Whale: The Man Who Fooled Wall Street, Hollywood, and the World</u>	Wright, Tom and Bradley Hope	*****	1/9/19	<p>Heists. There's nothing new about financial fraud, greed and hubris, but the scale of it all provides quite a story in a book by Wall Street Journal reporters Tom Wright and Bradley Hope titled, <u>Billion Dollar Whale: The Man Who Fooled Wall Street, Hollywood, and the World</u>. You may have read their reporting about the Malaysia kleptocracy and the 1MBD scandal involving Goldman Sachs. The book tells us about a young Wharton graduate, Jho Low who knew how to game the system, heisted a fortune for himself and others, at least \$4.5 billion, and got lots of senior executives to be swayed by his manipulation. While there's an entertaining aspect to this story if your money is not at stake, here's a scary takeaway (p.85): "His was a scheme for the twenty-first century, a truly global endeavor that produced nothing – a shift of cash from a poorly controlled state fund in the developing world, diverting it into the opaque corners of an underpoliced financial system that's all but broken." The barn door may still be open.</p>	
<u>The Curse of Bigness: Antitrust in the New Gilded Age</u>	Wu, Tim	Unread		Shelf of Ennui 2019.	

The Fox and Dr. Shimamura

Wunnicke, Christine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

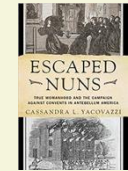


Escaped Nuns: True Womanhood and the Campaign Against Convents in Antebellum America

Yacovazzi, Cassandra L.

Unread

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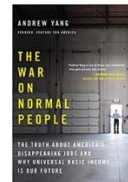


The War on Normal People: The Truth About America's Disappearing Jobs and Why Universal Basic Income Is Our Future

Yang, Andrew

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Seventeen

Yokoyama, Hideo

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

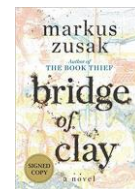


Bridge of Clay

Zusak, Marcus

2/2/19

Dunbars. There are loads of levels of meaning for the bridges in Marcus Zusak's novel titled, Bridge of Clay. Protagonist Clay Dunbar is building a physical bridge. He also bridges the family relationships and finds identity as a Dunbar boy, one of five brothers. Zusak bridges past and present in erratic ways as he tells the Dunbars' story in mixed pieces of exposition. The building blocks become clearer over hundreds of pages of what seems unclear or circular while on the reading



journey. Patient readers will be rewarded with
a finely written family story.



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Key to Ratings:

*****	I love it
****	I like it
***	It's OK
**	I don't like it
*	I hate it