

Steve Hopkins' Bookshelves

This Bookshelf: All Books Authors N through Z

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This web page lists all books appearing on the pages of *Executive Times* and at <http://bkrev.blogspot.com> from April 1999 through December 2020 for authors last names from N through Z. For the pending list (The Shelf of Possibility) and reviews by Steve Hopkins in 2021, visit <http://www.hopkinsandcompany.com/2021books.html>. You can click on the title of a rated book to jump to the detailed book review. Click on the picture of any jacket cover to jump to amazon.com where you can purchase a copy of any book on this shelf. You can jump to an issue of *Executive Times* by hitting the date in the "Issue Date" column. When you hit a broken link, send an e-mail to books@hopkinsandcompany.com to request what you want.

Key to Ratings 1999-2012

Outstanding book-read it
now

Highly recommended

Recommended

Mildly recommended

Read if your interest is
strong

Do Not Read: Take a Pass

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DNR

Key to Ratings: 2013 and
after

I love it

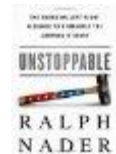

I like it

It's OK

I don't like it

I hate it

All Books 1999-2020 Authors N through Z

| Title (Click on Link to purchase at amazon.com) | Author(s) | Rating | Blog Date | Comments | Click on Picture to Purchase at amazon.com |
|---|----------------|--------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Unstoppable: The Emerging Left-Right Alliance to Dismantle the Corporate State | Nader, Ralph | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| Wise Men | Nadler, Stuart | **** | 4/12/13 | Legacy. Stuart Nadler's debut novel, Wise Men , has four ingredients that combine to make a tasty dish of fiction: love, money, race and identity. Set in the mid-20 th century, love happens in unexpected places, money arrives in a large amount quickly, and things happen that lead to betrayal, a need for forgiveness, and satisfactory resolution. The key |  |

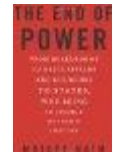
father-son relationship produces a legacy that has consequences. Nadler's prose is finely crafted, the characters are well drawn, and the story entertaining.

The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States, Why Being In Charge Isn't What It Used to Be

Naim, Moises

Unread

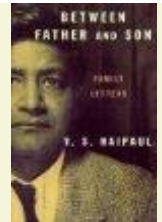
Shelf of Ennui 2015.



[Between Father and Son: Family Letters](#)

Naipaul, V. S.

Paul Theroux and others have called Naipaul the finest living writer in the English language. Here's a chance to read some early letters and glimpse at his relationship with his father, also a writer.



[Magic Seeds](#)

Naipaul, V.S.

[June 05](#)

Identity. Character from earlier novel reprised to join communist revolutionaries in India, become arrested and jailed, and return to England, still searching for who he is and his place in the world.

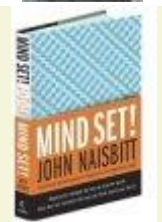


[Mind Set!](#)

Naisbitt, John

[Mar 07](#)

Surprises. Interspersed among the pages of things already known are one or more surprises for readers that may have a profound impact. Read and be surprised by that discovery.

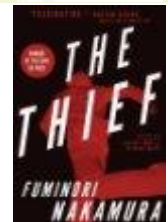


[The Thief](#)

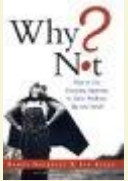


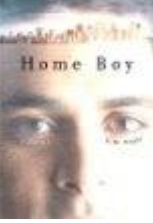
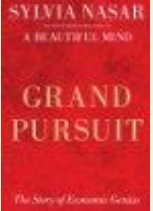
Nakamura, Fuminori

[10/25/13](#)

Pickpocket. I was intrigued by Fuminori Nakamura's novel, [The Thief](#). Translated from Japanese, the novel presents an image of contemporary society from the perspective of a pickpocket. I kept thinking about skill as I enjoyed the ease with which the thief carries out his work.



When a crime goes awry, we are led to see the consequences of an unexamined life. If your preference in fiction tends toward the psychological and thought-provoking, consider reading this novel.

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|--|------------------|--------|--|---|---|
| Why Not? How to Use Everyday Ingenuity to Solve Problems Big and Small | Nalebuff, Barry | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>Fish in Exile</u> | Nao, Vi Khi | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>The Selected Works of Abdullah the Cossack</u> | Naqvi, H.M. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Home Boy | Naqvi, Husain M. | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| Grand Pursuit: The Story of Economic Genius | Nasar, Sylvia | Unread | | I ventured a few dozen pages into this book and stalled. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |

Andrew Carnegie

Nasaw, David

Feb 07

Unpredictable. Finely written biography, replete with the many contradictions of character and behavior that frustrated those with whom Carnegie interacted. Lots to learn on these 800+ pages.



The Patriarch: The Remarkable Life and Turbulent Times of Joseph P. Kennedy

Nasaw, David

11/19/13

Ambition. It took me almost a year to read the 800 or so pages of David Nasaw's fine biography of Joe Kennedy titled, The Patriarch: The Remarkable Life and Turbulent Times of Joseph P. Kennedy. I spread out the reading not because this was slow reading, but because I found that the raw ambition and imperious personality of Kennedy was best served in small doses. Nasaw captures the politics, business, family and character with a wide scope and a presentation of episodes and anecdotes that kept my attention throughout. Any reader interested in this era, this person, and this family, will likely enjoy all the time spent in reading this well-written biography.



Ahab's Wife or, The Star-Gazer

Nasland, Sena Jeter

An epic homage to Melville. Could be a great American Novel.

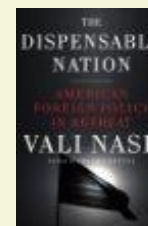



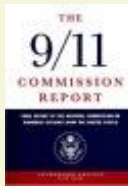



The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat




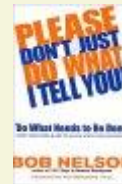
Nasr, Vali

5/10/13

Cogent. Obfuscation can often be the preferred communication style of professionals involved in foreign relations. Coded language conveys messages to narrow targeted audiences, while most listeners hear little that could be called cogent or transparent. Contrary to that approach, Vali Nasr writes with candor and clarity in his book, The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat. He also writes with a specific viewpoint: supportive of Richard Holbrooke and Hilary



| | | | | | |
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| | | | | Clinton, and angry at the shortcomings of the Obama White House. The first accounts of history come from informed insiders like Nasr, and this contribution will be used by others who will assess American foreign policy for years to come. Readers interested in politics and world affairs are those most likely to enjoy reading this finely written book. | |
| <u>SONY: The Private Life</u> | Nathan, John | *** | <u>7/00</u> | A fascinating and revealing inside story of Sony Corporation and the people who've led it. |  |
| The 9/11 Commission report : final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States | National Commission on Terrorist Attacks | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Gargoyles</u> | Nayes, Alan | ** | <u>Aug 02</u> | Robin Cook-like fiction makes good parallel to Fukuyama's <u>Our Posthuman Future</u> , featuring made-to-order creatures. |  |
| <u>The Unnatural</u> | Nayes, Alan | *** | <u>Aug 04</u> | Creepy. Better medical thriller than latest Robin Cook novels. An enjoyable, creepy story, perfect for summer distraction. |  |
| <u>The Best People: Trump's Cabinet and the Siege on Washington</u> | Nazaryan, Alexander | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

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|---|--------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Eleanor and Harry: The Correspondence of Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman</u> | Neal, Steve | ** | <u>Apr 03</u> | New Friends. Following FDR's death, Harry Truman and Eleanor Roosevelt needed each other, and through their letters, and Neal's light commentary, we see how they used each other, got to know each other, and eventually became friends. |  |
| City of Tiny Lights | Neate, Patrick | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Lessons From the Top: The Search for America's Best Business Leaders</u> | Neff, Thomas J. and Citrin, James M. | *** | <u>3/00</u> | Read 5-6 pages of general, high level themes about fifty executives and their companies. |  |
| <u>You're in Charge--Now What?</u> | Neff, Thomas J. and James M. Citrin | *** | <u>Apr 05</u> | Structure. Headhunters present 8 point plan for leaders in new roles, based on interviews with executives. Can be distilled to: listen, learn, underpromise, overdeliver. |  |
| <u>Please Don't Just Do What I Tell You: Do What Needs to be Done: Every Employee's Guide to Making Work More Rewarding</u> | Nelson, Bob | * | <u>May 02</u> | Premise is that managers and employees live in different worlds and are unlikely to communicate. Beware that people might actually do some of the things in this book. |  |

[The Boy in the Box](#)

Nelson, Lee J.

*

[Apr 03](#)

Welcome Back Kafka. Schemes and schemers, alienation and strangeness, in a New York City apartment, told with all the charm that Franz Kafka would have used. Read if you're up for a downer.



[The Argonauts](#)

Nelson, Maggie

[11/22/16](#)

Voice. The voice of Maggie Nelson is not one that I feel that I've heard before from other writers. In her book titled, [The Argonauts](#), she takes a critical look at marriage, gender and child-rearing, while reflecting on these and others issues as they have played out in her own life. This blend of memoir and criticism, combined with her writing skill and thoughtfulness, offer readers a unique voice and insight into issues and a personality that may be different from one's own experiences. The time I spent reading this short book led me to think about issues and people in new ways.



[So Many Books, So Little Time: A Year of Passionate Reading](#)

Nelson, Sara

**

[Jan 04](#)

Hyperlinking. Busy New Yorker chronicles her year and the many directions her reading led her toward or away from what she planned.



[The Tao of Willie](#)

Nelson, Willie and Turk Pippin

[July 06](#)

Conduct. Thanks to longtime friend Turk Pippin, Willie Nelson's wisdom comes across clearly on the pages of this book, full of jokes and the lessons of life and work.



[The Cactus League](#)

Nemens, Emily

[6/2/20](#)

Ensemble. Whether you love baseball or not, you're likely to enjoy the interesting ensemble of characters in Emily Nemens' debut novel titled, [The Cactus League](#). Nemens gives us an overview of all kinds of people drawn to spring training including an aging batting coach and his wife, a star player, a rookie player, an agent, and a woman looking for a fling. The observations about each character



entertained me and Nemens reveals human behavior in all its quirky wonder.

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.



We Can Save Us All

Nemett, Adam

12/20/19

Beheld

Nesbitt,
TaraShea

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

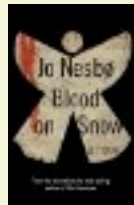


Blood on Snow

Nesbo, Jo

11/22/16

Cold. Fans of Jo Nesbo's crime novels may miss protagonist Harry Hole in the stand alone novella titled, Blood on Snow, but those who like Nesbo's depth of character development will love the narrator, assassin Olav Johansen. Olav works for crime boss Daniel Hoffman, a cold and ruthless character. After finishing one assignment, Olav is placed in personal jeopardy by the next case he's assigned by Hoffman. Nesbo handles the tension expertly, and many readers who like crime fiction will enjoy this short novel.



Cockroaches

Nesbo, Jo

4/7/14

Sober. I've been surprised by the effect of my reading the Harry Hole series by Jo Nesbo out of sequence. I know and enjoy this character well from Nesbo's recent novels and now that earlier novels are being released in English translations, I'm finding even more pleasure in exploring the world with a younger Harry Hole. In Cockroaches, Harry is sent to Thailand to assist in solving a case involving the Norwegian ambassador. True to form, Harry drinks to excess on the flight from Norway. In a surprise move, he remains sober while investigating the case, and is constantly tempted by drink and drugs. If Bangkok didn't already exist, Nesbo would have had to make it up, since Harry is made for a seedy place just like it. Readers who like this series and crime fiction overall are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



Midnight Sun

Nesbo, Jo

3/7/16

Hideaway. I was delightfully surprised by Jo Nesbo's novel titled, Midnight Sun. I expected a crime novel with a high gristle component, and was curious to find a love story and reflection about the problem of God. A good hearted criminal named both Jon and Ulf stole money from his crime boss in Oslo for a good purpose that didn't work out. Jon fled to rural upper Norway where he finds a hideaway in a small village steeped in Sami culture and in the Laestadian religion. The pursuit to recover the crime boss's money is expected, but the resolution was both surprising and pleasurable. Nesbo's range increased quite a lot for me as I finished this novel, and I am looking forward to seeing an even wider range in his next works.

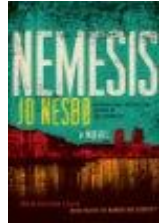


[Nemesis](#)

Nesbo, Jo

[8/18/09](#)

Revenge. Jo Nesbo maintains suspense to the last page of his novel, [Nemesis](#). Protagonist Harry Hole is a police investigator with a bundle of personal challenges that provide some distraction from the essence of his talent and expertise. The multiple plot lines require a reader's focused attention, and Hole's personal relationship with a murder victim adds to the suspense. Just when I thought I had things figured out, I was proved wrong. Readers wonder along with Hole whether or not murders and robberies are connected, and the identity of Hole's nemesis takes a while to figure out. Hole's sidekick Beate Lonn provides great talent of her own that complements, and often covers for Hole. Fans of mysteries and crime novels will find a lot of reading pleasure on the pages of [Nemesis](#).

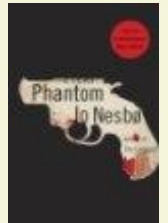


[Phantom](#)

Nesbo, Jo

[10/10/12](#)

Identity. Check the five day weather forecast before you start reading Jo Nesbo's novel, [Phantom](#). There's enough gloom and misery in this novel to spoil the sunniest day, so I can't imagine the experience of reading this on a gloomy or cloudy day. Protagonist Harry Hole is one of the most complex characters in modern fiction. He has the moral core of the policeman he has been, and the erratic behavior of the alcoholic he has also been. The extremes of love and hate are never distant from the daily life of Harry Hole. While each novel in this series stands alone, there's richness for readers who have followed the trajectory of Harry's life. I won't even bother with reference to the plot here because the reason to pick up this novel is to enter into a complex life and watch the tension between good and evil play out, no matter what else is going on. Fans of crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series, provided one has a high tolerance for gloom.

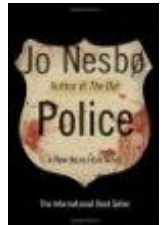


Police

Nesbo, Jo

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.

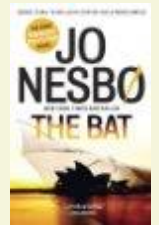


[The Bat](#)

Nesbo, Jo

[8/6/13](#)

Holy. Those readers who love character-driven crime fiction can be voracious in wanting to consume every word written about a favorite protagonist. To satisfy this demand, we can finally read Jo Nesbo's first Harry Hole novel, [The Bat](#). Set in Australia, the younger Harry behaves just like the older one: impulsively, doggedly, intoxicated and creatively. In Sydney, Harry is introduced as "Holy," so that may be how his name should be pronounced, although Nesbo, whose name is pronounced "Yo," has become reconciled to being called "Joe" by many English-speaking readers. All Harry Hole fans will love this first installment to help round out the story of this great detective character. New readers can start here or elsewhere and find a well-told story and a complicated and compelling protagonist.

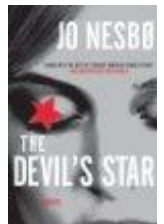


[The Devil's Star](#)

Nesbo, Jo

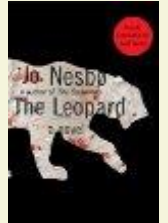
[8/21/12](#)

Motive. [The Devil's Star](#) by Jo Nesbo provides readers who love mystery thrillers with two key elements: a complex plot and a complex well-developed protagonist. Detective Harry Hole's alcoholism and nonconformity has put him at the brink of dismissal from the force. A serial murderer provides a reprieve for Harry, who never stops thinking. The multiple connections Hole makes, and the ways in which he never lets go of the case, provide great plot momentum. In this novel, Hole becomes fixed on the element of motive. I was captivated by the plot throughout the novel, and read this book quickly and with pleasure, despite

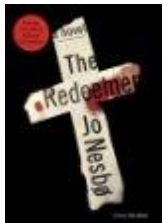


spending time in the depths of evil that Nesbo plumbs through his villains.

Inhumanity. Readers who can tolerate massive amounts of violence and inhumane acts described in detail can open Jo Nesbo's novel, [The Leopard](#), and settle right in. It's helpful to have read the earlier novels in the Harry Hole series to understand why this protagonist has hit his nadir and is living a life of darkness in Hong Kong. Coerced home to Norway to solve yet another serial murder case, Hole who has subjected himself to great pain, faces even greater physical pain during this case. The plot is complicated, and it can be painful to an empathetic reader to watch the damaged Hole suffer. Harry Hole is a great character, and Nesbo's writes well (probably better in the original Norwegian), and readers willing to spend time exploring the nature of evil will find this book engaging.



Mellow. Harry Hole is the kind of fictional character that I enjoy more thoroughly with each new installment. Jo Nesbo's latest novel featuring this complex detective is titled [The Redeemer](#). For me, Harry came across as more mellow in this novel than he did in earlier ones. In some ways, that increased my interest in the character. The major appeal for Nesbo's novels goes beyond the fine character development: the thrilling plots provide great entertainment. This novel's plot kept my interest from beginning to end, and I read this novel swiftly. Readers who like well-written detective fiction should consider reading this one.



[The Leopard](#)

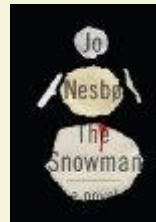

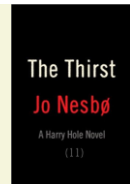
Nesbo, Jo

[1/18/12](#)

[The Redeemer](#)

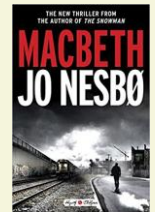
Nesbo, Jo

[6/20/13](#)

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|------------------------------------|-----------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Snowman</u> | Nesbo, Jo | *** | <u>6/7/11</u> | <p>Chilling. Jo Nesbo's detective novel, <u>The Snowman</u>, kept me on edge and engaged from beginning to end. Detective Harry Hole struggles with alcohol, relationships and a serial killer, always thinking and putting the pieces together. Multiple suspects provide the requisite twists and turns to the plot, and give Nesbo the opportunity to allow Hole to relax briefly and then forge ahead rapidly. It was hot weather when I read this novel, and the chill of the story provided welcome refreshment. Fans of detective novels are most likely to enjoy this finely written one.</p> |  |
| <u>The Son</u> | Nesbo, Jo | **** | <u>3/15/16</u> | <p>Intensity. I tend to defer my reading of Scandinavian crime fiction until winter. The atmosphere from the page to the mind seems best traveled on a cold cloudy day. Over the course of a few winter days, I had the pleasure of reading Jo Nesbo's novel, <u>The Son</u>. The title refers to the protagonist, Sonny Lofthus, one of the most complex and interesting characters Nesbo has created. I found pleasure in reading these 400 intense pages in which Sonny leaves prison and dope addiction behind as he uses all his skills to avenge what happened to his deceased father. Crime fiction fans will find great plot, interesting characters, and even a love story. You may even enjoy reading it in Spring.</p> |  |
| <u>The Thirst</u> | Nesbo, Jo | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Knife</u> | Nesbø, Jo | **** | <u>6/2/20</u> | <p>Twists. Jo Nesbø's twelfth novel featuring Harry Hole is titled, <u>Knife</u>. Crime fiction fans will enjoy almost five hundred pages of plot twists and Harry's ups and downs. The only woman Harry has ever loved, Rakel, has been murdered with a knife,</p> |  |

and Harry is a suspect. His excessive drinking hurts him again, as he can't remember much about the night Rakel died. Nesbø pulls readers into the story, complicates matters superbly, and leads us toward a surprising and satisfying conclusion.

Driven. I braced myself when I saw that the Hogarth Shakespeare assignment for the Scottish play went to Jo Nesbø. Usually, I don't like contemporary staging of Shakespeare in offbeat ways, but this Hogarth series has been terrific. Nesbø's Macbeth provided the perfect blend: Shakespeare's core story in the form of a dark crime story set during the 1970's drug wars. Macbeth takes drugs and is the head of a police SWAT team. His ambitious wife runs a casino and is called, "Lady." All the elements of love, ambition, guilt, crime and greed are present, and fans of Nesbø and Shakespeare alike should be pleased by this novel.



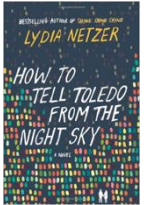

Lids. Readers who like the darkness of Scandinavian crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy another Inspector Van Veeteren mystery from Hakan Nesser titled, Munster's Case. When you take the lid off a normal family to see what's underneath, you may be surprised by what you find. The novel opens with a murder, and the puzzle gives mystery readers an entertaining outing. Fans of the series may be disappointed that Van Veeteren remains in the background. I found that the case kept be interested, and the subplot allowing more development of Munster was an added bonus. If you like crime fiction, give this one a try.



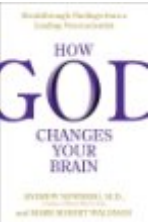
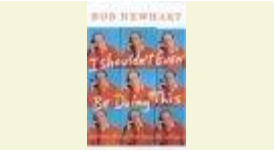
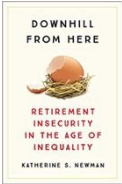


Vacation. Mystery readers looking for an entertaining novel that's set in a hot summer are likely to enjoy The Inspector and Silence by the Swedish writer Hakan Nesser. Chief Inspector Van Veeteren has scheduled a vacation in a few weeks' time, and agrees to take on an out-of-town case to



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|---|---------------|-------|----------------|--|
| <u>Macbeth</u> | Nesbø, Jo | ***** | <u>6/20/18</u> | |
| <u>Munster's Case: An Inspector Van Veeteren Mystery</u> | Nesser, Hakan | *** | <u>9/17/12</u> | |
| <u>The Inspector and Silence: An Inspector Van Veeteren Mystery</u> | Nesser, Hakan | *** | <u>8/6/12</u> | |

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| | | | kill some time until he can get away. A young girl has been murdered near a holiday camp, and Van Veeteren faces the silence of cult members in whose program the girl was participating until her death. Fans of character-driven mysteries are those most likely to enjoy this book. | |
| <u>How to Tell Toledo from the Night Sky</u> | Netzer, Lydia | **** | <u>12/4/15</u> | <p>Destiny. I came very close to putting down Lydia Netzer's novel titled, <u>How to Tell Toledo from the Night Sky</u>. On one level, this is a quirky love story about fate. On another level, it's a weird family saga packed with dysfunction. Once I reconciled myself to the unevenness of the prose and my reactions to what I was reading, I let Netzer take control, and take me where she wanted. Once I surrendered, the book seemed to improve, and by the end, I found it enjoyable, even funny. Readers who enjoy eclectic writing are those most likely to enjoy reading this unusual novel.</p>  |
| <u>Shine Shine Shine</u> | Netzer, Lydia | **** | <u>10/25/13</u> | <p>Spectrum. What I like most about Lydia Netzer's debut novel, <u>Shine Shine Shine</u>, is the complexity and fullness of her characters. Netzer introduces us to individuals who are at once very much the same as we are, and also very different. The plot required me to suspend my disbelief to a very great extent, and I'm glad I stayed with this novel to the end. Central characters Sunny and Maxon are deeply in love and are drawn into a forced separation as Maxon is in a rocket on the way to the moon. His place on the autism spectrum added even more to the complexity of his character. While Sunny struggles with so many issues common to women in her situation, she is presented as unique and complex. Readers willing to explore a debut novel, especially those who like a good story with complex characters, are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p>  |

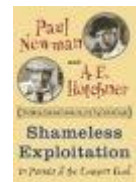
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|--|-----------------------|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Catholic Matters | Neuhaus, Richard John | *** | June 06 | Continuity. Former Lutheran minister and current NYC Catholic priest explains current issues in that Church in the context of fidelity, authority and continuity. Explains why, despite scandals and disagreements, many people still define themselves as Catholic. |  |
| Seriously | Nevai, Lucia | *** | Jan 05 | Community. Debut novel with taut writing developed from prior short stories and just the right amount of description of finding new life in a small town. Pleasurable reading that doesn't insult one's intelligence. |  |
| How God Changes Your Brain: Breakthrough Findings from a Leading Neuroscientist | Newberg, Andrew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| I Shouldn't Even Be Doing This! | Newhart, Bob | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| 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.

Loyalty. Many readers of the tell-all book by former Trump apprentice and White House staffer Omarosa Manigault Newman titled, [Unhinged: An Insider's Account of the Trump White House](#), will find support on these pages for positions already held. Supporters of the President will find a story of vengeance by a disgruntled fired employee. Trump opponents will find lots of gossipy tidbits about the chaos in the President himself and in White House operations. I found myself reflecting about loyalty and what it takes to gain it and how it can be lost. Omarosa's many years of loyalty to Trump was a response to the ways in which he aided her career. Once scorned, her loyalty died, and her story is now placed in a context under her control and in her version, her dignity and character remain intact.



Worth the Hustle. Entertaining and informative story of how a business was formed, grew and thrives, despite following paths not recommended by the experts consulted. Includes moving stories of helping children in need with the profits from the business.



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



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| <u>Unhinged: An Insider's Account of the Trump White House</u> | Newman, Omarosa Manigault | *** | <u>9/24/18</u> | |
| <u>Shameless Exploitation in Pursuit of the Common Good</u> | Newman, Paul and A. E. Hotchner | *** | <u>Jan 04</u> | |
| <u>The Heavens</u> | Newman, Sandra | **** | <u>4/25/19</u> | |

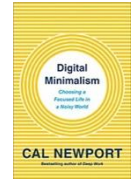
altered reality from the one she left before sleep. While Ben loves Kate, he finds her changes unsettling and disturbing. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World

Newport, Cal

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

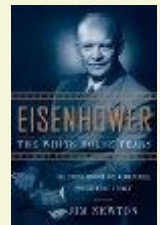


Eisenhower: The White House Years

Newton, Jim

11/22/11

Middle. Readers of political biography usually want two elements to dominate: a vivid portrait of the individual that makes him or her come alive, and a description of the context or world situation in which the subject engaged. Jim Newton's biography, Eisenhower: The White House Years, masters both elements. For readers like me who think of the 1950s as a boring and stable decade, and who recall Ike as a grandfatherly golfer who led his Administration with a light touch, this book debunks such myths. This was a very complex time and Ike was fully engaged on the issues and challenges we faced. He pursued a middle path that seems quaint in the context of today's partisan political environment. Readers who enjoy good writing and lively political biography are those most likely to enjoy this book.



Victorian Fairy Tales

Newton, Michael

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Little Fires Everywhere

Ng, Celeste

11/6/17

Mothers. Things are not as they appear in the planned community of Shaker Heights, Ohio, and when secrets are revealed the consequences are dramatic. Celeste Ng homes in on the theme of motherhood in her novel titled, Little Fires Everywhere. A variety of birth and adoptive



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| | | | | <p>mothers are faced with difficult choices. The children of those mothers are the beneficiaries or the victims of those choices. Differences in class are dramatic, but disaster knows nothing about class. There are many little fires simmering or blazing in the houses of Shaker Heights, and thanks to Ng, readers are drawn into these lives to become singed.</p> | |
| The Refugees | Nguyen, Viet Thanh | **** | 4/5/17 | <p>Displaced. The finely written prose in Viet Thanh Nguyen's short story collection titled, The Refugees, demands that readers focus close attention on the human beings in these stories, people who are just like us. In a time period during which many people have conflated illegal immigrants with refugees, it can be helpful for anyone to explore the lives of people who were welcomed into the United States from the devastating experiences that disrupted their lives in Vietnam during the war. These stories explore displacement from many different perspectives, especially the struggle of coming to terms with the life left behind and the struggle to adjust to a new place that is not yet home.</p> |  |
| The Sympathizer | Nguyen, Viet Thanh | **** | 12/15/16 | <p>Identity. After reading Viet Thanh Nguyen's novel titled, The Sympathizer, I understand why it won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. This novel is like a piece of music in which each part contributes a unique element to the whole, and the result is a complexity and harmony that should resonate for most readers. This is a presentation of the Vietnam War from the point of view of a Vietnamese American in which all parties are held accountable. Nguyen presents love and betrayal alongside the defining elements of identity that provides the core theme for the novel. The pleasure of reading a digital version of this work is that I was able to search and discover that Nguyen uses the phrase "crapulent major" seventy six times, and "affectless</p> |  |

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| | | | | lieutenant” twenty three times. That repetition became an example for me of the comparison to music: the phrases provided an expected and harmonious rhythm that I came to anticipate as the novel progressed. | |
| Us | Nicholls, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| The Seabird's Cry | Nicholson, Adam | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| The Perfect Summer | Nicolson, Juliet | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| Her Fearful Symmetry | Niffenegger, Audrey | *** | 3/5/10 | Entwined. Audrey Niffenegger gives readers over 400 pages of finely written prose in her novel, Her Fearful Symmetry . I found myself mesmerized by this odd story of two generations of twins whose lives and relationships are entwined. A supporting cast of characters provide plot movement and opportunity for Niffenegger to display her skill in character development. Readers with low tolerance for the paranormal will be overwhelmed by how much of the novel is outside the world we can see and feel. Readers willing to suspend disbelief and allow the novel to proceed will be rewarded by the behavior of character that disclose fundamentals about the ways we relate to one another. I suggest any reader sample some pages before committing to this unusual novel. |  |

The Scapegoat

Nikolaidou,
Sophia

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



[Our Lady of the
Prairie](#)

Nissen, Thisbe

[2/22/18](#)

Flyover. From 36,000 feet above land, Iowa looks like most of what many readers think of as flyover country: the calm and indistinguishable flat middle of the United States. The tornado on the cover of Thisbe Nissen's novel titled, [Our Lady of the Prairie](#), promises more of the topsy-turvy reality that a flyover obscures. Just about all aspects of protagonist Phillipa Maakestad's life are in turmoil, and when an actual tornado arrives for her daughter's wedding, it couldn't be more fitting. Nissen's prose can meander at times to the impatience of plot focused readers, but for those who enjoy the messy way life plays out for flawed characters, this novel will be a treat.



[The Darkening
Age: The
Christian
Destruction of
the Classical
World](#)

Nixey, Catherine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

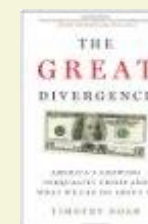


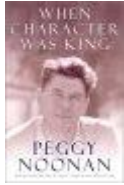
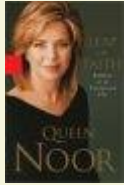

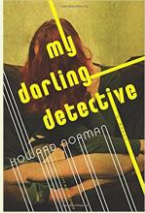
[The Great
Divergence:
America's
Growing
Inequality Crisis
and What We
Can Do about It](#)

Noah, Timothy

[6/14/12](#)

Grounding. Award-winning journalist Timothy Noah has reworked some insightful articles he wrote for *Slate* into a book titled, [The Great Divergence: America's Growing Inequality Crisis and What We Can Do about It](#). The bulk of the book presents evidence for the first part of the subtitle. Any reader who thinks that income inequality is no big deal may be persuaded otherwise by the facts Noah presents. His prescriptions for change are covered in a single chapter, and represent a partisan political viewpoint that may lead some readers to cheer and others to stop listening. Any reader interest in current political and economic



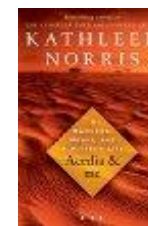
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| | | | | affairs should consider reading this book to acquire grounding in the facts of how we have arrived in the current state of wealth distribution. | |
| <u>When Character Was King: A Story of Ronald Reagan</u> | Noonan, Peggy | *** | <u>Apr 02</u> | Noonan's view of President Ronald Reagan: a happy, unpretentious, simple, well-grounded man whose character was formed by hardship, and whose goodness and kindness were felt by many. |  |
| <u>Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life</u> | Noor, Queen | **** | <u>Aug 03</u> | Personal. If there's only one memoir you read this year, make it this one. Noor describes her relationship with King Hussein, family life, and politics with an articulate voice helping you learn more than you may expect about the Middle East and about personal, loving relationships. |  |
| I Hate to Leave this Beautiful Place | Norman, Howard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| <u>My Darling Detective</u> | Norman, Howard | **** | <u>4/3/18</u> | Library. Crime fiction fans are those readers most likely to enjoy Howard Norman's novel titled, <u>My Darling Detective</u> . Protagonist Jacob Rigolet was born in the Halifax Public Library where his mother was head librarian. Jacob's fiancée is the detective in the title, and a noir drift involves uncovering the truth about Jacob's father, Robert Emil. The plot moves along at a perfectly paced clip, all the characters are interesting, and any novel in which a library plays a major role is always worth investigating. |  |

Acedia and Me:
A Marriage,
Monks and a
Writer's Life

Norris, Kathleen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009

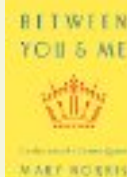


Between You & Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen

Norris, Mary

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



Greek to Me

Norris, Mary

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



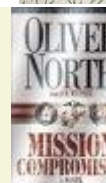
Mission Compromised

North, Oliver

*

Jan 03

Do As ISEG. 200 good pages out of 600; just try to find them. Acronyms, slow-moving plot, weak dialogue: all here for your reading distraction.



A Keeper

Norton, Graham

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



Holding

Norton, Graham

11/21/17

Duneen. Not many mystery novels make me laugh, but the debut novel by Graham Norton titled, Holding, presented a sense of humor that aligned well with my own. I had low expectations for a novel written by the host of BBC America's *The Graham Norton Show*, and his writing was better than I expected. Set in the small Irish town of Duneen where everyone knows everybody and their business, human bones are discovered on a building site. Protagonist Garda sergeant P.J.



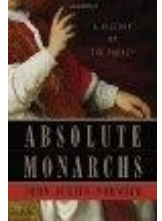
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| | | | Collins finds himself at the center of the mystery, despite the case being led by a big city detective. Collins is overweight and endearing. Secrets that have been kept for decades are held no more. Kindness and decency abide throughout Dunneen, and spending time in this small town brought me great reading pleasure, and many smiles along the way. | |
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Absolute Monarchs: A History of the Papacy

Norwich, John Julian

Unread

Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012.



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| <u>Four Princes: Henry VIII, Francis I, Charles V, Suleiman the Magnificent and the Obsessions that Forged Modern Europe</u> | Norwich, John Julius | **** | <u>6/9/17</u> Transformation. As a casual reader of history, I gravitate toward books that synthesize and lean away from those that present detailed specialization. I was captivated by John Julius Norwich's focus on the early 16 th century titled, <u>Four Princes: Henry VIII, Francis I, Charles V, Suleiman the Magnificent and the Obsessions that Forged Modern Europe</u> . I enjoy the ways in which this talented historian connected these four rulers and explained with clarity how they led a dramatic transformation on the continent. I knew many things about each of these rulers before reading this book, but Norwich connected them in my brain and helped me understand what was happening in different parts of Europe at the same time. |  |
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The Book of Proper Names

Nothomb, Amelie

**

Dec 05

Disorder. Protagonist overcomes tragic infancy, blooms in idyllic childhood, then withers in ballet school as the path to artistic perfection becomes consuming.



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| <u>Strike Your Heart</u> | Nothomb, Amélie | **** | <u>3/26/19</u> | 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, <u>Strike Your Heart</u> . 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 will lead to revelation of one's own maternal and sibling relationships and an extra glass of wine or two. |  |
| The Informer | Nova, Craig | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2010 | |  |
| <u>The Education of an Accidental CEO</u> | Novak, David | *** | <u>May 08</u> | Likeable. Light and pleasant wisdom from a CEO who doesn't take himself too seriously, and seems very comfortable with being who he is, and proud to share what he's learned with readers. |  |
| The universal hunger for liberty : why the clash of civilizations is not inevitable | Novak, Michael | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2005 | |  |
| <u>Plus One</u> | Noxon, Christopher | **** | <u>7/9/15</u> | Hollywood. I enjoyed reading a witty debut novel by Christopher Noxon titled <u>Plus One</u> . Set in Hollywood, Noxon draws readers into a marriage with kids, and all the dynamics that can bring, |  |

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| | | | | kicked up several notches. Figgy has become a successful TV writer, so her husband, Alex, takes care of the home and the kids, except when he doesn't. Any reader who has watched the red carpet and noted the invisibility of "nobody" spouses will get the Alex character. Every female reader will get the Figgy character. Readers looking for a light and witty novel that still captures real marital relationships should consider reading this book. | |
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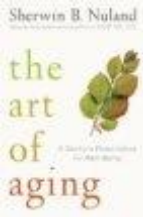
Unraveling Oliver

Nugent, Liz

9/18/17

Evil. The debut novel by Liz Nugent titled, Unraveling Oliver, presents multiple narrators helping us understand protagonist Oliver Ryan, and what led him to do what he did. From each narrator we learn a point of view about Oliver, and receive a building block relating to understanding this person. We learn about him being unwanted as a child, feeling envy, and mastering the arts of deception and manipulation. The psychological profile that Nugent assembles comes to define her view on the nature of evil. The structure and prose are finely developed in this promising author's debut novel.



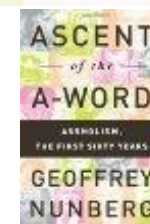
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| The Art of Aging | Nuland, Sherwin B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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Ascent of the A-Word: Assholism, the First Sixty Years

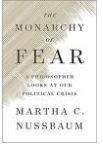
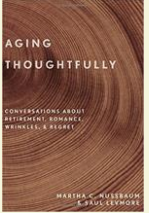
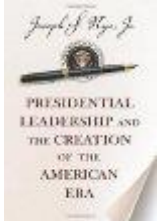
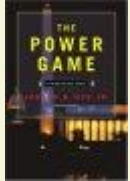


Nunberg, Geoffrey

Unread

I am surprised that I read as far as page 35. There's only so much assholism that this reader can take. Shelf of Ennui 2013.



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| Talking Right | Nunberg, Geoffrey | *** | Apr 07 | <p>Words. Linguist diagnoses how Democrats and liberals have lost to Republicans and conservatives the battle of words and phrases that resonate with voters. He offers a prescription to cure this. All readers who care about politics will enjoy this book.</p> <p>Comfort. Dog lovers will be delighted to read Sigrid Nunez' novel titled, The Friend. The narrator remains unnamed, but the Great Dane that enters her life unexpectedly has a name that suits him perfectly: Apollo. Apollo was the dog of the narrator's mentor, a fellow writer and lifelong friend. None of the three wives of the late writer wanted to live with Apollo whose confusion at the author's disappearance made him seem depressed. The narrator deals with her grief by taking Apollo into her small apartment where dogs are not allowed. They provide comfort to each other and comedy for many who see this unlikely couple together.</p> |  |
| The Friend | Nunez, Sigrid | **** | 3/20/18 | |  |
| Chance | Nunn, Kem | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Tijuana Straits | Nunn, Kem | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities | Nussbaum, Martha C. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |

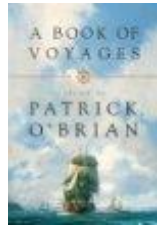
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| <u>The Monarchy of Fear</u> | Nussbaum, Martha C. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Aging Thoughtfully: Conversations about Retirement, Romance, Wrinkles, and Regret</u> | Nussbaum, Martha C. and Saul Levmore | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Presidential Leadership and the Creation of the American Era | Nye, Jr., Joseph S. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| The Power Game | Nye, Jr., Joseph S. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Blue at the Mizzen</u> | O' Brian, Patrick | *** | | As long as he keeps writing the Aubrey-Maturin novels, we'll keep reading them. This is #20. |  |
| <u>21: The Final Unfinished Voyage of Jack Aubrey</u> | O'Brian, Patrick | * | <u>Feb 05</u> | Fragment. Handwritten manuscript with some typed edits by the author placed in printed version. Unsatisfying because incomplete, and appeals only to O'Brian addicts. |  |

A Book of Voyages

O'Brian, Patrick

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

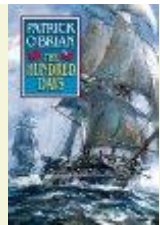


The Hundred Days

O'Brian, Patrick

7/99

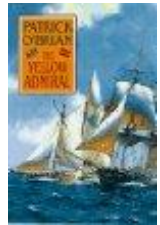
Recommended. This is the latest in the Jack Aubrey-Stephen Maturin series of historical fiction set in the British navy during the Napoleonic era.



The Yellow Admiral

O'Brian, Patrick

When we read that O'Brian died recently, we just had to pick up one of the Aubrey-Maturin novels we hadn't yet read. A pleasure, as always.



The Light of Evening

O'Brien, Edna

**

May 07

Contrasts. Lyrical writing with multiple narrators and letters presents the complicated relationship between a mother and daughter, the losses and loves of their lives, and the loneliness that comes from estrangement.



The Little Red Chairs

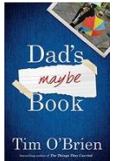

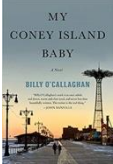
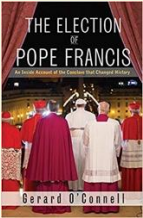

O'Brien, Edna

6/3/16

Home. Edna O'Brien is up to nothing but good in her novel titled, The Little Red Chairs. Set in the small Irish town of Cloonoila, protagonist Fidelma McBride's life becomes disrupted after the arrival of a stranger, Dr. Vladimir Dragan. Dragan turns out to be a person quite different from the one he appears to be. Out of Fidelma's longing comes trauma. From Dragan's violence comes justice. From her pain comes a search for redemption. O'Brien's prose is lyrical. Her characters are complex and fully developed. Her insight into human nature is complete and unfaltering in both



darkness and light. Fidelma's longing for home may break your heart. This novel is great writing from a great writer.

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|---|--------------------|--------|---------------|---|---|
| Blood Runs Green: The Murder That Transfixed Gilded Age Chicago | O'Brien, Gillian | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>Dad's Maybe Book</u> | O'Brien, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>July, July</u> | O'Brien, Tim | *** | <u>Dec 02</u> | <i>Now, and Then.</i> Rich portraits of a dozen characters who gather in Minnesota for their 30 th college reunion, and how events from 1969 formed their characters. Realistic dialogue and poignant revelation of real people. |  |
| <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>Living with Saints</u> | O'Connell, Mary | ** | <u>Jan 02</u> | Debut collection of stories placing Catholic saints in modern settings with Catholic women longing for something. |  |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------|--------------------------|--|---|
| A Prayer Journal | O'Connor, Flannery | ***** | 12/12/13 | <p>Longing. Even casual readers of Flannery O'Connor's fiction catch on quickly that her Catholic faith was never far away from her writing. Any reader can now see for oneself O'Connor's longing for God, as expressed in her recently published work titled, A Prayer Journal. Inside both in typed form and manuscript are the prayers of O'Connor from 1947 and 1948 when she was a student at the Iowa Writers' Workshop. While I felt like I was invading her privacy by reading this journal, I found her prayers full of the same liveliness as her fiction. Any reader interested in either O'Connor or prayer will find something to like in this short book.</p> |  |
| Dangerous Admissions | O'Connor, Jane | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2008 | |  |
| Shadowplay | O'Connor, Joseph | ***** | 7/23/20 | <p>Bram. Are you missing live theater during the covid-19 pandemic? Spend a few hours with Joseph O'Connor's novel titled, Shadowplay, and you'll be in London's West End during the time of Jack the Ripper and walking alongside Bram Stoker at work in the theater. Sometimes we read fiction for a glorious escape from contemporary life, and O'Connor gives that to us in this finely written novel. While this is a Dracula backstory, it is also a story of passion and ambition in a setting that will delight most readers, but especially theatregoers who long to return to those wonderful places. Night becomes a time of danger and opportunity in Victorian England, and Stoker is in the middle of things that will spark the imagination of readers of this entertaining novel.</p> |  |

The Map of
Innovation:
Creating
Something Out
of Nothing

O'Connor, Kevin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004

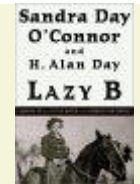


[Lazy B: Growing Up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest](#)

O'Connor,
Sandra Day

[Mar 02](#)

Dry, distant and unemotional memoir that resembles turning pages in a photo album and hearing a few sentences about each picture by an observer. Does reveal formation of character and presents an unusual place and time.



[The Majesty of the Law: Reflections of a Supreme Court Justice](#)

O'Connor,
Sandra Day

[Aug 03](#)

Pedagogic. O'Connor shares her love of the law but reveals little about the inner workings of the court, and tells nothing that would reveal her approach to issues coming before the court.



Augustine

O'Donnell,
James J.

**

Read, but not reviewed.

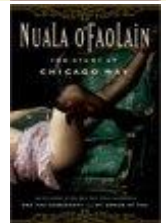


[The Story of Chicago May](#)

O'Faolain, Nuala

[Jan 06](#)

Transformations. Quirky biography of May Duigan, who changed her lifestyle frequently in a life of adventure and crime, all the time adapting and surviving.

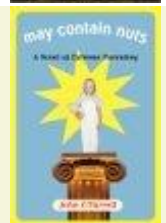


May Contain Nuts

O'Farrell, John

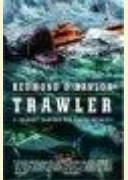
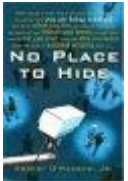

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



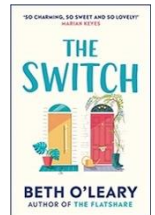
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| <u>Hamnet</u> | O'Farrell, Maggie | ***** | <u>10/19/20</u> | <p>Stratford. Readers who enjoy historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy Maggie O'Farrell's novel titled, <u>Hamnet</u>, based on the lives of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway in Stratford, England. The story focuses on Agnes (Anne) and the love and loss that define her life. O'Farrell's prose helps place us in the time and place and in the context of the plague. With great skill, O'Farrell draws us into a portrait of marriage in the sixteenth century, and the ways in which an artist acquires inspiration to express in one's work the most important things in life.</p> |  |
| <u>This Must Be the Place</u> | O'Farrell, Maggie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| Be Near Me | O'Hagan, Andrew | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| The Illuminations | O'Hagan, Andrew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>The Secret Life</u> | O'Hagan, Andrew | ***** | <u>3/3/18</u> | <p>Personalities. I am drawn toward finely written stories that bring out elements of interesting personalities and complex characters, whether in fiction or non-fiction. Three long form essays by Andrew O'Hagan have been assembled into a book titled, <u>The Secret Life</u>. One essay describes O'Hagan's relationship with Julian Assange on an assignment to ghostwrite Assange's autobiography.</p> |  |

As expected, Assange is a fascinating and complex character, and O'Hagan unveils him to a reader's delight. A second essay explores identity theft and O'Hagan success in constructing for himself a new identity. The third essays involve bitcoin and the identity of its mysterious creator, Satoshi Nakamoto. O'Hagan describes the relationship he develops with Craig Wright, an Australian who claims he is Satoshi. Fans of good writing are those most likely to enjoy reading these essays.

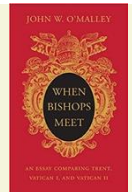
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| Trawler: A Journey Through the North Atlantic | O'Hanlon, Redmond | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| No Place to Hide: Behind the Scenes of Our Emerging Surveillance Society | O'Harrow, Jr., Robert | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>The Flatshare</u> | O'Leary, Beth | **** | <u>7/26/19</u> | Fun. Summer vacation is a perfect time to pick up a novel that's pure fun. The romantic comedy titled, <u>The Flatshare</u> , 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 |  |

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| | | | | and their adventures. Readers who are looking for light reading are those most likely to enjoy this entertaining novel. | |
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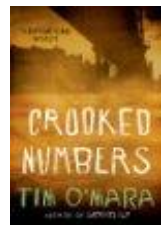
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| <u>The Switch</u> | O'Leary, Beth | **** | <u>10/27/20</u> | <p>Exchange. While some readers may be skeptical of the premise of Beth O'Leary's novel titled, <u>The Switch</u>, it won't take long to overcome that and luxuriate in the lives of two women named Eileen Cotton. Younger Eileen Cotton (Leena) works nonstop in London as she grieves the death of her sister, Carla, who died of cancer recently. Leena's grandmother, Eileen Cotton, the grandmother, faces life changes at age 80, sharing grief at Carla's death, and adrift following her husband's departure for another woman. After Leena's boss demands that she take a two month holiday from work, grandmother and granddaughter decide to switch places, with Leena leaving her flat in London to live in her grandmother's rural home, and Eileen looking for a chance to love again in the big city. This is a heartwarming story that will satisfy many readers and enliven any book club's discussion about life's possibilities at any age.</p> | |
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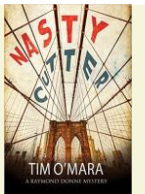
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| <u>When Bishops Meet: An Essay Comparing Trent, Vatican I, and Vatican II</u> | O'Malley, John W. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. | |
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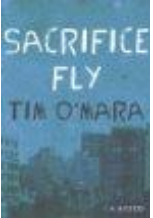
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| <u>Crooked Numbers</u> | O'Mara, Tim | **** | <u>1/21/14</u> | <p>Intentions. The second crime novel by Tim O'Mara to feature Raymond Donne is titled, <u>Crooked Numbers</u>, and I liked this one even more than his debut novel, <i>Sacrifice Fly</i>. I enjoyed the sharp dialogue in this novel, which always seemed to me to capture the way characters such as the ones in this novel would really speak. Donne works as a dean at a middle school. One of his former students was murdered, and when the boy's mother</p> | |
|--|-------------|------|--------------------------------|---|--|



asks him to try to get the police to take more action to solve the case, he intends to nudge his former NYPD colleagues, but not interfere. For most of the novel, Donne interferes, despite his best intentions. All the characters are well developed in this novel, and the many ways in which Donne interacts with kids, parents, criminals and the police provided me with hours of entertainment. The pacing of this novel was faster than the earlier book. Any reader who likes well-written character-based crime fiction should consider reading this one.

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| Nasty Cutter | O'Mara, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
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Redemption. The very slow pace of Tim O'Mara's debut novel, [Sacrifice Fly](#), tested my patience. O'Mara introduces protagonist Raymond Donne in this novel which is intended as the first in a series featuring a New York City schoolteacher. One of Ray's students, Frankie Rivas, a great baseball player, has gone missing. Slowly, the search for Frankie proceeds at the same pace as the most boring baseball game you've ever watched. Some of O'Mara's dialogue is terrific in this novel, and that was enough to overcome my impatience as I endured to the satisfying end of the novel that became a story of redemption. Patient readers willing to take a risk on a debut novel, as well as those who like to get in on the start of a series, are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

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| Sacrifice Fly | O'Mara, Tim | *** | 10/8/13 | |  |
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|--|----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Hook</u> | O'Mara, Tim | ***** | <u>4/23/20</u> | <p>Rehab. The fifth novel by Tim O'Mara to feature former cop Raymond Donne is titled, <u>The Hook</u>. The dramatic action opens on the roof of the school where Donne teaches, the place where Maurice MoJo Joseph is shot to death with an arrow. Mojo's life seemed to be turning around after a stint in rehab, but at the time he died, heroin was in his system. While Donne investigates, his girlfriend Allisson writes stories about White Nationalists, thanks to a runaway and insider who has confided in her. The plot pulls readers into the action quickly, and fans of thrillers and this series are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>City of Secrets</u> | O'Nan, Stewart | ***** | <u>7/15/16</u> | <p>Brand. Stewart O'Nan accomplishes more within the 200 pages of his novel, <u>City of Secrets</u>, than most writers can ever achieve. Set in Jerusalem just after World War II, the novel deeply develops one character, Brand, with so much skill that readers could feel comfortable with stating they understand Brand completely. Brand is a camp survivor now driving a taxi. He's a member of a cell working for the creation of the state of Israel. Brand is displaced in so many respects, and the past seems to be always present with him no matter where he is or what he is doing. O'Nan places faith and despair side by side, and explores past and present moral choices that offer hope and love. The tension in the novel never lets up, and Brand's choices have far-reaching consequences.</p> |  |
| Emily, Alone | O'Nan, Stewart | Unread | | I stalled out after 40 pages. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |

[Henry, Himself](#)

O’Nan, Stewart

[8/5/19](#)

Seasons. We spend most of our time in the ordinary routines of life. In his novel titled, [Henry, Himself](#), 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.



[Last Night at the Lobster](#)

O’Nan, Stewart

[Feb 08](#)

Working. Finely written novel about the closing of a Red Lobster restaurant with insights into working and managing. Protagonist Manny DeLeon is a manager that any company would want to hire.



[Songs for the Missing](#)



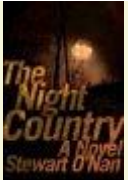
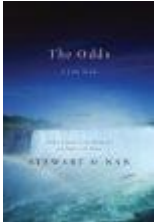

O’Nan, Stewart

[1/27/09](#)

Disappeared. Stewart O’Nan’s latest novel, [Songs for the Missing](#), explores a family’s nightmare: the disappearance of a daughter and sister. On her way to work during the summer after her senior year of high school, Kim Larsen disappears. The lives of her parents, Ed and Fran, and 15-year old sister, Lindsay, become consumed with looking for Kim. Each family member deals with Kim’s disappearance in a different way, as do Kim’s closest friends. What O’Nan does so well in this novel is the way in which he allows the missing and the uncertainty to remain constantly present. Days, weeks, months and years go by with the constant presence of the missing Kim. All of what is unknown dominates: is she dead or alive; was she abducted or did she run away; will this horror ever end? A reader can feel each character become numb



in one form or another as their agony of their reality sets in over time. Thanks to O’Nan’s fine writing, that numbness is observed, not felt by a reader.

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| <u>The Circus Fire</u> | O’Nan, Stewart | * | | Detailed and gruesome story of the Hartford Circus fire. More than we wanted to know. |  |
| <u>The Good Wife</u> | O’Nan, Stewart | *** | <u>Aug 05</u> | Faithful. Finely written lyrical novel reveals the ordinary life of Patty Dickerson who remains faithful to her husband, Tommy, during his 28 year incarceration while she raises their son, doing what we all do: the best we can in the circumstances. |  |
| The Night Country: A Novel | O’Nan, Stewart | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>The Odds: A Love Story</u> | O’Nan, Stewart | *** | <u>5/18/12</u> | Gamble. Stewart O’Nan’s novel, <u>The Odds: A Love Story</u> , pulls the reader into a marriage under great stress. Art and Marion Fowler have been married thirty years. Both are now unemployed and their Cleveland home is in foreclosure. They decide to gamble on a last ditch way to try to get out from under their financial woes: wager their remaining cash at Niagara Falls casinos. O’Nan tells this story efficiently, in less than 200 pages. It didn’t take me long to find this odd couple endearing. I closed the book having been entertained and satisfied by O’Nan’s fine storytelling and well-written prose. |  |
| <u>West of Sunset</u> | O’Nan, Stewart | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |

[Wish You Were Here](#)

O’Nan, Stewart

[Jun 02](#)

Join a sad extended family on their last seven days at the newly sold family vacation home on Chautauqua Lake.



A Paper Life

O’Neal, Tatum

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

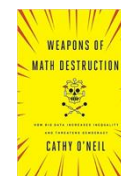


[Weapons of Math Destruction: How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy](#)

O’Neil, Cathy

[10/4/16](#)

Outrage. Readers interested in public policy, especially those who love quantitative analysis, are those most to enjoy reading Cathy O’Neil’s book titled, [Weapons of Math Destruction: How Big Data Increases Inequality and Threatens Democracy](#). O’Neil presents many examples of ways in which algorithms are being used and often misused in many parts of society. Writing in a conversational style, she keeps her outrage at some practices on a steady simmer throughout the book. Her plea is that we need fairness and accountability in the application of mathematical models. She explores the use of models by schools, courts, credit providers, employers and others. If your mind is open to the possibility that aspects of “fact-based” analysis or the application of big data might be detrimental, be sure to read this book.



[Gray Day: My Undercover Mission to Expose America's First Cyber Spy](#)

O’Neill, Eric

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

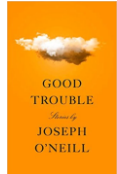


Good Trouble

O'Neill, Joseph

9/5/18

Vulnerability. Great writers tell us things about ourselves and the world in which we live that seem obvious only after the telling. In the eleven stories of the collection by Joseph O'Neill titled, Good Trouble, there's great insight into our modern condition and our struggles. I loved the story in which one character was unable to get anyone to give him a reference so he could rent in a New York City co-op. Nothing could better describe this aspect of being solitary in a crowded world. O'Neill explores contemporary loneliness and isolation and holds a mirror and a magnifying glass for us to examine modern life and our many individual insecurities and vulnerabilities.



The Dog

O'Neill, Joseph

12/5/14

Adrift. I surrendered myself to Joseph O'Neill's finely-crafted witty prose in his novel titled, The Dog. The unnamed narrator is adrift in contemporary life and alert to his predicament. He's living in Dubai, working for a superrich family handling business affairs. O'Neill's riff on class relations and the unspoken reactions employees have to the demands of unreasonable bosses were among the finest parts of the novel. Readers who are comfortable with meandering, being as adrift as the narrator, while enjoying finely written prose are those most likely to savor this novel.



Till Death Us Do Part

O'Neill, Terrence

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



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|--|----------------|--------|--------------------------|---|--|
| Quotients | O'Neill, Tracy | *** | 8/19/20 | <p>Secrets. My best advice to readers of Tracy O'Neill's novel titled, Quotients, is to give yourself over to whatever it is she is doing and don't worry too much about what's going on. Enjoy the precise sentences without worrying too much about why this one follows that one. By the end, you will have watched a work of art being assembled and can close the book with impressions about contemporary life, about the power of secrets, about love and family, and about what it takes to make one's way in this world. At least that's what I think I read about.</p> |  |
| WTF?: What's the Future and Why It's Up to Us | O'Reilly Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama | O'Reilly, Bill | ** | 11/15/10 | <p>Boring. I've wondered what makes Bill O'Reilly appealing and why he has become popular. After reading his book, Pinheads and Patriots, I'm beginning to understand. He judges and divides every person and issue in ways that can entertain and come across so definitively that any middle ground or gray area evaporates. One is either a pinhead or a patriot. That seems to play well to our divided society, especially along political lines. While behaving as a bombastic bully, he pretends to reflect the perspective of real Americans in a fair and balanced way. For those who agree with him, O'Reilly is an articulate spokesperson for their opinions. For those who disagree with him, he can raise one's blood pressure with his rhetoric. Those fans of his show may not find much new on these pages; curious readers will find some insight into the author and his views, and those who disagree with him will probably not pick up this book. Overall, I found the book boring; without hearing the author's voice, the words fall a bit flat on the</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>page, reminding me that above all, O'Reilly is a showman who demands to be heard. When one can read his words slowly, there's not much to think about, and his authority comes not from insight or perspective, but from having a soapbox in prime time.</p> | |
| <p><u>Killing Kennedy: The End of Camelot</u></p> | <p>O'Reilly, Bill and Martin Dugard</p> | <p>***</p> | <p><u>12/18/12</u></p> | <p>Selective. There's one thing for sure that I can say about Bill O'Reilly: he comes across with confidence and certainty, no matter what. In his book <u>Killing Kennedy: The End of Camelot</u>, written with Martin Dugard, O'Reilly animates the build-up to the assassination of John Kennedy. He selects highlights from the Kennedy presidency and the political environment, injects the swagger of his confidence and certainty and keeps readers begging for more. Some historians need great communicators to convey the results of their research. Some events are not well known and can benefit from being promulgated. I learned nothing new here; the well-known story was retold clearly. For readers who want a refresher on the Kennedy years and the assassination, this book provides a crisp way to skim through the surface of what happened. Readers who like that kind of dramatic, brisk and selective presentation of history are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p> |  |
| <p><u>Killing Lincoln: The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever</u></p> | <p>O'Reilly, Bill and Martin Dugard</p> | <p>**</p> | <p><u>10/5/12</u></p> | <p>Artistic. History need not be boring, but unless labeled fiction, readers should expect some diligence about getting the facts right. After the third person recommended that I read Bill O'Reilly's dramatic book, <u>Killing Lincoln</u>, I decided to go ahead, despite having read some poor reviews. To my surprise, I was thoroughly entertained by the dramatic presentation of the well-known and documented events surrounding the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. O'Reilly's confident prose gets most of the big facts right, but I found myself</p> |  |

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| | | | | thinking too often that some of what he presented didn't match what I read from prominent historians. If you want to read a well-researched history of this event and this time period, choose another book. If you want to be entertained with a dramatically presented story that takes some artistic liberties, and doesn't nail down all the facts, by all means enjoy this book. | |
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On The Wealth of Nations

O'Rourke, P. J.

Apr 07

Lightly. So we don't have to read the full Adam Smith tome (as if many of us would), busy readers can read this clear and light alternative and glean the key points.



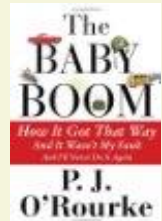
The Baby Boom: How It Got That Way (And It Wasn't My Fault) (And I'll Never Do It Again)

O'Rourke, P.J.

**

3/7/14

Boring. I usually enjoy P.J. O'Rourke's humor, and I anticipated finding plenty of it in his latest book, The Baby Boom: How It Got That Way (And It Wasn't My Fault) (And I'll Never Do It Again). I was surprised at how boring I found this book. His writing was more didactic than usual, and his attempts at being clever fell flat often. Read a sample before committing to this book. Chances are if you find the selection engaging and interesting, you're likely to enjoy the entire book. I struggled through this short book to the end, hoping that the O'Rourke writing I've loved would begin to shine, but kept finding more misfires than bulls-eyes.



Holidays in Heck

O'Rourke, P.J.


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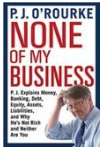
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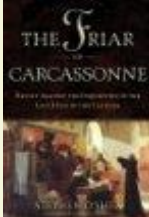
Droll. Any parent who has traveled with children will find something familiar in P.J. O'Rourke's new essay collection, Holidays in Heck. There are a dozen or so finely written pages here. Out of almost three hundred, you have to decide if it's worth the effort to find them. I found his writing mostly droll, and too often, tiresome. Perhaps because I think he's an excellent writer, I expected more from this collection. I felt like he pounded these pieces out




without much care, and a few of the best nuggets stand out.

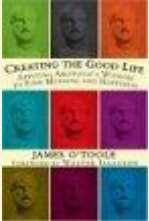
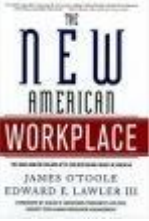

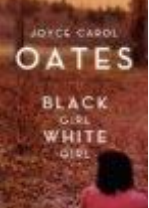
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| <u>How the Hell Did This Happen?</u> | O'Rourke, P.J. | *** | <u>4/12/17</u> | <p>Undertone. I really, really wanted to laugh while reading P. J. O'Rourke's book on the 2016 Presidential election titled, <u>How the Hell Did This Happen?</u>. Instead, I found his humor a bit too sour to trigger my funny bone. I think I kept sensing an undertone to his text that inhibited my search for humor: a sense that his sadness and mine melded, and we can't find the humor. If you're more ready than I am to enjoy O'Rourke's punditry and satire, please consider this book as a chance to take pleasure in reading his latest work.</p> |  |
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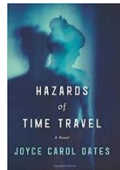

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| <u>None of My Business</u> | O'Rourke, P.J. | *** | <u>3/26/19</u> | <p>Yuks. The latest humorous commentaries on contemporary American life by P.J. O'Rourke are contained in a new book titled, <u>None of My Business</u>. O'Rourke's wit and funny 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> |  |
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| The Friar of Carcassonne: Revolt Against the Inquisition in the Last Days of the Cathars | O'Shea, Stephen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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| <u>Is It All In Your Head?</u> | O'Sullivan, Suzanne | **** | <u>6/16/17</u> | <p>Psychogenic. Dr. Suzanne O'Sullivan, a neurologist, has written an interesting and engaging book about psychogenic disease titled, <u>Is It All In Your Head?</u>. Spoiler alert: yes, it is in your head, but that doesn't reduce the very real physical pain. In medicine and in society at large, there have</p> |  |
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been huge gaps in communicating effectively about psychosomatic illness. Through the cases presented in this book, O'Sullivan calls attention to the challenges of communicating effectively, and reveals her own shortcomings with different patients. Her overall treatment is sensitive and informative. The mind is a marvelous thing, and can exert significant control over the body in ways that become debilitating. Health care professionals or general readers interested in medicine or the mind are those most likely to enjoy reading this book.

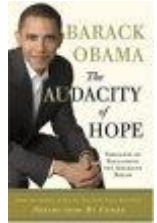
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| Creating the Good Life | O'Toole, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>The New American Workplace</u> | O'Toole, James | ***** | <u>Mar 07</u> | Data. Authors update landmark 1972 study of work in America with current data and fact-based conclusions delivered clearly in an organized and systematic way. |  |
| The Radical and the Republican | Oakes, James | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2007 |  |
| <u>Black Girl/White Girl</u> | Oates, Joyce Carol | *** | <u>Feb 07</u> | Guilt. Exploration of the ways in which two freshman roommates in the mid-1970s from different worlds become transformed. |  |

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| Carthage | Oates, Joyce Carol | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>Hazards of Time Travel</u> | Oates, Joyce Carol | ***** | <u>1/22/19</u> | <p>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, <u>Hazards of Time Travel</u>. 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.</p> |  |
| <u>Jack of Spades</u> | Oates, Joyce Carol | **** | <u>10/15/15</u> | <p>Theft. I had the sense that Joyce Carol Oates had a lot of fun writing her novel titled, <u>Jack of Spades</u>. Protagonist Andrew Rush writes popular mystery novels, and in secret his alter ego writes noir under the pseudonym Jack of Spades. Andy is accused of theft by C.W. Haider and his life turns inside out. This is a short novel by Oates' standard, and when I finished my initial reaction was this is Oates-lite. After a short while, I realized how finely constructed the novel is, and its efficiency added to how it all works so well. Readers who like well-written fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |

The Audacity of Hope

Obama, Barack

Read, but not reviewed.



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.

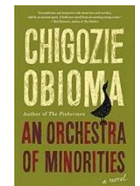


An Orchestra of Minorities

Obioma, Chigozie

3/18/19

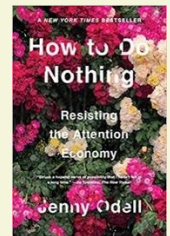
Sorrow. The omniscient narrator of Chigozie Obioma's novel titled, An Orchestra of Minorities, is the guardian spirit of protagonist Chinonso. Obioma allows this chi to weave slowly the life story of Chinonso, a naïve chicken farmer, whose life choices toward joy lead to sorrow and pain. Nonso falls 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.



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| <u>The Fishermen</u> | Obioma, Chigozie | **** | <u>10/26/15</u> | <p>Folklore. I picked up a copy of Chigozie Obioma's debut novel, <u>The Fishermen</u>, after it was short listed for the 2015 Man Booker Prize. Obioma draws readers into a Nigerian village in the 1990s and the lives of brothers growing up at that time. A madman predicts tragedy, and the impact of his story on the lives of the brothers provides the action in the novel. I found the prose lyrical, and recommend this novel to any reader who may have in interest in Nigerian life, family dynamics, and the power of belief in our lives.</p> |  |
| The Adirondack Cabin | Obomsawin, Robbin | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>The Tiger's Wife</u> | Obreht, Tea | *** | <u>4/22/11</u> | <p>Outcasts. Tea Obreht's debut novel, <u>The Tiger's Wife</u>, introduces her talent to readers with imaginative storytelling and memorable imagery. The youngest writer noted in <i>The New Yorker's</i> latest 20-under-40 list, Obreht selects intriguing characters to develop: many are outcasts and all are involved in actions that are unusual. The threads of her narrative are filled with mythic elements and struggles with life and death. This unusual debut novel should appeal to those readers willing to try out new writers, and those who enjoy well-written fiction in which all the elements are not clearly resolved.</p> |  |
| <u>Inland</u> | Obreht, Téa | **** | <u>7/23/20</u> | <p>Camel. I typically skip reading any books set in the past in the American West because the myths they present can be so predictable and weary to plod through. So I stared at Téa Obreht's novel titled, <u>Inland</u>, for months before I opened it. Fans of fine literary fiction will enjoy her gorgeous prose, even when ghosts are involved. Readers who enjoy interesting and complex characters will appreciate</p> |  |

both Nora who struggles after her husband left and Lurie who runs from his past but is well known because of the camel he rides. I never felt the plot was predictable, and I never tired of her prose. Those of us who travel with Obrecht to Arizona in the 1890s are richly rewarded with fine writing about interesting people in a well-described place.

Quality. Many of us spend much of our daily time and mindful attention responding to what others present to us for our attention. In her book titled, How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy, Jenny Odell offers for readers' consideration a different way of engaging with the world. She proposes resistance to addictive technology and media and engaging with people and places close to us. If your quality of life involves a lot of time with devices, consider ways of breaking your patterns and pay attention to nature instead. I wonder what Odell would think of how I absorbed her book: walking outside and listening to the audiobook.



How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy

Odell, Jenny

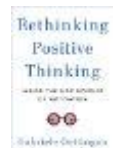
3/13/20

Rethinking Positive Thinking: Inside the New Science of Motivation

Oettingen, Gabriele

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

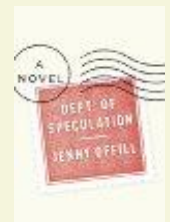



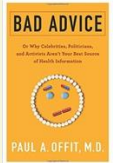
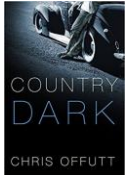

Dept. of Speculation

Offill, Jenny

5/9/14

Marriage. What keeps a marriage together? Jenny Offill approaches an answer to that question in her novel, Dept. of Speculation. She wastes few words in this book: every sentence seems distilled to richness. We don't live in narrative flow, and what flow there is in this book involves snippets of a little piece of this and that, which is precisely how we live. Our marriages become the sum of all the little things. Are we prepared for when a big thing comes along? How will we stay together after infidelity? What is fulfillment? When I sat down to read this



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| | | | | novel, the quirky snippets seemed to be leading nowhere. Before long, I realized that Offill was piecing together a portrait of modern lives that captures marriage in all its joy and struggle. | |
| Weather | Offill, Jenny | **** | 5/5/20 | <p>Fragments. In her short novel titled, Weather, Jenny Offill spits out fragments of the life of a librarian named Lizzie. As readers flit from piece to piece, we laugh, scratch our heads, and occasionally re-read a sentence or two with great joy. Offill can make climate change funny, and for that reason alone, some readers are grateful for her skills. No fragment lasts long, so like the weather, it changes quickly whether you're in the sunshine or in a storm. Fans of contemporary literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| Bad Advice: Or Why Celebrities, Politicians, and Activists Aren't Your Best Source of Health Information | Offit, Paul A. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Country Dark | Offutt, Chris | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| The Memory Police | Ogawa, Yoko | **** | 2/7/20 | <p>Disappearance. Have you ever gone by a vacant lot and found yourself at a loss when you try to remember what had been on the site? Yoko Ogawa's novel titled, The Memory Police, is set on an island where a powerful surveillance state causes items to disappear and for the memory of those items to be unlawful. People also disappear, especially those who have the ability to recall the disappeared items. After a struggling writer hides</p> |  |

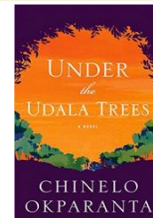
her editor from the police, fear and loss increase dramatically. The premise is frightening, the prose elegant, and the novel disturbing in all the right ways.

[Under the Udala Trees](#)

Okparanta, Chinelo

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



[Hotel Silence](#)

Ólafsdóttir, Auður Ava

[4/3/18](#)

Toolbox. The protagonist of Auður Ava Ólafsdóttir's novel titled, [Hotel Silence](#), is a man with a plan. Jónas Ebeneser has found his life in Iceland lost all meaning and purpose, so he settles his affairs there and travels to a war-torn country in the Balkans with a toolbox to assist him in committing suicide. After he arrives at a hotel in a small town and plans his demise, he finds that the people in the hotel and the town can use his help and his tools. Before long, he repairs both property and himself, and brightens the lives of the people around him.



[The Sacrament](#)

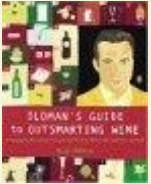
Olafsson, Olaf

[1/24/20](#)

Memory. What triggers our recollection of memories? In Olaf Olafsson's novel titled, [The Sacrament](#), the trigger for protagonist Sister Johanna, a French nun, is her return to Iceland. Two decades after her first investigation into allegations of clerical sexual abuse, a Vatican official from her past asks her to go to Iceland to investigate another allegation. With finely written prose, and insight into human nature, Olafsson draws readers into an examination of memory and secrets. The author sneaks us around the edges of Sister Johanna's recollections as we learn all that he wants us to observe. Johanna shows readers how nuns inside the institutional Catholic church can be powerless in some respects and vital in others.



While there is an examination of suffering in this novel, there's also deep insight into the nature of love.

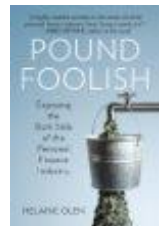
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| Oldman's Guide to Outsmarting Wine : 108 Ingenious Shortcuts to Navigate the World of Wine with Confidence and Style | Oldman, Mark | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
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Pound Foolish: Exposing the Dark Side of the Personal Finance Industry

Olen, Helaine

4/12/13

Hucksters. I've always been a bit repulsed by the popular purveyors of financial advice, and it was a pleasure to find a kindred spirit in Helaine Olen when I read her book, Pound Foolish: Exposing the Dark Side of the Personal Finance Industry. Olen calls out the hucksters and describes how their advice is often false. She does this in a lively writing style, and with a bright spotlight, as the subtitle indicates. My takeaway: be the advisor not the client. That's where the money is. Read a sample. If you like what you find, chances are you'll enjoy the whole book.

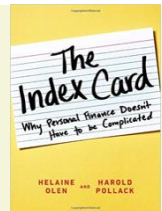


The Index Card: Why Personal Finance Doesn't Have to Be Complicated

Olen, Helaine and Harold Pollack

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.

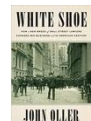


White Shoe: How a New Breed of Wall Street Lawyers Changed Big Business and

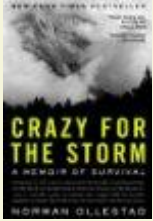
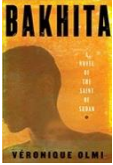
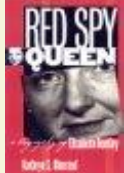
Oller, John


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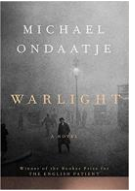
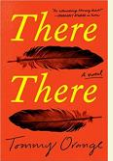
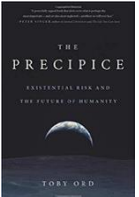
Shelf of Ennui 2019.



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| <u>Crazy for the Storm: A Memoir of Survival</u> | Ollestad, Norman | *** | <u>11/7/09</u> | <p>Fatherhood. At age eleven in 1979, Norman Ollestad was the only survivor of a small plane crash in the San Gabriel Mountains in which his father, his father's girlfriend, and the pilot all died. <u>Crazy for the Storm</u> is his memoir of that experience, written in alternating chapters about the crash with his life before and after that pivotal event. Norm's father pushed him hard during the eleven years they were together, and it turned out that the skills Norman learned from his father gave him the resources to survive against long odds against him. I especially liked the affectionate way in which his father called Norman "Ollestad". The writing in <u>Crazy for the Storm</u> presents the ordeal and the memories of childhood in ways that keep a reader engaged, and never approach the sentimental or maudlin. By the last page, I realized that rather than a memoir of survival, I was reading about the relationship between a father and son, and how a father's trial of his son by ordeal prepared a young man for the biggest challenge of his life.</p> |  |
| <u>Bakhita: A Novel of the Saint of Sudan</u> | Olmi, Veronique | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Red Spy Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth Bentley</u> | Olmstead, Kathryn S. | * | <u>Feb 03</u> | <p>Why Spy? Tedious tale of FBI star witness against her former comrades in the 1940s and 1950s, sometimes telling the truth and sometimes lying.</p> |  |

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| <u>The Deep Dark</u> | Olsen, Gregg | *** | <u>Sep 05</u> | Disaster. Detailed description of the 1972 disaster at Idaho's Sunshine Mine when 91 people died. Lessons about corporate culture in how decisions were delayed out of fear. |  |
| <u>Troublesome Young Men</u> | Olson, Lynne | **** | <u>July 07</u> | Courage. Finely written history about thirty young members of Parliament who rebelled against their party over appeasement with Germany, and how they brought Churchill to power. Also tells what happened to them afterwards. |  |
| <u>Waterloo</u> | Olsson, Karen | *** | <u>Jan 06</u> | Hometown. Debut novel replaces "Austin, Texas" with "Waterloo" and presents the great interplay of journalists, politicians and musicians, all behaving as adolescents. Special treats for Texans, and promising new author for others. |  |
| <u>Anil's Ghost</u> | Ondaatje, Michael | Unread | | We read and mostly followed The English Patient, so we're likely to give this a try. | <u>Buy at amazon.com</u> |
| <u>Divisadero</u> | Ondaatje, Michael | *** | <u>Aug 07</u> | Endless. Episodes build atop each other, connecting past and present in this masterfully written complex novel. A second reading enriches the experience from the first. |  |
| <u>The Cat's Table</u> | Ondaatje, Michael | **** | <u>11/28/11</u> | Voyage. Michael Ondaatje's novel, <u>The Cat's Table</u> , presents the story of a boy's journey by boat from Sri Lanka to England in 1954 using two perspectives: as it was underway and how it was remembered much later. I found Ondaatje's writing to be outstanding throughout this novel, and the characters became richly developed from both perspectives. The descriptive and poetic language became beguiling at times, and I found myself re-reading passages that were particularly enjoyable. The title refers to the shipboard table located |  |

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| | | | | <p>furthest from the Captain's table, the one at which all the strays were gathered. It is these strays that become the liveliest characters in the novel. Readers who appreciate literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> | |
| <u>Warlight</u> | Ondaatje, Michael | ***** | <u>7/12/18</u> | <p>Shadows. Some of the best novels take readers to a different place and time and lead us to feel as if we are there in a vividly drawn setting alongside characters who are just like us and people we know. From the first pages of Michael Ondaatje's novel, <u>Warlight</u>, I felt like I was in London in 1945, and as I read each paragraph, I saw shadows and light alternating across the rubble of the war. While some of the characters are just like you and me, others were a bit quirkier, but all are complex and finely drawn. This novel is a thriller that will appeal to any reader who enjoys fine writing.</p> |  |
| <u>There There</u> | Orange, Tommy | **** | <u>7/12/18</u> | <p>Identity. The debut novel by Tommy Orange titled, <u>There There</u>, explores identity and issues of belonging and exclusion. The title refers to part of Gertrude Stein's description of Oakland, California, where this novel is set. Orange draws readers into the lives of about a dozen Native Americans, and through each of them we learn about a segment of American culture and their struggles. This is a novel about chaos and disillusionment that seems to fit our current times precisely.</p> |  |
| <u>The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity</u> | Ord, Toby | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

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|--|------------------|--------|------------------------|--|---|
| Ally: My Journey Across the American-Israeli Divide | Oren, Michael B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Cinderella Ate My Daughter: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the New Girlie-Girl Culture | Orenstein, Peggy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| The Library Book | Orlean, Susan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Am I Alone Here? Notes on Living to Read and Reading to Live | Orner, Peter | *** | 8/3/17 | <p>Reading. I love to read. Peter Orner loves to read. Orner shares his love of reading in a book titled, Am I Alone Here? Notes on Living to Read and Reading to Live. This memoir discloses the ways in which literature has helped Orner during the most difficult times of his life. Orner's reflections about life are engaging and interesting. His vulnerability and personal disclosure becomes a way to encourage readers into Orner's world of reading, in hope that readers will find enhancement to living through reading.</p> |  |
| Last Car Over the Sagamore Bridge | Orner, Peter | **** | 4/7/14 | <p>Meandering. There are two types of stories in the collection from Peter Orner titled, Last Car Over the Sagamore Bridge: short and shorter. I enjoyed reading both types. Orner has the skill to present wit or devastation in just a few paragraphs. We don't ever find out the complete life or story, but we get the condensed essence. Orner meanders from one time period and place to another in this</p> |  |

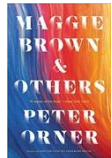
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| | | | | collection. Each story includes finely written prose and cohesion. No matter how short the story, I consciously paced myself to read only one story at each sitting. I wanted to absorb what Orner did in one story before I started to read another. Readers who enjoy a wide range of short stories are those most likely to savor this finely written collection. | |
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Maggie Brown & Others

Orner, Peter

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

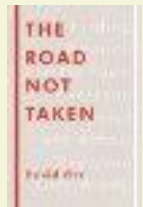


The Road Not Taken: Finding America in the Poem Everyone Loves and Almost Everyone Gets Wrong

Orr, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.

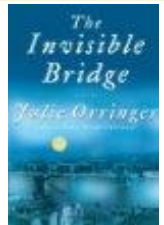


The Invisible Bridge

Orringer, Julie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010



The Bolter

Osborne, Frances

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009



Beautiful Animals

Osborne, Lawrence

9/26/17

Hydra. Using finely written prose, Lawrence Osborne thrilled me with the contrasts he draws in a novel titled, Beautiful Animals. The novel is set mostly during a summer on the Greek island, Hydra, and protagonist Naomi Codrington is both



beautiful and animal. When she sets out to do something she sees as good for a Syrian migrant, bad things follow. Under the brightness of the summer sun there is darkness. After developing a friendship with a young American girl named Sam, Naomi proceeds to manipulate her. The serpents on Hydra are humans, not snakes, and thanks to Osborne, we see the contrasts in a wide range of human behavior. Readers who like psychological thrillers especially when there's a moral tilt, are those most likely to enjoy this finely written novel.

Borders. Lawrence Osborne's novel, Hunters in the Dark, takes readers across many different borders. Protagonist Robert Grieve is a disillusioned twenty-eight-year-old teacher from England, on the border between late adolescence and adulthood. His chosen profession is nothing like what he expected. He leaves Sussex on holiday for Thailand. Running out of money, he crosses the border in Cambodia where he thinks his funds will stretch further. He wins money at roulette, and what seemed like a path of decline and destruction seems to turn in his favor. Osborne keeps Grieve off balance, and the clouding of identity creates a new kind of border that needs to be crossed. Osborne's descriptive language makes every scene come alive. If sunny days lead you to a dark novel, consider reading this one.



Hunters in the Dark

Osborne, Lawrence

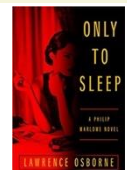
8/26/16

Only to Sleep

Osborne, Lawrence

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



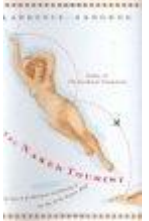

The Ballad of a Small Player

Osborne, Lawrence

9/6/14

Addiction. There was so much to dislike about the behavior of protagonist "Lord" Doyle in Lawrence Osborne's novel, The Ballad of a Small Player, that I don't know what the author did to keep me reading



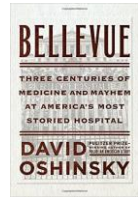
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| | | | | <p>and interested in what happens to this unlikeable character. A former London lawyer, Doyle stole funds from a client, moved to Hong Kong, and has become obsessed with baccarat. His level of risk taking is off the charts, and his addiction is severe. All that matters is the next bet. A run of good luck comes with consequences more significant than what happens with losses. Osborne injects an element of the supernatural that will appeal to some readers, and repel others. Any reader who has an interest in addiction or risk-taking will find some kindred elements in this unusual and atmospheric novel.</p> | |
| <p><u>The Naked Tourist</u></p> | <p>Osborne, Lawrence</p> | <p>***</p> | <p><u>Sept 06</u></p> | <p>Vacate. On the way to Papua New Guinea to visit a tribe with little exposure to outsiders, Osborne stops in Dubai, Calcutta and Bangkok on the way. In all places, he's the center of attention.</p> |  |
| <p><u>The Job: True Tales from the Life of a New York City Cop</u></p> | <p>Osborne, Steve</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>6/26/15</u></p> | <p>Stories. Having listened to Steve Osborne tell a story on <i>The Moth</i>, I knew that I would select the audiobook version when he published his memoir titled, <u>The Job: True Tales from the Life of a New York City Cop</u>. Osborne knows how to tell a story, and anyone who has been a member of the NYPD has a wealth of anecdotes that are worth hearing. Osborne takes those regular stories up a notch, thanks to his superior ability to tell a story just right. Any reader who loves New York, or who loves a police officer, will enjoy reading (or listening to) this book.</p> |  |

Bellevue: Three Centuries of Medicine and Mayhem at America's Most Storied Hospital

Oshinsky, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.



Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth, and Faith in the New China

Osnos, Evan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

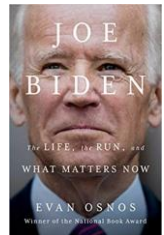


Joe Biden: The Life, the Run, and What Matters Now

Osnos, Evan

11/24/20

Resolute. Whatever you think you know about President-elect Joseph R. Biden, Jr., you're likely to learn something new if you read Evan Osnos' brief book titled, Joe Biden: The Life, the Run, and What Matters Now. I always look for Evan Osnos' writing in *The New Yorker*, and in this book, he draws on extensive interviews with Biden and many others. While I found ample examples of Biden's leadership, strategy, empathy and morality throughout this book, I finished reading it with a deeper understanding of how resolute this man is, and in what good hands the United States Presidency will be in during his tenure.



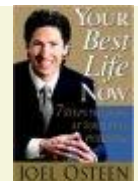
Your Best Life Now: 7 Steps to Living at Your Full Potential

Osteen, Joel

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Mar 05

Nostrums. Preachy, simplistic, slogans and nostrums, packed with exclamation points and smiley face stories. Author influences wide audience, so you may find something here.

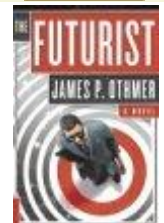


The Futurist

Othmer, James P.

Sept 06

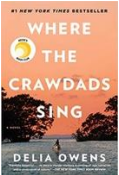
Imaginative. Entertaining debut satire features the global exploits of J.P. Yates, "founding father of the Coalition of the Clueless." Laugh while reading and think afterwards about us getting the future we deserve.





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| <u>When the Emperor Was Divine</u> | Otsuka, Julie | *** | <u>Feb 03</u> | <p>Injustice. Debut novel takes on Japanese internment during WWII with care and precision capturing the impact on the members of one family at that time. Poetic voice creates lasting images.</p> |  |
| <u>The Conundrum</u> | Owen, David | *** | <u>4/19/12</u> | <p>Cross-purposes. If you're pretty smug about the ways in which you're green: recycling, locavore, hybrid, etc., be sure to avoid reading David Owen's book, <u>The Conundrum: How Scientific Innovation, Increased Efficiency, and Good Intentions Can Make Our Energy and Climate Problems Worse.</u> Owen's basic premise is that we turn efficiencies into increased consumption and thereby make our problems worse. These usage changes don't lead to sustainability. The conundrum entails our inability, thus far, to commit to taking steps that would actually make a lasting difference on a global scale. According to Owen, we need to find ways globally to live smaller, closer to each other, and to drive less. Readers who enjoy gathering a broader perspective on issues are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p> |  |
| <u>The Quick</u> | Owen, Lauren | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>No Easy Day: The Firsthand Account of the Mission That Killed Osama Bin Laden</u> | Owen, Mark | *** | <u>10/10/12</u> | <p>Mission. I'm a fast reader, and I rushed my way through Mark Owen's vivid account of his life as a Navy SEAL and his participation in the mission that killed Osama Bin Laden. <u>No Easy Day</u> is an account of the training, practice and talent of the many professionals who work to become the best at what they do. Written under the pseudonym Mark Owen, this book conveys the love of doing work that makes someone become the most highly skilled among their peers. This book will be inspirational for young people who are considering a military career and have the desire to become the very best at what</p> |  |

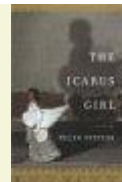
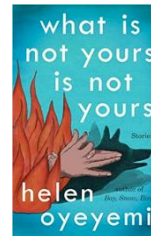
they will do. Any reader who enjoys getting an insider view of a significant historical event will love reading this book.

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| No Hero: The Evolution of a Navy SEAL | Owen, Mark | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
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| <u>Where the Crawdads Sing</u> | Owens, Delia | ***** | <u>7/3/19</u> | <p>Marsh. While I've noted that Delia Owens' debut novel titled, <u>Where the Crawdads Sing</u>, 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.</p> |  |
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| <u>The Factory</u> | Oyamada, Hiroko | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
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| <u>Boy, Snow, Bird</u> | Oyeyemi, Helen | ** | <u>10/18/14</u> | <p>Family. I'm surprised that I finished reading Helen Oyeyemi's novel, <u>Boy, Snow, Bird</u>. Having read reviews about how finely written this novel is, I was prepared to be delighted. Instead, the prose frustrated me. The themes of identity and family played out erratically with multiple narrators, and the modern fairy tale seemed forced and without the expected moral to the story. Read a sample to gauge your interest before leaping into this unusual novel.</p> |  |
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| <u>Gingerbread</u> | Oyeyemi, Helen | **** | <u>5/28/19</u> | <p>Imaginative. Readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction are those most likely to appreciate the prose in Helen Oyeyemi's novel titled, <u>Gingerbread</u>. 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.</p> |  |
| <u>Mrs. Fox</u> | Oyeyemi, Helen | ** | <u>1/23/12</u> | <p>Muse. Music lovers who appreciate amusing variations on a theme and those readers who are patient with an absence of plot sequence or logic are those most likely to enjoy Helen Oyeyemi's novel, <u>Mrs. Fox</u>. I found many parts of the novel to be witty and I enjoyed the multiple ways in which Oyeyemi explores the story. After a while, I lost patience, and found myself concluding that this odd novel is for acquired tastes, and mine savors something a little less gamey.</p> |  |
| The Icarus Girl | Oyeyemi, Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>What Is Not Yours Is Not Yours</u> | Oyeyemi, Helen | **** | <u>11/18/16</u> | <p>Keys. There are nine stories in the collection by Helen Oyeyemi titled, <u>What Is Not Yours Is Not Yours</u>. Readers who love literary fiction, especially short stories, are those most likely to appreciate each finely written story in this collection. Oyeyemi structures the stories with great skill, and uses many different forms of keys to unlock the essence of the story from the inside and the outside. I paced myself in reading these stories over several weeks, and I savored each one. Oyeyemi uses great efficiency in drawing readers into the setting, the</p> |  |

progression of the plot and in developing complex characters.

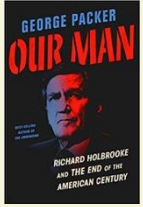
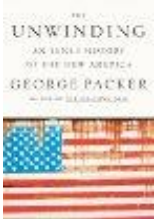



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| Scenes from Village Life | Oz, Amos | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
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| Heir to the Glimmering World | Ozick, Cynthia | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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| <u>Songs Without Words</u> | Packer, Ann | *** | <u>Oct 07</u> | Friendship. Life is harder for some people, and the characters in this novel are going through a rough patch. Packer presents their brokenness in ways that will be appreciated by many readers. |  |
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| <u>Swim Back to Me: Stories</u> | Packer, Ann | *** | <u>4/26/11</u> | <p>Loss. There are six works of short fiction in Ann Packer's new collection, <u>Swim Back to Me</u>. These are either short stories or novellas, depending on how one draws that distinction. In each story, Packer presents the emotional tension in relationships, and explores the many forms of loss we experience throughout life. While I find Packer's longer fiction to be outstanding (I loved <i>The Dive from Clauson's Pier</i>), there was something too quirky about these stories that left me wishing for any of these stories to be longer and more complete. She's a great writer, and even lesser work from her is far better than that of most writers. Readers who like fiction that reflects the complexity of human behavior and that contains psychological insight are those most likely to enjoy this collection.</p> |  |
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| <p><u>The Children's Crusade</u></p> | <p>Packer, Ann</p> | <p>*****</p> | <p><u>5/26/15</u></p> <p>Taut. Hundreds of novels will be published this year that feature the complicated lives of families. None is likely to be as finely written as Ann Packer's <u>The Children's Crusade</u>. Packer presents the Blair family from the 1950s to the present. The father of the family, Bill Blair, is a pediatrician. His wife, Penny, is an artist. Their four children are named Robert, Rebecca, Ryan and James. By the selection of name, you can guess how well James fits in with the others. As in many families, the story revolves around the mother, and Penny is not the storybook Mom of the 1950s. She chooses her art over giving her children what they need. What Packer does so well is create this interesting and complex character in Penny, and fleshes out the impact of Penny's choices on each member of the family over six decades. Packer's prose can delight close readers, no matter what the content. The prose here describes the place and time so perfectly that the development of characters in their multiple settings seems to flow with great ease. Packer's insight into these characters made me love reading this novel. Each unique character, formed by life experience, behaves in ways that are understandable and totally recognizable. Fans who revel in finely written literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p> |  |
| <p><u>The Dive from Clausen's Pier</u></p> | <p>Packer, Ann</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>Jul 02</u></p> <p>Packer delivers characters, scenes, and dialogue with precision in this great debut novel.</p> |  |

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| <u>Our Man: Richard Holbrooke and the End of the American Century</u> | Packer, George | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America | Packer, George | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| A Blessed Event | Page, Jean Reynolds | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>The Body in the Casket</u> | Page, Katherine Hall | *** | <u>2/2/18</u> | Celebration. I am a latecomer to the mystery novels of Katherine Hall Page featuring protagonist Faith Fairchild. The twenty-fourth installment and my introduction to the series is titled, <u>The Body in the Casket</u> . Faith has been hired by Max Dane to cater a weekend celebration of his seventieth birthday. Max is a Broadway musical producer and director, and the guests for this party are all associated with his last and unsuccessful production. Mystery fans will find a pretty straightforward story and some mild entertainment as well as a villain who was easy to spot. |  |
| <u>The Matriarch: Barbara Bush and the Making of an American Dynasty</u> | Page, Susan | **** | <u>7/26/19</u> | Beloved. Susan Page has written a terrific biography of the late former First Lady Barbara Bush titled, <u>The Matriarch: Barbara Bush and the Making of an American Dynasty</u> . 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 |  |

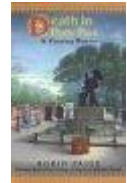
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| | | | | a large family whose public service was exemplary. This book is no hagiography, as Page presents achievements alongside shortcomings. As with many women of her time, Barbara Bush has been undervalued and underestimated. A reader will come 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. | |
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Death in Hyde Park

Paige, Robin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004



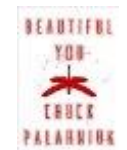
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| <u>Adjustment Day</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | ***** | <u>11/17/18</u> | Satire. Fans of Chuck Palahniuk are those readers most likely to enjoy reading his latest satire, a novel titled, <u>Adjustment Day</u> . Palahniuk has the ability to poke right at the heart of the divisions in society, drawing your brain into twisted ways in which tables are turned. Things don't have to be the way they are. They could be much, much worse. The novel twists the tension in many of our divisions: race, class, age, sexuality, and describes another cultural model. |  |
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[Beautiful You](#)

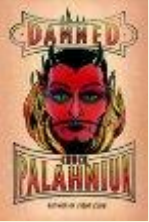



Palahniuk, Chuck

[11/21/14](#)

Control. Jonathan Swift would love reading Chuck Palahniuk's novel, [Beautiful You](#), an over-the-top satire of modern life. A billionaire, C. Linus Maxwell, plans to control the behavior of women worldwide by offering irresistible products that provide stimulating personal pleasure, and then make them buy whatever he wants them to buy. Alternating as his partner and nemesis is Penny Harrigan, a twenty-five year old working in New York City for a law firm. Palahniuk riffs on porn, marketing, power, control, narcissism, and many other aspects of contemporary society. Many readers will be distracted by how extreme this novel



may seem, but I think both Swift and I agree that for satire to succeed, you need to make a modest proposal that will catch the attention of wise readers.

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| <u>Damned</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | *** | <u>11/14/11</u> | <p>Spunky. Readers who enjoy satire will find a lot to like in Chuck Palahniuk's latest novel, <u>Damned</u>. Each chapter begins with these two sentences: "Are you there, Satan? It's me, Madison." We get to see the hell of Palahniuk's imagination through the eyes of thirteen-year-old Madison who finds herself there. She's a spunky and lively character in every chapter, and the descriptions of hell are vintage Palahniuk.</p> |  |
| <u>Diary</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | ** | <u>Mar 05</u> | <p>Anatomy. Dark tale structured as a wife's diary written for her husband who's in a coma that followed an apparent botched suicide attempt. Quirky, artistic, imaginative.</p> |  |
| <u>Doomed</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | **** | <u>2/7/14</u> | <p>Hilarious. Readers taken with thirteen-year-old protagonist Madison Spencer to hell in Chuck Palahniuk's 2011 novel, <i>Damned</i>, are back on earth with her in the sequel titled, <u>Doomed</u>. I laughed often throughout this hilarious novel, still enamored by Madison as a tour guide to Satan and the afterlife. Palahniuk's prose hits my funny bone just right. Read a sample to see if you're likely to be as entertained as I was. If you agree that it's a matter of perspective to see our current condition as being pre-dead, chances are you'll like this novel.</p> |  |
| Haunted: A Novel of Stories | Palahniuk, Chuck | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |

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| <u>Make Something Up: Stories You Can't Unread</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | **** | <u>11/6/15</u> | <p>Hilarious. I readily admit that I have acquired a taste for Chuck Palahniuk's bizarre writing. The 21 stories in a collection titled, <u>Make Something Up: Stories You Can't Unread</u>, display a range of his humor and creativity. The subtitle reveals the artist at work: there's something in most of these stories that you may wish you had not read, but once your eyes crossed the page, there's no going back. Readers who like his novels are those most likely to appreciate the humor in his short stories.</p> |  |
| <u>Pygmy</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | *** | <u>5/25/09</u> | <p>Havoc. Chuck Palahniuk may be the only author who could lead readers to laugh about terrorism. His new novel, <u>Pygmy</u>, describes the exploits of a group of teenage exchange students sent to the United States from an unnamed country. Their mission: Operation Havoc. The thirteen-year-old first person narrator is called "Pygmy" by his hosts, and while the language used is English, the grammar and sentence structure can be a challenge to read. I remembered my own struggles as a young teen trying to read the dialect in <i>Huck Finn</i>. Typical of Palahniuk, the level of description for both sexual content and violence are likely to stress the most tolerant readers. <u>Pygmy</u> bears no resemblance to <i>High School Musical</i>, yet teens typically act in ways that stretch the limits of any rules constraining behavior. The model U.N. and the science fair described on these pages will make most readers laugh out loud. Religion plays a role in <u>Pygmy</u> that will offend some readers and bring guffaws from others. <u>Pygmy</u> didn't go to your high school, but he could have.</p> |  |

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| Rant : An Oral Biography of Buster Casey | Palahniuk, Chuck | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Tell-All</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | ** | <u>7/20/10</u> | <p>Celebrity. Chuck Palahniuk's <u>Tell-All</u> is an odd book that may have limited appeal for most readers. Palahniuk is a talented writer, and his skill shows on these pages. I enjoyed many aspects of this clever take on movie celebrity: the structure as visual scenes as if in a movie; the bold-faced names of celebrities as if they were appearing in a gossip column; and the larger-than-life behavior of protagonist Miss Kathie. After forty or fifty pages of this exposition, I found myself tiring of it all, and as if I were sitting in a movie theater, I let the pages turn and waited for the end. Any reader who loves movie celebrities, especially from decades ago, will appreciate this book.</p> |  |
| <u>The Invention of Sound</u> | Palahniuk, Chuck | **** | <u>11/24/20</u> | <p>Foley. A few decades ago, in a ploy to get my sons to sit tight as a movie ended to let the crowd clear, I would encourage them to look at the credits and find the names of the Foley artists. We began to recognize some of these artists, and we all came to know what the role of the Foley artist entails. While it was a delight, then, to see Foley artists in the book by Chuck Palaniuk titled, <u>The Invention of Sound</u>, the context involved screams, horror and the usual nausea inducing sensibility that Palaniuk brings to his art. If you are a fan of Palaniuk's work, and have a strong stomach, you will find in this book a thoughtful exploration of suffering and the power of art.</p> |  |

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| The Given World | Palaia, Marian | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Annoying: The Science of What Bugs Us | Palca, Joe and Flora Lightman | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| Brain Storms: The Race to Unlock the Mysteries of Parkinson's Disease | Palfreman, Jon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| The Truth | Palin, Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Smart Money: How High-Stakes Financial Innovation is Reshaping Our World—For the Better | Palmer, Andrew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>Version Control</u> | Palmer, Dexter | ***** | <u>3/20/18</u> | Physics. Intelligent readers who usually avoid any form of science fiction may join me in the pleasure of reading Dexter Palmer's novel titled, <u>Version Control</u> . If I say this novel involves time travel, you are likely to say, “no thanks.” But you might be interested if I mention that the near future Palmer |  |

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| | | | | presents may be what's scaring Elon Musk, you might be interested. If I mention the idea that avatars are becoming indistinguishable from real people, you might be intrigued. If I say that a physicist has been working on a causality violation device that has been funded by the government, you might read a few pages. If I tell you that old versions of life might be overwritten, I think that just might push you over the edge to consider reading this creative and clever novel. I'm glad I did. | |
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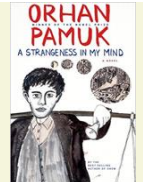
My Father's
Daughter:
Delicious, Easy
Recipes
Celebrating
Family &
Togetherness

Paltrow,
Gwyneth

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011



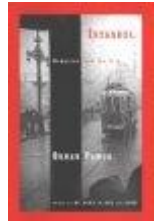
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| <u>A Strangeness in My Mind</u> | Pamuk, Orhan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
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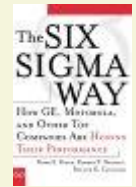
Istanbul

Pamuk, Orhan

Unread

Shelf of Reproach 2005



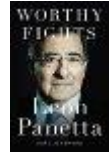
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| <u>The Six Sigma Way: How GE, Motorola and Other Top Companies Are Honing Their Performance</u> | Pande, Peter S. | *** | <u>03/01</u> | Whatever questions you have about Six Sigma, you're likely to find an answer here. <u>Read longer review.</u> |  |
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Worthy Fights:
A Memoir of
Leadership in
War and Peace

Panetta, Leon

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

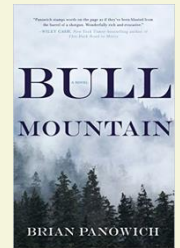


Bull Mountain

Panowich, Brian

2/5/16

Family. Land and family provide the raw material for a finely written debut novel by Brian Panowich titled, Bull Mountain. The Burroughs family have nurtured one another and created a community on a backwoods mountain in Georgia. From moonshine to meth in a few generations, this outlaw family faces new challenges when someone arrives on their doorstep seeking revenge. Panowich develops great characters, tells a gripping story, and writes with great skill. Readers interested in a debut novel telling an old story in new ways are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

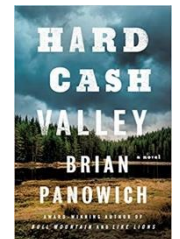


Hard Cash Valley

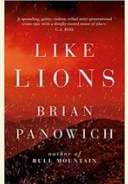
Panowich, Brian

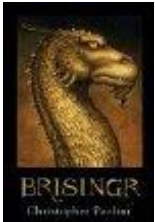
8/25/20





Loss. Brian Panowich returns to Bull Mountain and McFalls County for the third time in a novel titled, Hard Cash Valley. Squeamish readers should be cautious when approaching this thriller, since the violence includes both murder and torture. Protagonist Dane Kirby has suffered a lot of loss during his life in McFalls County. His boss has assigned him to work with the FBI on a brutal murder in another state, but the trail leads him back home to a world of chickens bred for fighting, criminal treachery and the hunt for a boy on the autism spectrum. The pace of the novel is rapid, and Panowich builds heavy layers of complexity onto each main character to intensify the stakes and accelerate the action. Fans of crime fiction with a stomach for gore are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel. Through all the loss, there is also love, and that helps point Kirby and other characters in the direction of redemption and recovery. Meanwhile, the bad guys face justice to



the satisfaction of readers who have put up with a lot from these criminals.

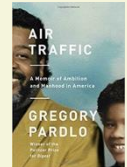
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| <u>Like Lions</u> | Panowich, Brian | **** | <u>2/7/20</u> | <p>Women. The violence on Bull Mountain from Brian Panowich's debut novel of that name returns with revenge in his novel titled, <u>Like Lions</u>. Sheriff Clayton Burroughs finds himself in pain and withdrawing from life with his wife, Kate, and their child. The legacy of crime in his family and in this location weighs heavily. Because Clayton's brother is dead, there's a void in the criminal playing field, and those trying to fill the void provide the plot momentum for this novel. The novel is a story of revenge and retribution. Three women are the stars of this book: Kate, a character named Vanessa, and the ailing widow of the head of another crime family. Readers who enjoy crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p>  |
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| <u>Brisingr</u> | Paolini, Christopher | *** | <u>12/27/08</u> | <p>Leadership. The third installment of Christopher Paolini's Inheritance series is titled, <u>Brisingr</u>, which means "fire." The hero Eragon begins to deepen his understanding of the leadership that is expected of him, and throughout this novel there are leaders who are elected, or ones who prove their worthiness to lead by succeeding in passing tests to that leadership. Paolini continues to do a fine job at creating a fantasy world that capitalizes on prior heroic tales and legends. One would think that he could have wrapped up the series in these new 763 pages, but this remains a transition book, leaving fans with time to kill until the next installment. Despite new revelations and maturation, Eragon, Sephira and the Inheritance series still have a ways to go before they face Galbatorix. Given the pleasure it is to read a fresh heroic novel in a classical style, I'm willing to wait and read on until Paolini has gotten out all that he wants to write.</p>  |
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| <u>Eldest</u> | Paolini, Christopher | *** | <u>Nov 05</u> | Family. Installment two of the Inheritance trilogy continues the fantasy adventure of Eragon and Saphira in the world of Alagaesia, this time revealing family connections and allegiances. |  |
| <u>Eragon</u> | Paolini, Christopher | *** | <u>Dec 04</u> | Debut. 544 entertaining pages from teenage author. Familiar themes, but creative characters, suspenseful plot and descriptive language. |  |
| <u>Inheritance</u> | Paolini, Christopher | *** | <u>11/18/11</u> | Understanding. The four volume series that Christopher Paolini started writing as a teenager comes to a conclusion with <u>Inheritance</u> . Readers of the earlier books will want to read the finale to see how everything turns out. I've been wondering how Eragon would deal with Galbatorix in this last book and the clever way in which Paolini resolved their conflict was one of the highlights of the book for me. Readers who like a lot of pages for their dollar with find value here. The quality of writing is spotty, but the combination of plot and character provide enough momentum for most readers to overlook the shortcomings. The heroic story in all four volumes might have been better if condensed, but Paolini indulged readers by stringing us along in a story that developed slowly and left the door open to future books with these now familiar characters. |  |
| <u>The Fork, the Witch, and the Worm</u> | Paolini, Christopher | **** | <u>12/9/19</u> | 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, <u>The Fork, the Witch, and the Worm</u> . 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.

Poet. What words would any of us choose to examine our life? If we were the award-winning poet Gregory Pardlo, we would select words that match our message perfectly. In his book titled, [Air Traffic: A Memoir of Ambition and Manhood in America](#), Pardlo reflects a lot about fatherhood: himself, his father, and his grandfather. To place these complex individuals in context, Pardlo tells us about their work, their choices, the setbacks and advances of lives, like ours, packed with ups and downs. The title refers to the role of Pardlo's father as an air traffic controller. Family life changed forever after President Reagan fired striking controllers, including union leader Pardlo. Young Gregory was formed during the up and down years and his reflections are introspective and wise in this finely written book.



[Air Traffic: A Memoir of Ambition and Manhood in America](#)

Pardlo, Gregory

[11/17/18](#)

Loyalty. Detective V.I. Warshawski returns in deftly written, often strident, novel about the loss of rights after 9/11, the parallels to the McCarthy era, and how personal loyalty and closely held secrets can lead to conflicts with the law.

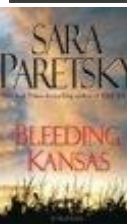


[Blacklist](#)

Paretsky, Sara

[Jan 04](#)

Family. Author leaves the comfort of Chicago and sets novel in Kansas, where the author grew up. The dynamics of three families over multiple generations create passion, fear and conflict galore.



[Bleeding Kansas](#)

Paretsky, Sara

[Apr 08](#)

Courage. Two protagonists dominate Sara Paretsky's latest novel, [Body Work](#): private detective V.I. Warshawski and the city of Chicago. In the fourteenth novel by Paretsky to feature both these characters they remain both consistent and adapt to what's going on the world. Over the course





[Body Work](#)

Paretsky, Sara

[10/15/10](#)

of 450 pages, Paretsky brings in the war in Iraq, wounded veterans, the exploitation of women, crime, and corporate malfeasance, all the while using a familiar cast of characters to move the story along. Vic, her cousin and other characters need extra courage to take on all the forces they encounter. Paretsky's political and social views are rarely disguised in her novels, and some readers may become impatient by this, while others will appreciate her point of view. The plot moved quickly enough for me, and I found myself caring about what happened. I've enjoyed this series, and look forward to future installments.

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|---------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------------------|--|---|
| Breakdown | Paretsky, Sara | *** | 4/27/12 | <p>Connections. Sara Paretsky's fifteenth and latest V.I Warshawski novel is titled Breakdown. As fans have come to expect, Paretsky's plot is complicated, her politics are raw, and issues from the headlines provide ample opportunities for Paretsky to exploit. The connections she makes from contemporary headlines to novel plots are always well done. Partisans of Paretsky's leftward leanings will cheer her character portrayals, while righter leaning readers may find her characters incomplete. Readers who like character-driven crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p> |  |
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|----------------------------|----------------|------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Brush Back | Paretsky, Sara | **** | 5/13/16 | <p>Blink. Few mystery writers attain excellence from multiple elements. One such writer is Sara Paretsky, and you can find the evidence in her novel titled, Brush Back. Complicated plots entertain crime fiction fans, and this plot moves in many directions, to great satisfaction. Characters must be compelling, and protagonist, V.I. Warshawski, comes across as the real thing. Also, the ways in which Paretsky explores families over time display her great insight into human nature. Finally, descriptive language, when well chosen, places readers into a specific location and time period.</p> |  |
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Paretsky brings Chicago neighborhoods and attitudes into your backyard, or wherever you're likely to read this novel. Paretsky does all this as an expert, and she kept my eyes so focused on the page that I had to remember to blink. If you like great detective fiction, read this novel.

Injustice. One of the reading pleasures that I get when I open the latest novel in a series I've read for years is that sense of familiarity, as if I've been reunited with old friends. The latest V.I. Warshawski novel by Sara Paretsky is titled, Critical Mass, and in this outing, Paretsky leads Vic and readers back and forth between modern and past Chicago into World War II and current Vienna, the development of atomic weapons in Vienna and Chicago, and the secrets of a family that built a business from a creative scientific breakthrough. Fans will enjoy as I did, the broad cast of familiar characters, as well as some interesting new ones. The plot is complex enough to satisfy mystery readers, and engaging enough to retain interest for the complete novel of just under 500 pages.

Power. The twentieth installment in the V.I. Warshawski series by Sara Paretsky is a novel titled, Dead Land. There's a secret power play to develop the lakefront on Chicago's South Side, and Vic's goddaughter Bernie pulls her into the middle of the action. The familiar cast of characters enhance the novel for longtime fans, and links to Kansas and South America broaden the story beyond Chicago. When bodies start to pile up, Vic's sense of urgency accelerates, especially when she herself becomes a target. I enjoyed every minute spent reading this entertaining novel and appreciated the continuing development of this familiar cast of characters alongside their engagement with new people.

Critical Mass

Paretsky, Sara

12/27/13



Dead Land

Paretsky, Sara

8/5/20



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|---------------------------|----------------|------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Fallout | Paretsky, Sara | **** | 6/9/17 | <p>Kansas. The nineteenth novel in Sara Paretsky's V.I. Warshawski series takes the private detective out of Chicago for a case in Kansas. In this book titled, Fallout, V.I. learns that events in the past provide the key to solving the case that led her to Kansas: the disappearance of a film student and an actress. Longtime fans of the series will enjoy spending time with Vic again, and watching so many plot lines get teased out and eventually resolved. Dog fans will love that Peppy joined Vic on the outing to Kansas.</p> |  |
| Fire Sale | Paretsky, Sara | *** | Sep 05 | <p>Questions. Latest novel in V.I. Warshawski series, set on Chicago's South Side, tackling money, power, race, corporate responsibility and recklessness, and complicated relationships. Private eye asks the right questions and gets the bad guys.</p> |  |
| Hard Time | Paretsky, Sara | *** | | V.I. Warshawski returns for new adventures. |  |
| Hardball | Paretsky, Sara | **** | 10/14/09 | <p>Secrets. I didn't realize how much I missed V.I. Warshawski until Sara Paretsky wrote the latest novel in the series titled, Hardball. After just a few pages, I remembered the reading pleasure from earlier books in the series. In many ways, both Paretsky and V.I. are continuing to improve. In Hardball, private detective V.I. Warshawski accepts a low-paid assignment from an elderly dying woman to find Lamont Gadsden, missing for forty years. V.I. tracks down leads and uncovers secrets that were long buried. Along the way, she wonders about her late father's role in police corruption and illegal practices. The south side of Chicago, past and</p> |  |

present, comes alive on these pages, as if it, too, is a character. V.I.'s twenty-three-year-old cousin, Petra, adds lots of energy to [Hardball](#), and reprised characters from prior novels remain reliable, giving V.I. much-needed help in her perilous work to uncover secrets held closely for decades.

Artifacts. The latest V.I. Warshawski novel by Sara Paretsky is titled, [Shell Game](#). Fans of character-based crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and the series. One case in this novel is a personal one in which Vic is trying to help her friend Lotty's nephew, Felix, clear his name from a murder accusation. A second case involves the disappearance of Vic's niece, Reno. I can't recall a novel in this series where Vic did so much unpaid sleuthing. Stolen artifacts spice up the action, as does the connection of Vic's ex-husband to the case. Loyal fans will anticipate that Vic will solve the case and get in harm's way while doing what she does best.



[Shell Game](#)

Paretsky, Sara

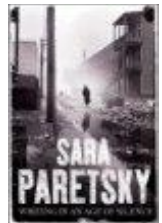
[12/6/18](#)

[Writing in an Age of Silence](#)

Paretsky, Sara

[Sep 07](#)

Courage. Novelist's memoir minces no words, and exudes with passion for social justice and for not standing by when our liberties are placed in jeopardy. Along the way, she tells her own story.



One Matchless Time : A Life of William Faulkner

Parini, Jay

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



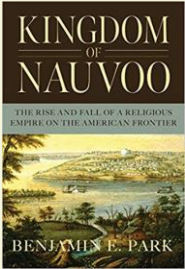
The Art of Teaching

Parini, Jay

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



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| <u>Kingdom of Nauvoo: The Rise and Fall of a Religious Empire on the American Frontier</u> | Park, Benjamin E. | ***** | 5/26/20 | <p>Rejection. Historian Benjamin E. Park uses newly released archival information from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to offer readers a concise view of the violent struggles on the American frontier in the 19th century in his book titled, <u>Kingdom of Nauvoo: The Rise and Fall of a Religious Empire on the American Frontier</u>. Park offers readers a serious look at the early years of the Mormons, and places them in the context of that time. For a brief period, they found acceptance and refuge in Illinois where they built a large utopian city, Nauvoo. Park describes the variety of forces that led to the abandonment of the city of Nauvoo and the rejection of the Mormons living in Illinois, forcing them to head West. Readers who enjoy history are those most likely to enjoy this book that blends well a national story with the growing power and popularity of a religion.</p> |  |
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Re Jane

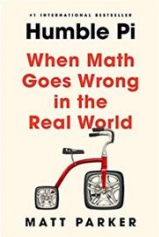
Park, Patricia


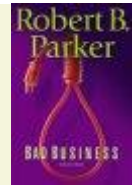
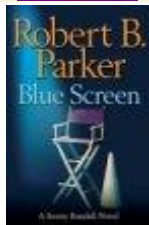
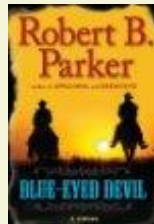
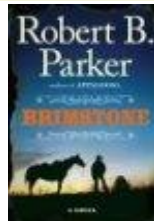
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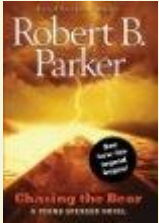
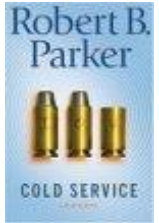
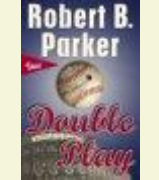

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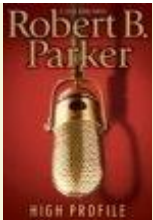


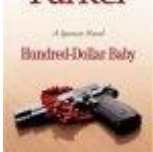
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| <u>The Caregiver</u> | Park, Samuel | ***** | 2/8/19 | <p>Daughter. Can a child ever truly understand the lives of one's parents? Samuel Park explores that question and others in a finely written novel titled, <u>The Caregiver</u>. Protagonist Mara Alencar grew up in a Rio de Janeiro flavela 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</p> |  |
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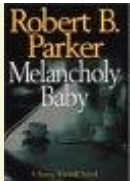
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| | | | | these fascinating characters. I'm usually skeptical of a man's ability to write with insight about female characters. In this case, Park seemed to understand the mother-daughter relationship extremely well. He also understood what Kathryn was facing with cancer. Park died of stomach cancer not long after he finished writing this novel. | |
| Ogden Nash : The Life and Work of America's Laureate of Light Verse | Parker, Douglas M. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Humble Pi: When Math Goes Wrong in the Real World</u> | Parker, Matt | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| The Watery Part of the World | Parker, Michael | Unread | | A few different times, I tried to read a few pages, and I kept putting it aside. After failing to get engaged, I gave up. Maybe I'm too grounded in the earthy part of the world. Shelf of Ennui 2011. |  |
| <u>The Shortest Way Home</u> | Parker, Miriam | *** | <u>9/12/18</u> | Sweet. The protagonist of Miriam Parker's debut novel titled, <u>The Shortest Way Home</u> , is ready to complete her MBA in California and move to New York to take a great job for which she beat many worthy competitors. While Hannah is spending a weekend in Sonoma a new dream displaces the old one. Most young adults veer a bit on the path to finding one's place in the world. Hannah pulls a full about face. However improbable her story, Hannah is a sweet character and Parker encourages readers |  |

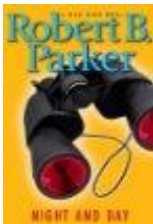
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| | | | | to laugh with the consequences of Hannah's actions and root for her dream to come true. | |
| Back Story | Parker, Robert B. | *** | Apr 03 | Spenser Vintage 2003. Master detective Spenser accepts six Krispy Kremes as payment to work on solving a decades-old murder. Memorable characters, interesting plot and realistic dialogue. |  |
| Bad Business | Parker, Robert B. | *** | May 04 | Human Nature. 31 st Spenser novel presents Enron-like company (Kinergy) and the consequences of its culture of marital cheating and corporate malfeasance. |  |
| Blue Screen | Parker, Robert B. | *** | Dec 06 | Partners. Usual Parker novel with an added twist: two of his serial mystery brands merge as Sunny Randall partners with Jesse Stone on a case, and they develop a good relationship. |  |
| Blue-Eyed Devil | Parker, Robert B. | *** | 12/16/11 | Mastery. The late Robert B. Parker excelled at two elements of fiction: dialogue and character development. Both those elements are superb in his western novel, Blue-Eyed Devil . Characters Virgil Cole and Everett Hitch return to Appaloosa where they had once been the only lawmen on the scene. The current and ambitious chief of a force numbering a dozen asks for their help. They refuse, and the excitement that follows will keep readers entertained, especially those who like character-driven fiction in which everything comes to resolution by the end of the novel. |  |
| Brimstone | Parker, Robert B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |

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| <u>Chasing the Bear: A Young Spenser Novel</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>11/21/09</u> | <p>Character. Robert B. Parker is trying to cultivate a new generation of readers by targeting some of his output toward young readers. His latest, <u>Chasing the Bear</u>, takes his protagonist from three dozen novels, Spenser, and sets the action when Spenser was fourteen years old. As a result, young and seasoned readers can see some of the ways in which Spenser's strength of character was formed early in life. In <u>Chasing the Bear</u>, the central story involves how he kept his cool when he faced a bear in the woods while hunting, and shows courage by rescuing a young girlfriend from a perilous situation with an abusive father. It won't take long for an adult to read <u>Chasing the Bear</u>, and after doing so, consider which young person might fall in love with reading if exposed to an interesting character and a clearly written story.</p> |  |
| <u>Cold Service</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>July 05</u> | <p>Friendship. Hawk is shot, Spenser helps him recuperate and together they pursue revenge, which is, as the title alludes, a dish best served cold.</p> |  |
| <u>Double Play</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>Nov 04</u> | <p>Healing. Stoic WW II vet becomes bodyguard for Jackie Robinson in 1947 and finds healing and the restoration of his feelings from the experience. Finely written with pitch perfect dialogue.</p> |  |
| Edenville Owls | Parker, Robert B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

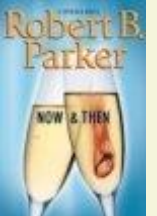
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| High Profile | Parker, Robert B. | *** | Apr 07 | Obsession. Jesse Stone and Sunny Randall return as a Paradise murder gives Parker the background to riff on the complexity of relationships, especially when love becomes obsessive. |  |
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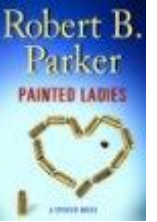
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| Hundred-Dollar Baby | Parker, Robert B. | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
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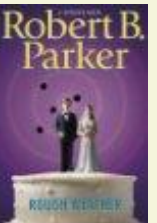
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| Melancholy Baby | Parker, Robert B. | *** | Apr 05 | Kin. Sunny Randall's back and tries to deal with her personal life while helping a client figure out whether or not she's related to the people she's known as her parents. |  |
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| Night and Day | Parker, Robert B. | *** | 3/20/09 | <p>Obsession. I like to read a Robert Parker novel whenever I want a book that is fast and simple to read. The characters are familiar, dialogue moves the action, and you can be distracted externally, and pick up where you leave off with ease. His books are ideal for travel: like snack food. The eighth police chief Jesse Stone novel, Night and Day, focuses on the theme of obsession. Readers know that Jesse remains obsessed with his ex-wife Jenn. After a peeping Tom in the town of Paradise increases his obsession and progresses to home invasion, molestation and then murder, Stone and his police team work to track him down. Along the lines of "it takes one to know one," Stone examines the obsessive Night Hawk, as they call him, from the perspective of Stone's own obsession with Jenn. Sunny Randall and Spike make cameo appearances, as does Spenser's Susan Silverman. The pace of the novel is as quick as ever, and the dialogue is</p> |  |
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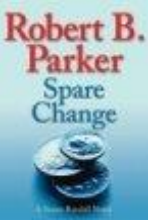
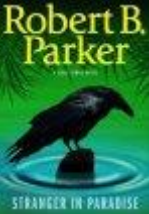
peppery. Before you know it, you'll have finished the book, the flight attendant will be announcing imminent landing, and you'll be somewhat satisfied that you didn't totally waste a boring flight doing nothing.

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| <u>Now and Then</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>Jan 08</u> | <p>Protect. Another Spenser novel in which Parker does what he does best: character and dialogue. All the action involves Spenser doing whatever it takes to protect Susan.</p> |  |
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|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Painted Ladies</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>10/26/10</u> | <p>Persistence. The 38th Robert Parker novel to feature private detective Spenser was completed at the time of the author's death last January. <u>Painted Ladies</u> ratchets up the ways in which Spenser confronts danger and takes personal risks. When asked to protect art historian Ashton Prince as he exchanges cash in ransom of stolen art, Spenser can do nothing when a bomb explodes and kills Prince. Spenser returns the fee he didn't earn, and persistently pursues the case to its resolution. Along the way, the tension is high as Spenser confronts skilled opponents who try hard to kill him. Susan Silverman keeps Spenser grounded to earth, caring for each other, while he puts his life in danger. Readers of the series will not want to miss this installment, and any reader who likes crime fiction will likely find this book to be enjoyable and entertaining.</p> |  |
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|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Rough Weather</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>12/22/08</u> | <p>Calm. The methodical and unflappable Spenser never wavers, and despite the title of Parker's latest Spenser novel, <u>Rough Weather</u>, all seems calm in Spenser's capable hands. Spenser's client in this novel is the wealthy Heidi Bradshaw, a divorcee whose wealth came from divorcing rich husbands. She hires Spenser to stand by her on her private island for the wedding of her daughter. She already</p> |  |
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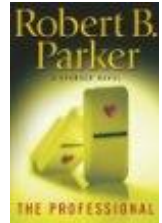
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| | | | | has island security, but wants something extra. Since Spenser's beloved Susan Silverman will be a guest, Spenser readily agrees. All seems to be going well until Spenser sees a familiar adversary: Rugar, the Gray Man. (Rugar almost killed Spenser in the 1977 novel <i>Small Vices</i> .) Before we know it, there's murder, kidnapping, and a wild storm. As readers have come to expect, the dialogue is always direct and repartee almost predictable. | |
| <u>School Days</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>Dec 05</u> | Hope. Spenser returns solo to help a grandmother's hope that her grandson's confession to a Columbine-style shooting spree had to be a misunderstanding or mistake. |  |
| <u>Sea Change</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>Apr 06</u> | Tawdry. Police chief Jesse Stone works methodically to solve a murder that seems to involve loveless sex. Witty dialogue, interesting plot twists, and effective character development. |  |
| <u>Shrink Rap</u> | Parker, Robert B. | ** | <u>Dec 02</u> | Therapeutic. Sunny Randall returns to protect a writer from the stalking of her ex-husband and psychiatrist. If you can overlook Parker's male clumsiness in writing as a female narrator, give this some attention. |  |
| <u>Sixkill</u> | Parker, Robert B. | *** | <u>6/7/11</u> | Steady. After more than three dozen Spenser novels, the character remains steady and reliable in the last one written by the late Robert B. Parker, <u>Sixkill</u> . The title refers to a character Spenser takes under his wing, Zebulon Sixkill, a Native American bodyguard for a client accused of rape and murder. After getting a whupping from Spenser, Sixkill asks him for help, and as fans would expect, Spenser obliges. Moderate pacing and finely written dialog make reading this novel a pleasure. The publishers |  |

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----|-------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | plan to continue the franchise with a new writer, but in many ways this is the finale. | |
| Spare Change | Parker, Robert B. | *** | Aug 07 | Dad. The sixth Sunny Randal novel has the expected complicated characters, crisp dialogue and fast-moving action, with a bonus motif on the parent-child relationship. |  |
| Split Image | Parker, Robert B. | *** | 3/12/10 | Twins. Readers don't yet know how many manuscripts Robert B. Parker left behind when he died earlier this year. Split Image may or may not be the last novel featuring Paradise police chief Jesse Stone. Parker moved forward the relationship between Stone and private detective Sunny Randall on these pages, as each continues to work through therapy to come to terms with prior romantic relationships. Their dialogue ratcheted up several levels in this book, and their development as individual characters continued to deepen and grow. Sunny is tracking down a young woman whose parents want her removed from a religious cult. There are murders to solve, and the antics of randy identical twins to enjoy. This book is Parker at his best: crisp dialogue, characters who come to life, and a story that's well-told. |  |
| Stone Cold | Parker, Robert B. | *** | Dec 03 | Serial. Fourth installment in Jesse Stone mysteries brings serial killers to Paradise, and allows Stone to match wits with smart criminals. Great dialogue, as usual. |  |
| Stranger in Paradise | Parker, Robert B. | *** | June 08 | Uneasy. The seventh Jesse Stone novel has the police chief enter into an uneasy alliance with an unconvicted killer, as they both try to achieve what each considers justice. |  |

[The Professional](#) Parker, Robert B.

[12/14/09](#)

Passion. Robert B. Parker's 37th installment in the Spenser series, [The Professional](#), represents a solid addition to the collection. As a regular reader, I count on Parker to provide fine dialog, character development, and a plot that retains momentum to the end. Each of my expectations was met in [The Professional](#), and both Hawk and Susan continued to develop along with Spenser in this offering which leads to reflections about passion. I think of a long running fiction series like this one as analogous to a television series: not every installment is a block buster, but when the episode ended, I felt like I hadn't wasted too much time. Any reader looking for a quick novel that goes down easily is likely to enjoy [The Professional](#).

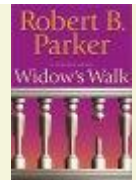


[Widow's Walk](#)

Parker, Robert B.

[May 02](#)

Spenser's back as Boston's greatest private eye, and solves another mystery. Parker crafts fine dialogue and paces the plot with just the right momentum.



[Tumbling After:
Pedaling Like
Crazy After Life
Goes Downhill](#)

Parker, Susan

[Aug 02](#)

Everything changes for Suzy Parker and her husband when he becomes a quadriplegic following a bicycle accident. Clear, poignant, short vignettes.



[Bloody January](#)


Parks, Alan

[11/6/18](#)

Glasgow. After I read a review of Alan Parks' debut novel titled, [Bloody January](#), I had to answer a key question. Should I read this detective novel set in Glasgow introducing Harry McCoy and risk that this will be a long series and I will end up reading every one? I took that chance. Set in the 1970s, there's lots of violence and blood, quirky characters and wooden ones. The story kept me engaged, and McCoy is still employed by the end of the novel, despite coloring outside the lines of acceptable police work. I was entertained by this debut novel and am willing to consider reading the



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|---|------------|--------|----------------|--|---|
| | | | | next in the series whenever it is released. Readers who like Tartan noir, or dark crime fiction of any fabric are those readers who should enjoy this novel. | |
| <u>Cleaver</u> | Parks, Tim | *** | <u>July 08</u> | Solitude. British journalist Harold Cleaver conducts “gotcha” interview with U.S. President, then decides to chuck it in and heads to a remote mountain cabin in the Italian mountains trying to find solitude and escape the impact of a novel written by his son and portraying Harold in an unfavorable light. |  |
| Italian Ways: On and Off the Rails from Milan to Palermo | Parks, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Medici Money: Banking, Metaphysics, and Art in Fifteenth-Century Florence | Parks, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| Rapids | Parks, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Sex Is Forbidden | Parks, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |

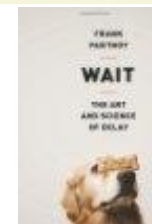
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| <u>Church of Marvels</u> | Parry, Leslie | *** | <u>2/16/17</u> | <p>Enchantments. Leslie Parry lays out four plot lines in her debut historical novel titled, <u>Church of Marvels</u>. By the end of the book, all the lines come together nicely. Along the way, Parry describes New York City life in the 1890s, from Coney Island to the Lower East Side. The enchantments of circus life offset the descriptions of a dark and gritty environment. Parry's writing is also enchanting as she structures the novel toward resolution. Readers who are looking for a new author to explore are those who might enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
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Wait: The Art and Science of Delay

Partnoy, Frank

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



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|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <u>Commonwealth</u> | Patchett, Ann | ***** | <u>10/4/16</u> | <p>Connections. I recall that in Ann Patchett's previous novels, she kept the plot focused on a short period of time. In her novel titled, <u>Commonwealth</u>, she spans fifty years with the exposition, and weaves in and out of the decades and the ten main characters in unpredictable ways. As fans have come to expect, Patchett's descriptive prose is lyrical, and her character development is complete and insightful. I came to care deeply about this ensemble of characters, and the more I understood them, the more I enjoyed the novel. The connections of love and care provide direction for the novel and the unpredictable and fleeting paths of our lives are held in high regard. Losses are deeply held by some characters, and affect all. Mortality remains present and vivid. Patient readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction and who can tolerate non-linear exposition are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p> |  |
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Run

Patchett, Ann

Nov 07

Family. Skilled writer explores many of the issues faced by all families through this novel, set in Boston, which allows readers to enjoy getting to know an interested family assembled through birth and adoption.

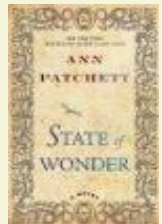


State of Wonder

Patchett, Ann

6/27/11

Misfit. Ann Patchett accomplishes many feats on the pages of her novel, State of Wonder. Her lyrical prose provides delight to readers who appreciate fine writing. The setting of the novel in the Amazon seems at first to be such a broad canvas, but Patchett creates an isolated setting in which the characters play out the ways in which they seem alienated or misfit for the environment in which they are living and working. She presents a study in relationships, especially a mentoring role, that provides a depth of understanding for readers that can lead to an extra level of enjoyment. Sometimes we need to go to an unfamiliar setting to understand our place in the world, to see where we fit into the scheme of things. Readers can go to that setting in this novel and reflect on life and relationships while enjoying a finely written novel.



The Dutch House

Patchett, Ann

11/14/19

Conroys. Fans of finely written prose with deep and complex characters are those most likely to enjoy Ann Patchett's novel titled, The Dutch House. 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 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.

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| <u>This Is the Story of a Happy Marriage</u> | Patchett, Ann | **** | <u>12/12/13</u> | Essays. I had read some of the 22 essays in Ann Patchett's collection, <u>This Is the Story of a Happy Marriage</u> , when they were originally published in various periodicals. It was only after reading them all again in the context of this collection that I realized how much self-disclosure Patchett has presented to her loyal readers. This prolific writer excels at both fiction and nonfiction, and this volume highlights how fine her prose is in whichever form she chooses. Any reader looking to sample very fine writing that celebrates hard work and the joy of living will find much to enjoy from these pages. |  |
| <u>Truth and Beauty: A Friendship</u> | Patchett, Ann | *** | <u>July 04</u> | Intertwined. Poignant and sad memoir of the friendship, love and devotion between two women leading intertwined lives from college to one's death. |  |
| <u>What Now?</u> | Patchett, Ann | **** | <u>June 08</u> | Commence. The award-winning novelist's 2006 commencement address for Sarah Lawrence College soars with great prose, thanks to her last minute rewrite. A great question for all ages to consider. |  |
| <u>The Phoenix Effect: 9 Revitalizing Strategies No Business Can Do Without</u> | Pate, Carter and Harlan Platt | ** | <u>Aug 02</u> | Basic primer on how to improve corporate performance including interesting stories, with advice that's conflicting and hard to implement. |  |

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| <u>Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation</u> | Patel, Eboo | ***** | <u>Dec 07</u> | <p>Pluralism. Inspiring book by founder of Interfaith Youth Core tells about bringing together youth of different religious backgrounds to talk, work together in service, and learn shared values and tolerance through their actions.</p> |  |
| <u>Out of Many Faiths: Religious Diversity and the American Promise</u> | Patel, Eboo | ***** | <u>11/9/19</u> | <p>Minorities. Eboo Patel offers readers a robust defense of religious diversity in his book titled, <u>Out of Many Faiths: Religious Diversity and the American Promise</u>. 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.</p> |  |
| <u>Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America</u> | Patel, Eboo | *** | <u>10/26/12</u> | <p>Connections. Eboo Patel's reflections on what kind of country we are and what we aspire to be are thoughtful and lucid in his book, <u>Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America</u>. Using examples of his work as founder and president of Interfaith Youth Core, Patel presents the ways in which tolerance and understanding can lead to building a stronger America, reinforced by the strength of our connections with those in our community who are different from ourselves in one form or another. The increase in divisive rhetoric that expresses prejudice calls for a response. Pluralism has been an important element of the United States from our beginning, and Patel writes a compelling story of how by coming together we can reinforce that value and become a better nation.</p> |  |

[If You See Me,
Don't Say Hi](#)

Patel, Neel

[2/2/19](#)

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.

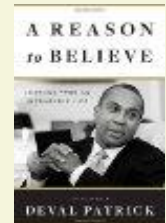


[A Reason to
Believe: Lessons
from an
Improbable Life](#)

Patrick, Deval

[8/19/11](#)

Improbable. Readers who are weary of the nastiness of politics and desire a break can find a feel-good story in Deval Patrick's memoir, [A Reason to Believe: Lessons from an Improbable Life](#). In just over two hundred pages, Massachusetts Governor Patrick reflects on the twists and turns of his life and the friendship, faith and perseverance that has brought him to where he is today. Patrick writes in a conversational style and the story he tells will engross most readers, especially those who are tired of political mudslinging.

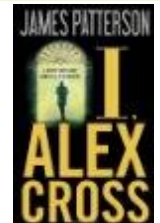


I, Alex Cross

Patterson, James

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011



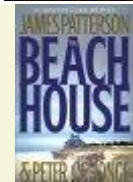
[The Beach
House](#)

Patterson, James

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[Jul 02](#)

Formulaic one-dimensional characters easily forgotten and leaving a reader thinking about nothing at all.

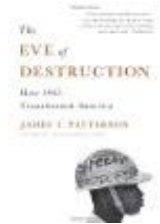


The Eve of
Destruction:
How 1965
Transformed
America

Patterson, James
T.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

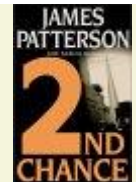


2nd Chance

Patterson, James
with Andrew
Gross

Jun 02

Predictable, junk-food mystery: short chapters; fast-moving, predictable action; interesting plot. Clumsy use of female first-person narrator and weak character development.

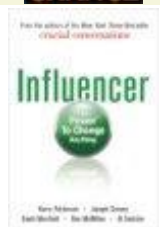


Influencer: The
Power to
Change
Anything

Patterson, Kerry

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

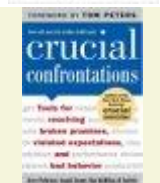


Crucial
Confrontations

Patterson, Kerry,
Joseph Grenny,
Ron McMillan &
Al Switzler

Mar 05

Tools. Practical and useful “how to’s” that improve the outcomes from those conversations that confront bad behavior, broken promises, and missed expectations.



Consumption

Patterson, Kevin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008



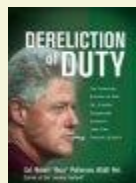
Dereliction of
Duty: The
Eyewitness
Account of How
Bill Clinton
Compromised
America's

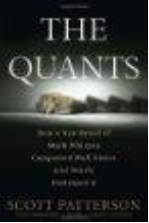

Patterson,
Robert

*

Aug 03

Punt. Air Force officer who carried nuclear “football” for two years in Clinton White House delivers poorly written screed based on personal observations, especially one incident on a golf course in September 1996.



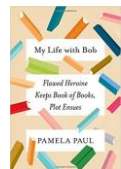
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|---|--------------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| <u>National Security</u> | | | | | |
| The Quants: How a New Breed of Math Whizzes Conquered Wall Street and Nearly Destroyed It | Patterson, Scott | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| The cult of personality : how personality tests are leading us to miseducate our children, mismanage our companies, and misunderstand ourselves | Paul, Annie Murphy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |




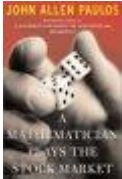
[My Life with Bob: Flawed Heroine Keeps Book of Books, Plot Ensues](#)

Paul, Pamela

[6/27/17](#)

Heartfelt. I've been listening to *New York Times* Book Review editor Pamela Paul on the NYT books podcast for a long time, so when I heard she wrote a memoir about her reading life, I knew I would read it. Titled, [My Life with Bob: Flawed Heroine Keeps Book of Books, Plot Ensues](#), this is a candid memoir, written with lively prose, that uses the story of her Book of Books (Bob) as a way to talk about her life. I think book clubs might find this selection will stimulate discussion and reminiscence about books read and lives lived. Paul tells a heartfelt and personal story with lightness and humor and I read it quickly, not at all anxious that while I was reading this book I was not reading something else.



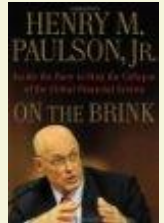
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|---|--------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Parenting, Inc.</u> | Paul, Pamela | *** | <u>Sep 08</u> | Anxiety. Author surveys the myriad ways in which parents are pitched with all the stuff kids need, and concludes that kids need time and attention from people who love them. |  |
| Skywriting: A Life Out of the Blue | Pauley, Jane | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>The Bees</u> | Paull, Laline | **** | <u>7/18/14</u> | Buzzed. After I heard that the protagonist of Laline Paull's debut novel, <u>The Bees</u> , is an insect, I opened the book with the expectation that I would set it aside after a few pages. Instead, I was drawn into the interesting community of bees and the adventures of Flora 717. Life in the hive requires cooperation and conformity. At times, special skills are needed, and a bee with the right qualities emerges to take on the task that needs doing. We see this world from Flora 717's point of view, and see her conformity to what's expected and the ways in which her qualities lead her to step outside her expected role. As in any community, there is friction in the hive, and life faces regular threats to existence. Paull allows readers to explore these issues alongside Flora 717 in an unusual and intriguing novel. |  |
| <u>A Mathematician Plays the Stock Market</u> | Paulos, John Allen | ** | <u>Apr 04</u> | Teacher. Easy to feel sorry for the professor who bought WCOM on margin and actually made some margin calls. |  |

On the Brink:
Inside the Race
to Stop the
Collapse of the
Global Financial
System

Paulson, Henry
M.

4/5/10

Complexity. Any reader impacted by the recent financial crisis will find something of value on the pages of Hank Paulson's recollections of the turmoil at its epicenter. Titled, On the Brink: Inside the Race to Stop the Collapse of the Global Financial System, Paulson presents his views and recollections of what happened, when, and who said and did what. This book reads like a novel, as Paulson paces the action well. As one might expect, he tends to put the best light on what he did and how he did it. He focuses intently on the collaboration between himself, Ben Bernanke and Tim Geithner. President Bush comes across as fully supportive of Paulson doing whatever was necessary to prevent a financial meltdown. This candid book reveals how much was done by the seat of the pants, and how complexity and interconnections led to actions that were both distasteful and necessary. It will be a long time before history weighs in with perspective on the actions during Paulson's tenure as Treasury Secretary. In the meantime, his personal account is an important contribution to gaining insight into those times.

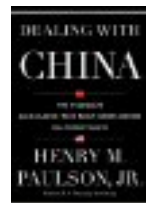


Dealing with
China: An
Insider
Unmasks the
New Economic
Superpower

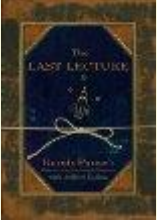

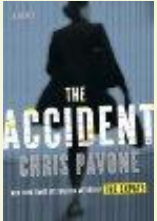
Paulson, Jr.,
Henry M.

5/26/15

Cooperation. Readers interested in China will discover a privileged and unique perspective in Hank Paulson's book titled, Dealing with China: An Insider Unmasks the New Economic Superpower. Paulson relates his personal experience with China and its leaders from three phases of his career: while at Goldman Sachs; when he was U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, and in his current role at the Paulson Institute dealing with environmental issues. Paulson relates the success that has been and that can be achieved through cooperation with China, based on understanding the needs and interests of the country and its leaders. While some



of the boosterism of Goldman can be distracting, and the self-congratulatory tone of the decisions Paulson made can be biased, the book shares insight and experience that is well worth considering by any reader interested in this subject.

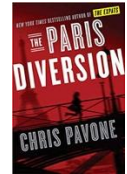
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| <u>The Last Lecture</u> | Pausch, Randy | *** | <u>Nov 08</u> | Teary. Expanded version of the live lecture from Carnegie Mellon that can be found on web video. Celebrates the positive sides of human nature and leads to a tear or two. |  |
| <u>The Eighth Detective</u> | Pavesi, Alex | **** | <u>10/12/20</u> | Puzzles. Fans of mysteries are those readers who will love Alex Pavesi's novel titled, <u>The Eighth Detective</u> . The setup is that a mathematician has determined that there are seven ways that a mystery can work, and he wrote seven stories to prove his thesis. An editor visits him on a remote island, and she plays our role: reading the stories to solve the puzzles. She provides an exciting twist to it all, showing inconsistencies and providing a puzzle of her own to delight readers. |  |
| <u>The Accident</u> | Pavone, Chris | **** | <u>4/24/14</u> | Manuscript. I opened Chris Pavone's novel, <u>The Accident</u> , with low expectations. After all, how good could a thriller be if set in the boring world of publishing and media? After a few dozen pages, I was hooked, and realized the unlikely setting for a thriller added to the entertainment. Pavone's plot involves a manuscript that provides shocking revelations about a media mogul and is written by an anonymous author. Through fast-paced action, well-developed characters, and an intriguing number of backstories and subplots, I was thoroughly entertained by this novel. Readers who like thrillers that require close attention are those most likely to enjoy this book. |  |

The Paris Diversion

Pavone, Chris

6/10/19

Plans. The action in Chris Pavone's novel titled, The Paris Diversion, 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.

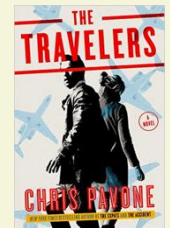


The Travelers

Pavone, Chris

6/9/16

Puzzle. Readers can stamp one's fictional passport with lots of entry and exit stamps during the course of almost 450 pages of Chris Pavone's novel titled, The Travelers. Despite a fast-paced globetrotting plot, Pavone requires readers to assemble puzzle pieces while enjoying the thrilling exposition. Along the way readers need to tolerate an unsympathetic protagonist and struggle against a tendency to not care what happens to him. Despite those challenges, I enjoyed this novel, and my different guesses at figuring out what was going on.

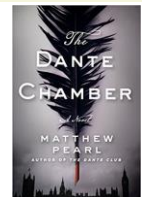


The Dante Chamber

Pearl, Matthew

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

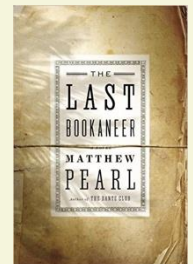


The Last Bookaneer


Pearl, Matthew

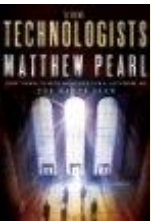
12/18/15


Pirates. Readers who enjoy a creative romp that mixes historical with fictional characters may freely indulge in the pleasure of Matthew Pearl's novel titled, The Last Bookaneer. Bookaneers are pirates, thieves, scoundrels, who roam the globe trying to steal literary works from writers and profit from selling manuscripts to publishers. Robert Louis Stevenson is the target for such theft and the journey from London to Samoa should be worth the

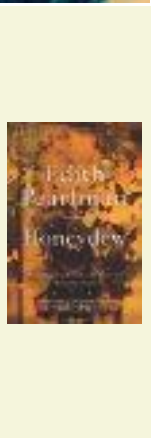


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| | | | | <p>effort. Such opportunities are becoming rare at the turn from the nineteenth to twentieth century as copyright laws are restricting the ability to publish literary works without the permission of the author. Avid book lovers are those readers most likely to enjoy this creative novel.</p> | |
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| <u>The Poe Shadow</u> | Pearl, Matthew | ** | <u>Apr 07</u> | <p>Uneven. Novel takes the historical facts about Poe's death and frames them into a compelling story, slowed by the replication of 19th century writing style and plot twists that race and then stall.</p> |  |
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| The Technologists | Pearl, Matthew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
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| Binocular Vision: New & Selected Stories | Pearlman, Edith | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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| <u>Honeydew</u> | Pearlman, Edith | ***** | <u>10/26/15</u> | <p>Olympic. Twenty outstanding short stories are assembled in a collection titled, <u>Honeydew</u>, by Edith Pearlman. Were I commenting on an Olympic gymnastic performance, I would call attention to the ways in which Pearlman nails every landing. She has great endings to each of these stories, often in the form of a cunning twist. If that were the only skill presented, that would be enough to bring a reader pleasure. Her main achievement, in my view, is the skill with which she presents aspects of human nature with such precision that I was moved by her compassion and insight into the</p> |  |
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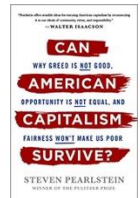
ordinary and its profound beauty and essential liveliness. There's an authenticity in these stories that will reward most readers with insight and understanding about people like us.

Can American Capitalism Survive?: Why Greed Is Not Good, Opportunity Is Not Equal, and Fairness Won't Make Us Poor

Pearlstein, Steven

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

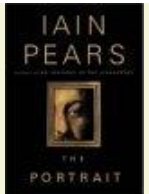


The Portrait

Pears, Iain

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

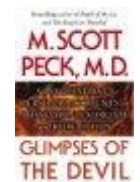


Glimpses of the Devil : A Psychiatrist's Personal Accounts of Possession, Exorcism, and Redemption

Peck, M. Scott

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



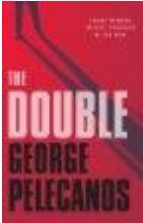
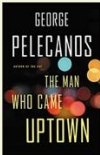
The Cut

Pelecanos, George

5/18/12

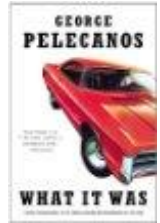
Schemes. Readers who enjoy crime fiction receive multiple rewards from The Cut by George Pelecanos. First, there's great character development, especially of protagonist Spero Lucas, who receives a cut from recovering stolen property. Second, the geographic description of the area in and around Washington, D.C. makes that area come to life both for those who know it well and those who are unfamiliar with the parts away from the federal buildings. Finally, the schemes that



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| <u>The Double</u> | Pelecanos, George | **** | <u>11/18/13</u> | <p>Pelecanos imagines create a plot that will entertain all readers.</p> <p>Warrior. Readers who like intelligent crime fiction should consider reading George Pelecanos' <u>The Double</u>. Pelecanos develops protagonist Spero Lucas in this second novel featuring this DC based Iraq War veteran Marine who works as an investigator and freelances at property recovery for a percentage of the value recovered. What Pelecanos explores with great care is the duality of human nature: goodness and evil coexist in each of us. Spero and his main adversary in this novel tilt slightly toward good or evil and are so much alike, that they are doubles, one level of meaning for the title. The property recovery in this novel involves a painting titled, The Double, providing another level of meaning. The adrenaline rush from Iraq remains powerful in Spero as he continues his warrior behavior at home. The tensions in his life provide great entertainment for those readers who like well-written crime fiction. I can't wait for the next novel to feature this complex character.</p> |  |
| <u>The Man Who Came Uptown</u> | Pelecanos, George | **** | <u>10/12/18</u> | <p>Reading. Fans of George Pelecanos are those readers most likely to enjoy his latest book titled, <u>The Man Who Came Uptown</u>. New readers could start here and get hooked by a fast-paced plot, well-developed complex characters, and the author's deep understanding of human behavior. Protagonist Michael Hudson gets hooked on reading while in prison, thanks to the attention of the librarian, Anna. Michael gets sprung from prison abruptly, because of the efforts of a private detective who now wants Michael to repay this debt. Michael is caught between trying to make something of his life versus repaying his debt to the private eye through crime. The novel explores the transformative power of reading and how an</p> |  |

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| | | | | individual can choose to pursue a new way of living. As always, the DC setting is described in detail and the changes in Michael are in parallel to the changes in neighborhoods. | |
| <u>The Martini Shot</u> | Pelecanos, George | **** | <u>3/20/15</u> | <p>Language. There are seven gritty and well-written short stories and one entertaining novella in a new collection by George Pelecanos titled, <u>The Martini Shot</u>, after the novella. Pelecanos captures the language of the streets in all his crime writing, and the characters in the collection, their dialogue, and the descriptive prose are all superb. Fans of crime fiction who enjoy compact stories are those who are most likely to enjoy reading this book.</p> |  |
| <u>The Way Home</u> | Pelecanos, George | ** | <u>7/16/09</u> | <p>Reform. George Pelecanos has a message for readers of his new novel, <u>The Way Home</u>: the juvenile criminal justice system needs to change. To deliver the message, Pelecanos creates 26-year-old protagonist Chris Flynn, who after spending time in juvenile detention, now works for his father as a carpet installer. A wider cast of characters include former offenders, and Pelecanos' description of the trajectory of different lives reveals the shortcomings of the system. The father-son relationship Pelecanos presents seemed shallow and predictable to me. Most of the characters were so one-dimensional that they strained any credibility. Much of the plot is thrilling and will keep many readers engaged. The setting in and around Washington, D.C. will appeal to many readers. I found the plot too implausible at enough points to actually laugh at some of the action. <u>The Way Home</u> provides entertainment with an agenda; the result is less entertaining than most readers would want to receive from an action novel.</p> |  |

Setting. George Pelecanos paints such a vivid picture of the setting for his novel, What It Was, that readers will see and feel the early 1970s on these pages. Pelecanos likes the cars, the music and the clothes, so they are described in detail to set the background and mood for a quickly paced crime novel featuring private detective Derek Strange at the time just after he left the Metropolitan Police Department. Fans of crime fiction and Pelecanos are those most likely to enjoy this book.



What It Was

Pelecanos, George

3/2/12

Tragic Indifference: One Man's Battle with the Auto Industry Over the Dangers of SUVs

Penenberg, Adam L.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004

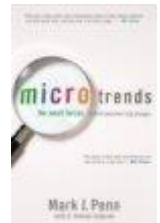


Microtrends: The Small Forces Behind Tomorrow's Big Changes

Penn, Mark J.

Nov 07

Nichy. Burson-Marsteller CEO who identified "Soccer Moms" as key influencers a decade ago, offers 75 relatively unseen groups in this book, any few of which could drive big changes. Scratch the niche you choose.

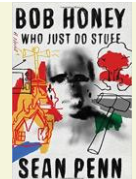


Bob Honey Who Just Do Stuff

Penn, Sean

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Shelf of Ennui 2019.

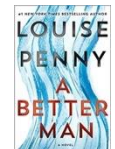


A Better Man

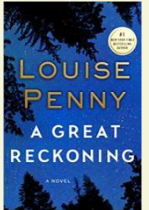
Penny, Louise

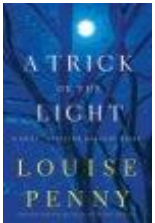
10/25/19

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, A Better Man. Armand Gamache's suspension from the Sûreté du Québec has ended, and to the surprise of politicians who wanted him retired,

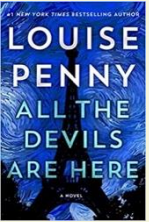
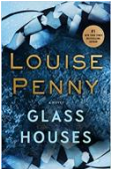


Gamache has returned in a demoted role, head of homicide, a role he shares with his son-in-law Jean-Guy Beauvoir, who will soon be leaving Canada to work in the private sector in France. Penny uses this installment to explore fear in many forms, which she does with great skill. The mystery at the heart 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.

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| <u>A Great Reckoning</u> | Penny, Louise | ***** | <u>9/16/16</u> | <p>Grief. The 12th Chief Inspector Gamache novel by Louise Penny is titled, <u>A Great Reckoning</u>. There's a lot of reckoning in this novel, but the great reckoning is both great and unexpected. Fans of the series will be delighted by the return of this interesting cast of characters led by Armand Gamache. We even learn more about Three Pines in this installment. There are plenty of twists, surprises and dogs. Much of the novel centers around grief and its long lasting effects. Penny keeps readers interested in solving the mysteries, while she proceeds at her own pace.</p> |  |
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| <u>A Trick of the Light</u> | Penny, Louise | ***** | <u>9/9/11</u> | <p>Chiaroscuro. The first Louise Penny novel I've read is her latest, <u>A Trick of the Light</u>. Set in Quebec, this is a murder mystery featuring a character she has developed over multiple novels: Chief Inspector Gamache, the head of homicide at the Sûreté du Québec. I was impressed by the ways in which Penny fleshed out each character with precise strokes, and with how her theme and title,</p> |  |
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what is real and what isn't, used a painter's portraits of darkness and light to reveal the inner character of the individual subjects. This novel is also a study in relationships and in finding ways to overcome the barriers to living an authentic life. Readers will care about these characters and what happens to them, and thanks to Penny's fine writing, will be absorbed in their stories from beginning to end. The mystery itself respects a reader's intelligence, and the solution will please most readers.

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| <u>All the Devils Are Here</u> | Penny, Louise | ***** | <u>9/19/20</u> | <p>Paris. For the sixteenth installment in Louise Penny's series featuring Quebec's Chief Inspector Armand Gamache, the action moves from Canada to Paris, where Armand and his wife, Raine-Marie, have gone to await the birth of a new grandchild. In the novel titled, <u>All the Devils Are Here</u>, Armand is called on to use all his skills to solve a case with great personal impact. While many readers will miss the familiar setting of Three Pines in this installment, the action is delightfully complex, the twists surprising, and the resolution satisfying. Penny allows parallel development of the relationship between Armand and his son, Daniel; Armand and his godfather; and as always, the relationship between Armand and his son-in-law, Jean-Guy. Fans of this series will love the latest installment, and new readers who enjoy character-driven crime fiction that's well-written can start here or with any other Gamache novel in this series.</p> <p>Conscience. There are loads of reasons why I loved reading, <u>Glass Houses</u>, the 13th installment in the series by Louis Penny featuring Chief Inspector Armand Gamache. For fans of the series, spending time with the familiar cast of complex characters is always a pleasure, and in this novel, all the familiar ones are back and Penny adds to the depth of</p> |  |
| <u>Glass Houses</u> | Penny, Louise | ***** | <u>9/11/17</u> | |  |

development of almost each one. Gamache, in particular, is a well-developed character already, and in this installment, he grapples with a serious matter of conscience that leads him to take actions that involve great risks to him professionally and personally. The structure of the novel, moving forward and backward in time, added to the tension and helped exposition. Gamache's ability to influence others with his views, especially when they entail taking great risks while being patient, is on full display in this novel. The dramatic action in Three Pines, Quebec will thrill every reader. I highly recommend this novel and this series.

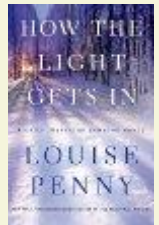
Plans. Louise Penny assembles all the perfect ingredients in great crime fiction in her latest installment of the series featuring Quebec's Chief Inspector Armand Gamache titled, [How the Light Gets In](#). First, the characters are compelling and complicated, fully recognizable people who we recognize. Second, the plot momentum is swift and interesting. Finally, the element of surprise provides mystery readers like me with great satisfaction. Penny reveals the plans of both the good and bad guys and kept me on the edge of my chair as the action progressed. Readers who like crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this finely written novel.

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

[How the Light Gets In](#)

Penny, Louise

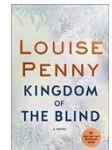
[10/8/13](#)



[Kingdom of the Blind](#)

Penny, Louise

[1/22/19](#)

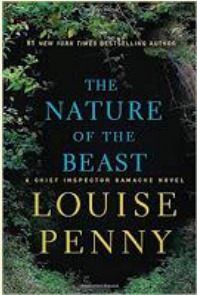


implements a risky plan to save lives. Penny continues to develop interesting characters with this installment and contrasts gritty city life with the tranquility of Three Pines. Crime fiction can become formulaic and is often poorly written. Penny crafts some of the best contemporary fiction in this genre and the current novel was a delight to read.

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| <u>The Beautiful Mystery</u> | Penny, Louise | ***** | <u>9/20/12</u> | <p>Harmony. The eighth installment in Louise Penny's Chief Inspector Gamache series is titled <u>The Beautiful Mystery</u>. Any reader who appreciates an intelligent mystery should consider reading this one. I never thought I'd read a mystery that involved Gregorian Chant, which is the reference in the title. A choir director is murdered in a cloistered monastery, and the murderer must be one of the two dozen monks living there. Gamache and Jean-Guy Beauvoir of the Sûreté du Québec go to the remote monastery to solve the case. There may be harmony in the beautiful music, but it doesn't take long for Gamache to uncover the personal conflicts and discord within this small community. Fans of the series will feel continuity from prior novels, and anticipation of what comes next, but this novel also stands well on its own for first time readers. Penny draws this setting with such detail and depth that the monastery becomes an additional character. Readers who like a satisfying mystery are likely to enjoy this one.</p>  |
| <u>The Long Way Home</u> | Penny, Louise | ***** | <u>9/6/14</u> | <p>Search. The tenth novel in Louise Penny's Chief Inspector Gamache series finds Armand retired and living contentedly in the village of Three Pines, Quebec. The novel titled, <u>The Long Way Home</u>, explores on many levels with multiple characters the search for the balm that will make the wounded whole and will cure the sin-sick soul, as in the spiritual, <i>There Is a Balm in Gilead</i>, and in a book</p>  |

Gamache is reading. Neighbor Clara Morrow tells Gamache that her husband is missing, and that leads to an expanded cast of characters searching for the lost man. I was drawn into the series by Penny's fine writing, and this installment brought my satisfaction to an even higher level. Any reader who enjoys fine prose with well-developed and complex characters will find lots of reading pleasure from this novel.

Intermezzo. Armand Gamache, recurring protagonist in a crime series by Louse Penny, finds himself in something like an intermezzo. In the latest novel titled, The Nature of the Beast, Gamache, former head of homicide at the Sûreté du Québec, has retired to the Quebec village of Three Pines with his wife, Reine-Marie. Some type of work will follow this pause in his career, and Armand and Reine-Marie are considering academia while he has received job offers from the Sûreté as well as from the United Nations. While restoring his spirit in this remote refuge, murder arrives at his doorstep and the burdens carried by many characters in this small town are revealed. Penny writes a great mystery and reveals deep insight into human nature as she explores good and evil and its manifestation within us. Readers who like crime fiction with complex characters and plot should consider this entertaining novel.



The Nature of the Beast

Penny, Louise

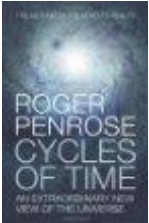
11/6/15


Cycles of Time:
An
Extraordinary
New View of the
Universe

Penrose, Roger

Unread

This book didn't grab me after a few pages, so I gave up. Maybe the view is extraordinary, but I couldn't see it. Shelf of Ennui 2011.



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| <u>The Dark Net</u> | Percy, Benjamin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men</u> | Perez, Caroline Criado | ***** | <u>2/21/20</u> | <p>Default. Many readers will be outraged after reading Caroline Criado Perez' book titled, <u>Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men</u>. Women die because in multiple ways men are used as the default for data analysis and women are ignored. Drugs are tested on men, even drugs intended for women alone. Crash tests use dummies based on men not women. Perez offers loads of evidence and multiple examples of many of the ways in which women are invisible and the consequence is dire. Women already know much of what's in this book because of a lifetime of working around a world designed with men as the default. Men should read this book and join the outrage. Then, do something to make this nonsense stop.</p> |  |
| <u>Confessions of an Economic Hit Man</u> | Perkins, John | ** | <u>Apr 06</u> | <p>Regrets. An unusual account of the author's regrets for his participation in a corrupt system of business and political practices around the world.</p> |  |
| <u>Money: A Memoir</u> | Perle, Liz | *** | <u>May 06</u> | <p>Wealth. One woman's feelings and attitudes about money, which may resonate for many female readers and will bring increased understanding to males, especially those who have noted differences and relationship conflict on money issues.</p> |  |

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| <u>The Vienna Paradox</u> | Perloff, Marjorie | *** | <u>Jan 05</u> | Transformations. Well-written memoir of journey from 1938 Vienna at age 6 through tenure as college professor and critic of modern writing. Lessons from the many changes she made along the way. |  |
| Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America | Perlstein, Rick | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| The Invisible Bridge: The Fall of Nixon and the Rise of Reagan | Perlstein, Rick | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| The Maze Murderer | Pero, Charles | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Mrs. Fletcher</u> | Perrotta, Tom | **** | <u>8/24/17</u> | Transitions. John Updike might be a bit shocked about the changes in his suburbs over the last half century. Eve Fletcher, a forty-six-year-old divorcee, is the protagonist of Tom Perrotta's novel titled, <u>Mrs. Fletcher</u> . Her son, Brendan, has headed off to college for his own major transition, and Eve is sorting out what's next for her. She takes a course at the local community college on Gender and Society that's taught by a woman who was born male. Eve settles into a habit of exploring pornography, exploring the situation of MILFs like herself. Perrotta uses the empty suburban nest as a way to explore modern life and the ways in which Eve and Brendan are trying to navigate ways to live in our society. I found the characters and plot |  |

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| | | | | <p>sweet, funny and enjoyable. This novel won't be the first selection of a church-sponsored book group, but over a few glasses a wine with a secular suburban cohort of a certain age, peals of laughter are sure to be frequent and sustained.</p> | |
| <u>Nine Inches</u> | Perrotta, Tom | **** | <u>12/12/13</u> | <p>Suburbia. Tom Perrotta focuses a lens on ordinary suburban life in the ten stories of his collection titled after one of them, <u>Nine Inches</u>. Humor and sadness alternate in these stories, keeping readers interested and involved in these brief glimpses into the way so many of us live today. Several of the stories are in school settings and will resonate for teachers and students alike. Ordinary lives can tend toward what seem like ordinary problems, and Perrotta uses great skill to add just the right twists of disappointment and hope. Readers who like short fiction are those most likely to enjoy this collection. I thoroughly enjoyed eight of the stories, and the two lukewarm contributions were forgotten quickly.</p> |  |
| <u>The Abstinence Teacher</u> | Perrotta, Tom | ** | <u>July 08</u> | <p>Ordinary. In this satiric novel, the high school's sex ed teacher has to change the curriculum to one that presents abstinence, thanks to the efforts of a fundamentalist church in getting its position listened to by the school board.</p> |  |
| <u>The Leftovers</u> | Perrotta, Tom | **** | <u>10/8/11</u> | <p>Grief. It's possible that Tom Perrotta's novel, <u>The Leftovers</u>, has created a new genre: the post-apocalyptic comic novel. Perrotta's action follows an event not quite like the rapture from the Left Behind series in a religious sense, but like it in that that some people have vanished, and others are still around. Families now have missing members, and characters are grieving their losses. While there's plenty of Perrotta's fine humor on these pages, there's a poignancy as well as he allows the characters to grieve and carries readers along with</p> |  |

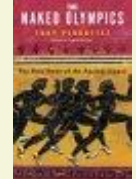
them in a state of disbelief and confusion. One example of that humor was that followers of a certain cult were required to smoke cigarettes. An example of the poignancy was the gift of a cigarette lighter from the daughter of a cult member to her mother, who had been a nonsmoker before joining the cult. The daughter missed her mother who moved out of the house to be with the cult, and the gift was perfect. Unknown to the daughter, the mother used it once and had to throw it away because the cult didn't keep possessions. Perrotta's writing is terrific, and most readers will find this to be an enjoyable reading experience.

[The Naked Olympics: The True Story of the Ancient Games](#)

Perrottet, Tony

[Dec 04](#)

Mettle. Witty and informative description of the original games when the mettle of the athletes was more important than medals. Good description of Greek life at the time and all aspects of the festivities.



Roadtrip. Personalized tours of Europe and elsewhere provide travelers with experiences that are tailored perfectly to one's interests. Tony Perrottet designed such a tour, and used a family vacation for him to present his wife and young children with the experience of a lifetime: a romp through Europe's best sites with sexual themes. His account of their trip is titled, [The Sinner's Grand Tour: A Journey Through the Historical Underbelly of Europe](#). Perrottet's narrative is engaging and entertaining, and the places he describes are peculiar and most of them have been omitted from the history texts most of us have read. Among my favorite chapters: visiting the bathroom that Raphael painted in the Pope's apartment at the Vatican, and being invited by Pierre Cardin to see the bowels of the house in southern France that had been owned by the Marquis de Sade. Armchair travelers will revel in Perrottet's crisp writing, but

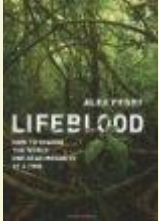
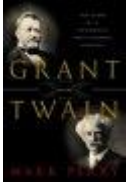
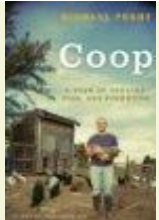
[The Sinner's Grand Tour: A Journey Through the Historical Underbelly of Europe](#)

Perrottet, Tony

[9/14/11](#)



trip planners may want to stick to Baedeker or an equivalent.

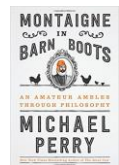
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| Lifeblood: How to Change the World One Dead Mosquito at a Time | Perry, Alex | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| Grant and Twain: The Story of a Friendship That Changed America | Perry, Mark | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Coop: A Year of Poultry, Pigs, and Parenting | Perry, Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |

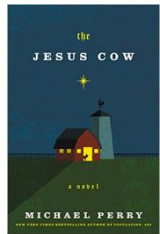

[Montaigne in Barn Boots: An Amateur Ambles Through Philosophy](#)

Perry, Michael

[1/4/18](#)

Essays. Setting, mood and context can change over the course of every few paragraphs in Michael Perry's finely written book of essays titled, [Montaigne in Barn Boots: An Amateur Ambles Through Philosophy](#). Humor in one sentence leads to poignancy in the next, and on to wisdom in the following paragraph. The mundane becomes meaningful when reflected upon by a good writer with great skill, and that describes Perry to a tee. Philosophy is a worthy pursuit and in this effort it is carried out close to the ground and not in the clouds. Readers looking for a chance to smile, nod and reflect will find plenty of reasons to do each of those while reading this book.



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| Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time | Perry, Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>The Jesus Cow</u> | Perry, Michael | **** | <u>4/13/16</u> | <p>Slapstick. If your funny bone is tickled by physical and slapstick humor, you're likely to love reading Michael Perry's funny novel titled, <u>The Jesus Cow</u>. Protagonist Harley Jackson's life as a rural farmer turns upside down when a calf is born bearing the image of Jesus Christ. Before he knows what happened, Harley's farm has become a spiritual destination, and his troubles escalate. Get yourself an order of cheese curds and sit in an easy chair with a Miller Lite and be transported to Wisconsin for lots of laughs.</p> |  |
| <u>Truck</u> | Perry, Michael | *** | <u>Feb 07</u> | <p>Restoration. Fine writing about author's life in rural Wisconsin and the ways in which the restoration of an old pickup truck leads to changes in his life.</p> |  |
| <u>Fed Up!: Our Fight to Save America from Washington</u> | Perry, Rick | *** | <u>9/23/11</u> | <p>Shrinkage. How can I possibly award a three-star rating (recommended) to a book that takes positions opposed to my own on every issue? There's one clear reason: given Rick Perry's high poll ratings, any citizen wanting to understand how he approaches political issues will learn a lot from reading his book titled, <u>Fed Up!: Our Fight to Save America from Washington</u>. If Perry wins the White House, this book warns readers to expect not just minor changes in spending around the edges, but radical transformation, assuming a supportive Congress and Supreme Court. Perry has found little of value from Washington since sometime in the 19th century. Everything from the federal income tax, through the New Deal and the Great Society</p> |  |

represent unwarranted federal intrusions into our lives, according to Perry. Republicans and Democrats both come under fire from Perry for expanding spending and for allowing the federal government to take on activities and roles beyond his interpretation of the Constitution. His goal would be to return most decisions from the centralized federal government to the states, where he feels decisions made closer to the governed will best reflect what people want. Whether you agree or disagree with Perry, reading this book can help citizens understand his version of America and the role of the federal government.

Witness. All the while I was reading Sarah Perry’s novel titled, Melmoth, I felt chilled. Was that because Perry tells a creepy ghost story in this book, or was it the beginning of a seasonal turn from autumn to winter? Melmoth appears in stories and myths as a wanderer who serves as witness as she watches. Protagonist Helen Franklin leaves England for Prague where she works as a translator. She comes across a letter that warns of Melmoth and while Helen thinks this is all fantasy, things happen that shake her views. Fans of atmospheric, gothic novels are those readers most likely to enjoy this one.



Melmoth

Perry, Sarah

11/24/18


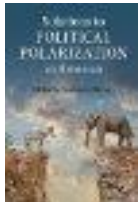

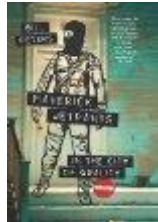

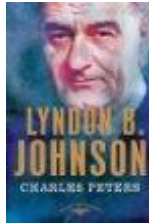
Franklin and
Lucy: President
Roosevelt, Mrs.
Rutherford, and
the Other
Remarkable
Women in His
Life

Persico, Joseph
E.


Unread


Shelf of Ennui 2008

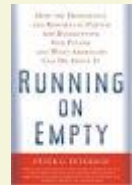



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| <u>Roosevelt's Secret War: FDR and World War II Espionage</u> | Persico, Joseph E. | ** | <u>Mar 02</u> | All you ever wanted to know and then some about spying during WWII. Sat for a while on the Shelf of Reproach after reading the first half. |  |
| Solutions to Political Polarization in America | Persily, Nathaniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Special Topics in Calamity Physics | Pessl, Marisha | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| Maverick JETPANTS in The City of Quality | Peters, Bill | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Five Days in Philadelphia | Peters, Charles | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Lyndon B. Johnson: The American Presidents Series: The 36th President, 1963-1969</u> | Peters, Charles | *** | <u>8/25/10</u> | Insecurity. I've liked each of the books I've read in the American Presidents Series, and the latest for me, <u>Lyndon B. Johnson</u> , may be the shortest book about the 36 th president I've read. Despite the brevity, Charles Peters captured Johnson quite well, in my opinion, especially the insecurity he felt throughout his life. Peters presents the highs and lows of Johnson's life and presidency, and through |  |

snippets covers the man fully, warts and all. The way in which Johnson berated his subordinates has always intrigued me, and Peters covers that with clarity and efficiency. Any reader who enjoys history and efficient writing will appreciate this book.

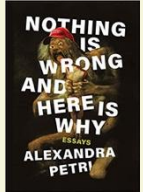
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| Re-Imagine | Peters, Tom | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
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|---------------------------|-----------------|-----|------------------------|---|---|
| The Manny | Peterson, Holly | *** | Sep 07 | Romance. Aggressively promoted debut novel by billionaire's daughter provided more entertainment than expected. Hard to have empathy for any of the characters, but the story came across as a sweet romance, something like the printed version of a chick flick. |  |
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| Running on empty : how the Democratic and Republican parties are bankrupting our future and what Americans can do about it | Peterson, Peter G. | | | Shelf of Reproach 2005 |  |
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| The Education of an American Dreamer: How a Son of Greek Immigrants Learned His Way from a Nebraska Diner to Washington, | Peterson, Peter G. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
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Wall Street, and
Beyond

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| <u>Nothing Is Wrong and Here is Why</u> | Petri, Alexandra | **** | <u>9/8/20</u> | <p>Poignant. The voice of Alexandra Petri as a political satirist finds that sweet spot for me: crisp, funny and poignant. In her collection of essays titled, <u>Nothing Is Wrong and Here is Why</u>, the range of her skills can be observed in their fullness. Some of the essays are new, and many are adapted from her column in <i>The Washington Post</i>. Whenever something comes out of the White House that can send me into a rage, I know I can count on Petri's next column to express a reaction far better than my feeble responses. Our finest writers, like Petri, find ways to help thoughtful people make sense out of the garbled nonsense what we often see and hear. This essay collection provides an abundance of that good sense.</p> |  |
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There Once
Lived a Mother
Who Loved Her
Children, Until
They Moved
Back In: Three
Novellas About
Family

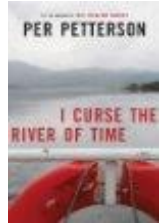
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| <u>Ashes in My Mouth, Sand in My Shoes: Stories</u> | Petterson, Per | **** | <u>11/22/16</u> | <p>Youth. Some readers clamor for more works by a beloved author, and publishers will often reissue early works to meet that demand. In the case of Per Petterson's short story collection titled, <u>Ashes in My Mouth, Sand in My Shoes: Stories</u>, this is a first English translation of a debut collection published in Norway in 1987. Petterson unveils the complex thoughts of a ten-year-old boy with all the delight and confusion and freshness of youth. I enjoyed each of the ten stories and expect that readers who enjoy both Petterson and the short story genre will find a lot to enjoy from these pages.</p> |  |
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I Curse the River of Time

Petterson, Per

10/15/10

Bleak. I recommend reading Per Petterson's novel, I Curse the River of Time, on sunny days only. This melancholy story can bum out the most cheery reader when clouds are present. In 1989, protagonist Arvid Jansen finds everything changing, and not necessarily for the better: his mother is dying of cancer, he and his wife are getting a divorce, and communism is falling. Looking back at his life thus far, Arvid searches for understanding and meaning to discover what can be ahead for him. The writing is spare and Arvid's memories expose complicated relationships and choices that are both in the open and developed unspoken in a rich interior life. There is a rich reality about relationships, life and death on these pages, and Petterson's writing is outstanding. For those readers who can handle melancholy, this novel is fine choice.



I Refuse

Petterson, Per

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.

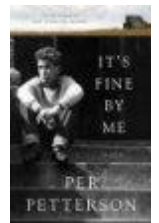



It's Fine By Me

Petterson, Per

12/18/12


Bleak. Readers who enjoy a closely examined character study without demanding an engaging plot are those most likely to enjoy Per Petterson's novel, It's Fine By Me. All is really not fine for protagonist and narrator Audun Sletten. When we meet him as a teenager, an age when most want to be liked and to blend in with their peers, Audun prefers separation, marked by the dark glasses he refuses to remove indoors. Petterson mines the extent of pain in Audun's life and presents a bleak family life in a cold landscape as a young man copes with sadness and alienation.



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| Out Stealing Horses | Petterson, Per | *** | Aug 07 | Remembering. Even as translated from Norwegian, the skilled writing is evident in this novel of a 70-year-old man's reminiscences of his father, what happened to them during WWII, and the connections that remain among people after decades apart. |  |
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To Siberia Petterson, Per Unread Shelf of Ennui 2009



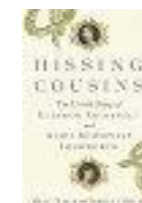
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| The New Pioneers: The Men and Women who are Transforming the Workplace and Marketplace | Petzinger, Jr., Thomas | *** | 4/99 | Buy a copy and read this book on your next flight. If you really love your current business plan, be sure to read it right away, because what he says will likely cause you to make some significant changes. |  |
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[Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth](#)

Peyser, Marc and Timothy Dwyer

[5/16/15](#)

Family. Readers who enjoy twentieth century American history are those most likely to enjoy an engaging book by Marc Peyser and Timothy Dwyer titled, [Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth](#). Two branches of the Roosevelt family dominated political life in the early twentieth century. Teddy Roosevelt led the Sagamore Hill branch and Franklin Delano Roosevelt of the Hyde Park branch dominated during the Depression and World War II. Eleanor was the wife of FDR, and also a cousin. Alice was TR's daughter. Peyser and Dwyer roam through the politics, the family life and the choices made by these two strong and complicated women. While Alice is best known for her clever wit and Eleanor for her public service, there's a lot more to



both of them, and the authors cover them in ways what were interesting and engaging. The catchy title calls attention to their differences, while the narrative draws readers into their similarities and to their shared passion for life in the public arena.

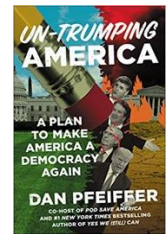
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| The Fearless Man: A Novel of Vietnam | Pfarrer, Donald | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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[Un-Trumping America: A Plan to Make America a Democracy Again](#)

Pfeiffer, Dan

[9/22/20](#)

Playbook. I listen to the *Pod Save America* podcast, so I was part of the target audience ready to read co-host Dan Pfeiffer's playbook for 2020, a book titled, [Un-Trumping America: A Plan to Make America a Democracy Again](#). Trump supporters should read this book to reflect on what to expect from the Democrats. Democrats should take some of the actions that Pfeiffer proposes in this novel. Any reader interested in public policy should listen to some of the bold and aggressive proposals made in this book.



[Yes We \(Still\) Can: Politics in the Age of Obama, Twitter, and Trump](#)

Pfeiffer, Dan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

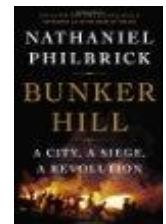


[Bunker Hill: A City, a Siege, a Revolution](#)

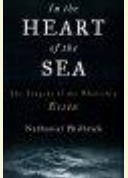
Philbrick, Nathaniel

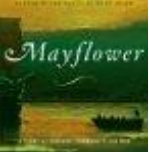
[7/16/13](#)

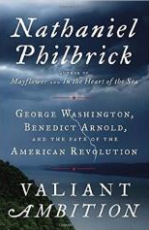
Warren. I love to read history written by contemporary authors. I find that they are often entertaining to a general reader like me, and I always learn something new. The four hundred pages of Nathaniel Philbrick's book, [Bunker Hill: A City, a Siege, a Revolution](#), present a lively, comprehensive and entertaining account of this critical battle. I went into the book with plenty of knowledge about the battle and the leadership of John Adams and John Hancock during this time period. I learned (or re-learned) the important role

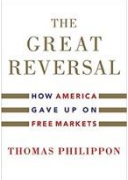



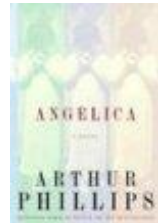
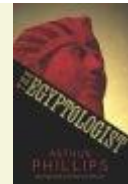
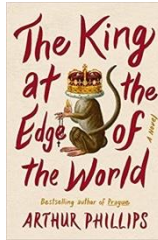

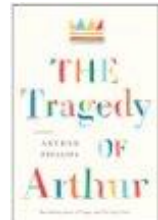
of Doctor Joseph Warren from Philbrick's account, and came to appreciate the loss that his death in that battle meant for Boston. Any reader who enjoys a well-written history will find something to like in this book.

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| <u>In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex</u> | Philbrick, Nathaniel | *** | | You know the story from reading Moby Dick. Here's an account from a variety of sources that expands the story. |  |
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| Mayflower | Philbrick, Nathaniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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| <u>Valiant Ambition: George Washington, Benedict Arnold, and the Fate of the American Revolution</u> | Philbrick, Nathaniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
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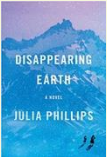
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| <u>The Great Reversal: How America Gave Up on Free Markets</u> | Philippon, Thomas | **** | <u>3/6/20</u> | <p>Concentration. If you think that the United States continues to be an exemplar of a free market economy, you may change your mind after reading Thomas Philippon's book titled, <u>The Great Reversal: How America Gave Up on Free Markets</u>. Philippon makes the case that American consumers suffer the ill effects of corporate concentration and corporate lobbying that has given large companies pricing power and market dominance. The past three decades have altered the landscape of free markets in dramatic ways. Philippon explains how.</p> |  |
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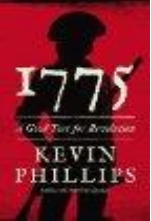
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| <u>Married to the Job: Why We Life to Work and What We Can Do About It</u> | Philipson, Ilene | *** | <u>Nov 02</u> | Unhealthy Attachment. Some people work so much because they're too emotionally attached to the workplace. See full review for checklist to see if you're one of those people. |  |
| <u>Angelica</u> | Phillips, Arthur | *** | <u>July 07</u> | Perspectives. Four narrators describe the same plot in this novel set in the Victorian period. Psychological insights available to thoughtful readers. |  |
| <u>The Egyptologist</u> | Phillips, Arthur | *** | <u>Feb 05</u> | Obsession. Engaging creativity and complexity will keep intelligent readers interested as multiple narrators present unusual happenings among the tombs of the pharaohs. |  |
| <u>The King at the Edge of the World</u> | Phillips, Arthur | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| The Song Is You | Phillips, Arthur | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| The Tragedy of Arthur | Phillips, Arthur | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |

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|---|----------------------|------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Beautiful Bureaucrat</u> | Phillips, Helen | **** | <u>7/1/16</u> | <p>Wordplay. The debut novel by Helen Phillips titled, <u>The Beautiful Bureaucrat</u>, may be the most courageous writing I've read in a long time. Phillips sets most of the novel in an odd workplace, and places protagonist Josephine in an Everyone role as she does the work she is asked to do, and grows in her curiosity as she tries to make sense of and master the work. Phillips uses files, paperwork and wordplay in ways that I found very funny. The subject is serious, and the courage that Phillips exhibits in presenting such a disturbing and odd novel as her introduction to readers may portend great things from this fine writer. Readers looking for an unusual and well-written novel should consider reading this one.</p> |  |
| <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>Lark & Termite</u> | Phillips, Jayne Anne | **** | <u>2/14/09</u> | <p>Structure. Jayne Anne Phillips' latest novel, <u>Lark & Termite</u>, is one of the most finely structured novels I've read in years, and her skill with language, characters and the description of sensations combine to make this a great novel. Phillips presents in parallel two six-day time periods: one in 1950, and the other in 1959. This is a vivid story of the ties of an extended family despite all obstacles. The 1950 period is set mostly in Korea in the early days of the war when Robert</p> |  |

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| | | | Leavitt, the husband and father, is a soldier in dire straits. His wife, Lola, awaits his return from war, as she gifts birth to a disabled boy who's called Termite. The 1959 period is set mostly in West Virginia where Lola grew up, and where her sister, Nonie, is the guardian of both Lola's older child, Lark, and of Termite. The love and caring will take your breath away, as will the poetic writing, and deep character development over the course of a compact novel. <u>Lark & Termite</u> is the rare novel that I think I will enjoy as much or more on a second reading. | |
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| Quiet Dell | Phillips, Jayne Anne | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
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| <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>  |
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| <u>1775: A Good Year for Revolution</u> | Phillips, Kevin | ***** | <u>2/26/13</u> | <p>Cousins. The current trend in hefty books about periods in history is to title the book with a specific year. Kevin Phillips has joined that trend with his book <u>1775: A Good Year for Revolution</u>. He uses what he calls a "long year" from late 1774 to early 1776 to show that this was the real period of revolution, despite our celebration of 1776 as the beginning of the American Revolution. Phillips' interest in the English Civil Wars from his book, <i>The Cousins Wars</i>, carries forward in the latest book as</p>  |
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he describes how the divisions in England crossed the Atlantic to the New World. In some respects, the American Revolution was a civil war. This book will appeal to those history buffs who are patient with lengthy exposition and enjoy an abundance of tidbits and details. I enjoyed reading it, and learned a thing or two about the context of events I thought I already knew.

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|--|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune, and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush | Phillips, Kevin | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2004 |  |
| <u>American Theocracy</u> | Phillips, Kevin | **** | <u>Sept 06</u> | Indictments. Prophetic political analyst explores the coming perils from reliance on dwindling supplies of oil, the dominance of the “debt and credit-industrial complex” and the growing influence of the religious right. |  |
| Bad Money: Reckless Finance, Failed Politics, and the Global Crisis of American Capitalism | Phillips, Kevin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| <u>William McKinley</u> | Phillips, Kevin | *** | <u>Feb 04</u> | Progressive. Much of the reform attributed often to Teddy Roosevelt was begun by McKinley, and thanks to this new biography, readers can learn how this often overlooked leader accomplished remarkable results without drawing much attention to himself. |  |

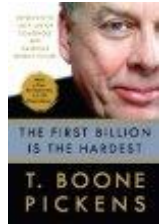
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|--|---------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Gods Behaving Badly</u> | Phillips, Marie | *** | <u>Mar 08</u> | Imaginative. Entertaining debut novel tells us what happened to the Greek gods: they're living in a rundown London house, on the brink of losing their immortality since people no longer believe in them. |  |
| The Gift of Valor | Phillips, Michael M. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>A Spy Named Orphan</u> | Phillips, Roland | **** | <u>8/17/18</u> | Treachery. I've been interested in British spies since I first heard of Kim Philby when I was a teenager. In a new book titled, <u>A Spy Named Orphan</u> , Roland Phillips tells the story of another one of the infamous Cambridge Five, Donald Maclean. This comprehensive book covers the full range of Maclean's life and his treachery. Phillips tells this story with gusto: lots of information in a readable and exciting narrative. Any reader who enjoys history or espionage will find a lot to enjoy from this finely written book. For some readers, Russian spies are not relegated to the past, and there may be readers who are concerned with contemporary issues and can find insight in this book. |  |
| Heroes Are My Weakness | Phillips, Susan Elizabeth | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>What You Want</u> | Phipps, Constantine | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |

The First Billion
Is the Hardest:
Reflections on a
Life of
Comebacks and
America's
Energy Future

Pickens, T.
Boone

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009



House Rules

Picoult, Jodi

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010

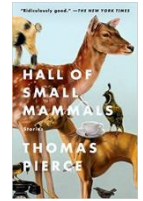


Hall of Small
Mammals

Pierce, Thomas

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



The Afterlives

Pierce, Thomas

3/20/18

Mortality. The protagonist of Thomas Pierce's novel titled, The Afterlives, Jim Byrd, had died briefly at age thirty when his heart stopped. Now acutely aware of his mortality, and a bit disturbed that he saw neither tunnel nor light while dead, Jim delves into wondering what happens after we die. Note that the title uses the plural. Pierce sets readers up for an exploration of this subject in ways that will lead to laughter at several turns. If anyone has ever told you that you don't seem to be all together there, after reading this novel you may have an answer why that's the case. We're all never really all here. Part of us is someplace else. Pierce's creativity makes the novel remain fun to read, and the holograms were a special treat. I was entertained.



Loneliness. On the Upper West Side of Manhattan and in most places in the United States, an extramarital affair is not a rare event to shock the community. In her debut novel titled, Among the Ten Thousand Things, Pierpont presents the Shanley family, husband, wife, brother and sister, and begins with a dramatic way in which the infidelity of husband Jack comes to light. What Pierpont goes on to do is reveal the loneliness of each character over time, and the ways in which love can endure hardship and infidelity. Pierpont writes with great skill, and I look forward to reading more of her writing.



Among the Ten Thousand Things

Pierpont, Julia

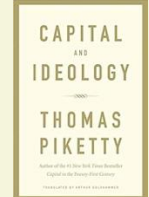
9/23/15

Capital and Ideology

Piketty, Thomas

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

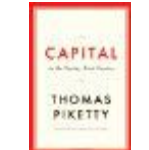


Capital in the Twenty-First Century

Piketty, Thomas

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014. There's a lot more here than the press reports indicate. I went first to the conclusions starting on page 571. I read those and decided that was more than enough for me.



Black Deutschland

Pinckney, Darryl

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.

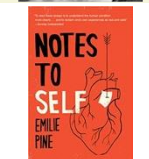


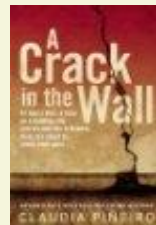
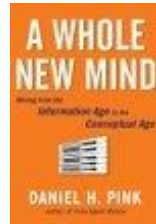
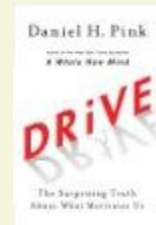
Notes to Self

Pine, Emilie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

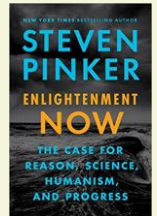


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| <u>A Crack in the Wall</u> | Pineiro, Claudia | *** | <u>11/7/14</u> | <p>Weaknesses. I'm still scratching my head a little after finishing Claudia Pineiro's novel, <u>A Crack in the Wall</u>. The protagonist, Pablo Simó, is a middle-aged architect with a secret relating to a character named Nelson Jara. When a woman named Leonor Corell two decades junior to Pablo visits his office asking about Jara, years of pent up dissatisfaction release. Pineiro explores human weaknesses in this novel, and through the weak Pablo she allows readers to see aspects of human nature that are widespread. I found the prose to be quirky to read, but that could be a matter of translation. Readers looking for something unusual might find enjoyment from reading this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>A Whole New Mind</u> | Pink, Daniel H. | **** | <u>Aug 05</u> | <p>Proficiency. A finely presented case for increasing proficiency in right-brain dominance, along with resources to help improve right brain aptitude.</p> |  |
| <u>Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us</u> | Pink, Daniel H. | **** | <u>2/25/10</u> | <p>Engagement. Dan Pink has written another insightful book, this time taking on the subject of motivation. In <u>Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us</u>, Pink highlights the disconnect between typical management practices and scientific evidence about human biology and behavior. After presenting a scientific basis for his approach, he proposes that we upgrade ourselves and our workforces to autonomy, mastery and purpose. The outcome will be greater engagement. He also provides a toolkit with suggestions on what to do next to move in the direction he proposes. While many readers feel one's own intrinsic motivation, it can be hard in some workplaces to see movement away from a carrot and stick approach toward greater autonomy, mastery and purpose. <u>Drive</u> may help readers transform</p> |  |

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| | | | | workplaces into environments that get more work done, better, by more satisfied workers. | |
| <u>Free Agent Nation: How America's New Independent Workers Are Transforming the Way We Live</u> | Pink, Daniel H. | *** | <u>07/01</u> | Read to understand better how workers are managing their own careers and choosing to work independently. <u>Read longer review.</u> |  |
| <u>To Sell Is Human: The Surprising Truth About Moving Others</u> | Pink, Daniel H. | **** | <u>10/25/13</u> | <p>Insights. I spent a lot less time reading Dan Pink's latest book, <u>To Sell Is Human: The Surprising Truth About Moving Others</u>, than I spent thinking about it. Pink's insights are targeted to two readers: those who know they are in sales and those who think they aren't. That covers everybody, and I think every reader will benefit from some aspect of this interesting book. I enjoyed the way Pink presents his insights: he observes what changes are happening (we're all in sales now); he observes how the best sales people behave; and he offers ways in which each of us can do different things to sway others. Pink's writing is always lively and accessible, and he refers often to research that has led him, and can lead us, toward greater understanding of ourselves and others.</p> <p>Naps. I have the same thought with every new book by Daniel H. Pink: what new and interesting insights is he sharing this time? In his latest book titled, <u>When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing</u>, Pink has scoured scientific journals to uncover stimulating information that could change one's beliefs. The big theme in this book is that timing really is everything. Using lots of examples, Pink reinforces this in multiple ways. My favorite was about naps. Like me, Pink was not a napper. Based on research, Pink now believes in the value of the short nap taken at the right time for the right</p> |  |
| <u>When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing</u> | Pink, Daniel H. | **** | <u>4/16/18</u> | |  |

period of time, following a cup of coffee. Any reader open to changing beliefs based on new scientific evidence will find much to enjoy in this book.

Context. Fiction is where readers usually find the motif, “things are not as they appear.” Harvard psychology professor Steven Pinker spends almost six hundred pages exploring that theme in his book titled, Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress. We may think world affairs are getting worse, but Pinker shows things are getting better. This optimistic book uses a clear fact base to illustrate and debunk perceptions that need to be placed into context to be interpreted properly. Pinker’s optimism becomes contagious, and he makes a case for renewed support of Enlightenment values and ideals. Sign me up.



Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress

Pinker, Steven

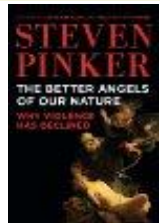
4/23/18

The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined

Pinker, Steven

Unread

Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012.

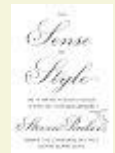


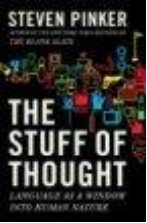
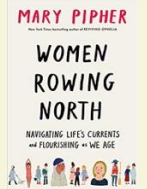


The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century

Pinker, Steven

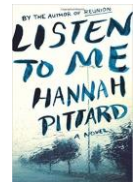
10/29/14

Improve. Grammar scolds are unlikely to enjoy reading Steven Pinker’s book titled, The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person’s Guide to Writing in the 21st Century. Those readers (and writers) who prefer to understand the reasons for certain rules of writing style will find great pleasure from reading this book. Some of us may be inclined to try harder to improve our writing style, thanks to Pinker’s fine way of presenting a positive case to encourage improved writing.

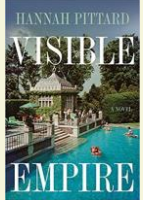

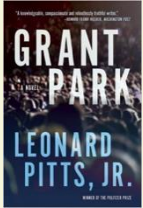
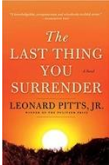
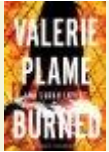



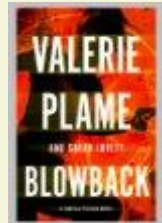
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| The Stuff of Thought | Pinker, Steven | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2008 |  |
| Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing As We Age | Pipher, Mary | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Fives and Twenty-Fives | Pitre, Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| A Small Moment of Great Illumination | Pitt, Leonard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

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|------------------------------|-----------------|------|-------------------------|---|--|
| Listen to Me | Pittard, Hannah | **** | 12/7/17 | <p>Disconnected. Married readers, especially those who have journeyed together on memorable road trips, are those who will gain an extra wallop from Hannah Pittard's novel titled, Listen to Me. Protagonists Mark and Maggie have started their annual drive from Chicago to Virginia to visit his parents later than planned, and a severe storm is forecast for their route. Their relationship is tense for many reasons, and the ways in which they are disconnected increase as the story develops. The darkness of the storm and power outage mirrors the darkness entering their relationship, a growing estrangement. Pittard's prose is taut to match the tension in the story, and readers who love literary</p> | |
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fiction will enjoy her fine writing, no matter how bleak the characters become or how dire their situation.

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| <u>Visible Empire</u> | Pittard, Hannah | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Freeman | Pitts, Jr., Leonard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>Grant Park</u> | Pitts, Jr., Leonard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>The Last Thing You Surrender: A Novel of World War II</u> | Pitts, Leonard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| Burned | Plame, Valerie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Fair Game: My Life As a Spy | Plame, Valerie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|---|---|
| Blowback | Plame, Valerie and Sarah Lovett | *** | 11/18/13 | <p>Mellow. I love spy thrillers for two main elements: an interesting, complex protagonist and a fast-paced plot. Former CIA spy Valerie Plame teamed up with thriller writer Sarah Lovett and produced a novel titled, Blowback. My expectation was that given Plame's CIA experience, the protagonist, Vanessa Pierson, would be something of an alter-ego to Plame, and she would bring us inside what life as a CIA spy is like. If that's what ended up in the novel, my conclusion is that there's a lot of boredom and infighting in the intelligence world. I found the plot mellow and the main character interesting, but not complex. I finished the novel and came away with no enthusiasm for reading a sequel.</p> |  |
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American Ghosts: A Memoir

Plante, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism

Plantinga, Alvin

Unread

Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012.



The Genius Factory

Plotz, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



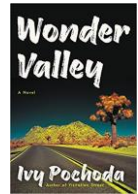
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| A Citizens Guide to Beating Donald Trump | Plouffe, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| These Women | Pochoda, Ivy | **** | 7/6/20 | <p>Voices. Amid the chaos involved with the terror of a serial killer, we hear the voices of a cast of women who know what must be learned, if only someone will listen to them. In her novel titled, These Women, Ivy Pochoda gives five key women clear voices, and adds to the murder mystery tension by having the murderer be the one individual paying attention to the women. The Los Angeles backdrop for this story becomes vivid, and readers will become invested in each of the women that Pochoda presents.</p> |  |
| Visitation Street | Pochoda, Ivy | *** | 4/7/14 | <p>Neighborhood. I was entertained by Ivy Pochoda's novel, Visitation Street. In some respects the most completely developed character in the novel is the setting, the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn. Pochoda develops a reader's understanding of Red Hook through descriptive language and through the wide cast of characters she presents as they pursue their hopes and dreams in this neighborhood. Using the mystery genre as the backdrop for displaying Red Hook in all its complexity, Pochoda led readers through various dead ends in trying to figure things out. Beyond a mystery, I read this novel as a story of redemption, and on that level, I was more satisfied. Readers willing to explore what a well written debut novel has to offer should take a look at this one.</p> |  |

Wonder Valley

Pochoda, Ivy

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

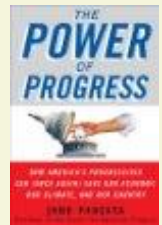


The Power of Progress: How America's Progressives Can (Once Again) Save Our Economy, Our Climate, and Our Country

Podesta, John

9/27/09

Prescription. John Podesta's The Power of Progress attempts to do two things: describe the history of the progressive movement in America, and lay out ways in which progressive leadership can move America forward. In a measured and calm way, Podesta lays out past accomplishments under a progressive agenda, and uses that foundation to show how the principles of progressivism can be applied to today's challenges. Those who disagree with President Clinton's former chief of staff will find plenty of ways in which he overstates his case; those who agree with him will find examples to bolster their opinions. Either way, reading The Power of Progress adds to the information a reader can have on hand to participate in an informed dialogue about what can work for Americans today. Podesta injects his personal story on these pages and that helps humanize the basis for his political persuasion.

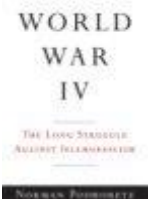


World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism

Podhoretz, Norman

Nov 07

Endurance. After reading this book, any advocate or opponent of cut and run from Iraq will think twice about the resolve and patience that will be necessary for what is likely to be a lengthy war.



Poilâne: The Secrets of the World-Famous Bread Bakery

Poilâne, Apollonia

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

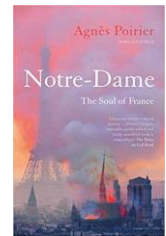


Notre-Dame:
The Soul of
France

Poirier, Agnès

9/22/20

Context. If France is such a secular country, and few people there attend religious services, why has there been such an outpouring of support to restore the Cathedral of Notre-Dame after the fire in 2019? In her book titled, Notre-Dame: The Soul of France, Agnès Poirier explains all the ways in which Notre-Dame has been the soul of France for eight hundred years. Readers will be gripped by her account of the fire and the actions by many to save as much of the structure and contents as possible. After that opening section, Poirier places the contemporary building in context by framing key events in the history of France relating to the building that is a church and much more. She explores Henry IV's conversion to Catholicism, how Napoleon crowned himself emperor there while the Pope was present, how Victor Hugo's writing and its adaptations made the building beloved to many, and how Charles de Gaulle used the building to unite the country after the war, and how his state funeral was held at Notre-Dame. In these episodes and more, Poirier shows how important Notre-Dame has been to the citizens of France. I laughed at one anecdote: in the Revolution mobs did damage to Notre-Dame as a response to the power of the Catholic Church. While much harm was done to the building, the organist played the Marseillaise loudly as a crowd approached. That kept the mob somewhat at bay and saved the structure from even greater pillage.



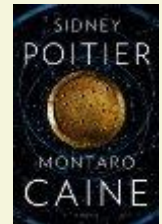
Montaro Caine

Poitier, Sidney

**

8/6/13

Coins. There's an imaginative story buried inside Sidney Poitier's novel, Montaro Caine. The problem I had with the book was trying to enjoy that story while suffering through poorly written prose. Dialogue was weak, characters poorly developed, and the plot momentum was erratic. If you think that a story about mysterious coins that may help our civilization is appealing, read a sample of this



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| | | | | novel before plunging in. I learned a valuable lesson about myself from reading this book: I'm more likely to stick with an ebook that I'm not enjoying than I am a print book. I had nothing to throw across the room in frustration, so I kept swiping pages until it was finished. | |
| <u>The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography</u> | Poitier, Sidney | *** | <u>7/00</u> | A conversational and self-critical story of an amazing life. |  |
| Exploring Reality: The Intertwining of Science and Religion | Polkinghorne, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Cork Boat</u> | Pollack, John | *** | <u>June 04</u> | Sails. Funny and poignant tale of the author's dream and execution of building a boat made from the corks of wine bottles. Relationships and community are built along with the boat. |  |
| Shortcut: How Analogies Reveal Connections, Spark Innovation, and Sell Our Greatest Ideas | Pollack, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |

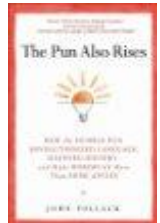
The Pun Also Rises: How the Humble Pun Revolutionized Language, Changed History, and Made Wordplay More Than Some Antics

Pollack, John

**

6/18/11

Punt. I loved the first fifty or so pages of John Pollack's entertaining book, The Pun Also Rises: How the Humble Pun Revolutionized Language, Changed History, and Made Wordplay More Than Some Antics. After that, the prose became a bit tedious, and by the end, I concluded that there are two types of readers who are most likely to enjoy this book: those who love language and like reading about it, and those who love to pun, and can use some ammunition to fend off attacks on their skill. Most readers are likely to find more here than you're likely to want to know about puns.



Alternadad

Pollack, Neal

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

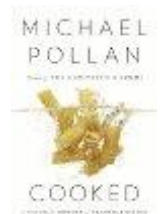


Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation

Pollan, Michael

8/6/13

Elements. The latest quirky food book by Michael Pollan is titled, Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation. Pollan explores the ways in which the fundamental elements of fire, water, earth and air can transform things that are great to eat and drink. The process of cooking with these elements also transformed Pollan and the ways he cooks, and can transform a reader's connection to the food and drink we consume. The structure of the book presents how Pollan tries to master one recipe using each of the four elements. I liked his writing and enjoyed reading about the adventures he pursued in cooking. Foodies and those who love cooking are those readers most likely to enjoy this book. Also, if you watch the Food Network or any cooking shows, you'll probably like this book.



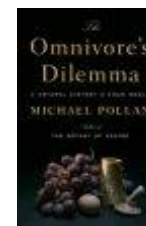
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| <u>Food Rules: An Eater's Manual</u> | Pollan, Michael | *** | <u>3/5/10</u> | <p>Policies. Omnivore Michael Pollan restates many of the key points of his recent books in a compact paperback titled, <u>Food Rules: An Eater's Manual</u>. In this simple little book that can be read in less than an hour, Pollan translates the seven summary words from <i>In Defense of Food</i> (“Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”) into 64 rules that he calls personal policies. Unlike the rules of say the 10 commandments, these are common sense approaches to choices about what, when and how to eat. It’s worth the purchase price of five bucks if a reader adopts one or more of these rules and winds up eating a healthier diet.</p> |  |
| <u>How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence</u> | Pollan, Michael | **** | <u>6/9/18</u> | <p>Psychedelic. I thought I knew a thing or two about psychedelics, but was disabused of that notion after reading Michael Pollan’s book titled, <u>How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence</u>. Lots of research into psychedelics has been going on for decades, and there are promising findings about the effectiveness of some substances for treating different conditions. Fans of Pollan’s writing about food will find a similar style in his writing about the mind, and about his own experiences with psychedelics.</p> |  |
| <u>In Defense of Food</u> | Pollan, Michael | **** | <u>Feb 08</u> | <p>Pleasure. Author kept getting questions about what to eat from readers of <u>The Omnivore's Dilemma</u>. This book answers: Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants. Read it and bring some pleasure to your diet.</p> |  |

[The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals](#)

Pollan, Michael

[Aug 06](#)

Choices. As we've become disconnected from the reality of what we're eating, we make food decisions that may not be to our benefit. Readers may never look at food in the same way after reading this book.

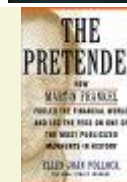


[The Pretender](#)

Pollock, Ellen
Joan

[Jun 02](#)

Fast-paced true story of how Marty Frankel executed financial fraud around the world. A real page-turner, stranger than fiction.



Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible: The Surreal Heart of the New Russia

Pomerantsev, Peter

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



[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.



The Authenticity Project

Pooley, Clare

7/15/20

Revelations. We present a façade to the world and the “truth” we tell even ourselves may not get to the root of who we are. In her novel titled, The Authenticity Project, Clare Pooley uses a clever conceit to lead characters to reveal their true selves: a plain journal in which individuals have disclosed themselves and left the journal for others to find. What follows is part romantic comedy and part deep insight into the nature of our human connections. If reading this book doesn’t uplift you, I don’t know what to suggest, except perhaps reading another novel by the prolific Alexander McCall Smith.

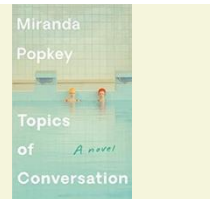


Topics of Conversation

Popkey, Miranda

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



Grief Is the Thing with Feathers

Porter, Max

9/16/16

Tornado. From the first page through the last of Max Porter’s debut novel titled, Grief Is the Thing with Feathers, I felt like I was lifted by a tornado and taken to some other place where I landed with total disorientation. That’s precisely what grief can do to us. We are pulled away from our life in a whirlwind and land with a sense of disorientation given our loss. Porter captures that sensation with prose, poetry, dreams, the character of a trickster crow and many other devices that support his effort to create art that conveys grief. This may be the most unusual novel I’ve read this year, and I liked it a lot.

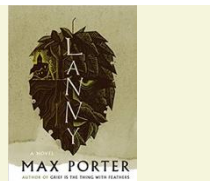


Lanny

Porter, Max

6/24/19

Interest. There’s a lot of interest in a small village outside London in the eponymous protagonist of Max Porter’s novel titled, Lanny. We learn of Lenny through the viewpoints of multiple characters, but not from Lanny himself. He is recognized as a very



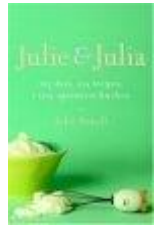
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| | | | | special young man by his parents, by an artist neighbor and by a version of the Green Man, a spirit called Dead Papa Toothwort. Porter writes in an unusual way, especially when he tries to let readers hear all that Dead Papa Toothwort is 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. | |
| <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>Why America Slept: The Failure to Prevent 9/11</u> | Posner, Gerald, L. | *** | <u>Dec 03</u> | Infighting. Exploration of twenty years of fumbled investigations and misplaced priorities leads to one conclusion: 9/11 did not need to happen. |  |
| <u>Rules for Old Men Waiting</u> | Pouncey, Peter | *** | <u>Mar 06</u> | Memories. Lyrical prose, well-crafted characters and gentle wisdom in this debut novel by president emeritus of Amherst College. |  |

Julie and Julia:
365 Days, 524
Recipes, 1 Tiny
Apartment
Kitchen

Powell, Julie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

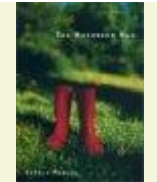


[The Mushroom Man](#)

Powell, Sophie

[May 03](#)

Dreamy Debut. Finely crafted, brief, first novel with enchanting view of a child's fantasy in Wales, and the adults around her who struggle with intimacy and strained relationships.

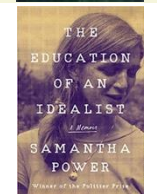


[The Education of an Idealist](#)

Power,
Samantha

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

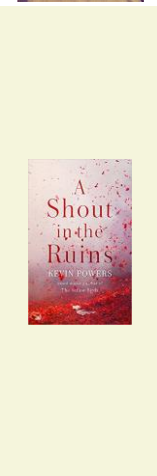


[A Shout in the Ruins](#)

Powers, Kevin

[11/24/18](#)

Violence. The first time I visited Richmond, Virginia, a friend living there gave me the right context for understanding the place: the past jumps out from every corner and pokes you. Kevin Powers writes about the past in Virginia in his novel titled, [A Shout in the Ruins](#). The book is set in two time periods: the civil war and its aftermath; and in the 1950s. Powers writes about violence and war with a blend of immediacy and distance: you are there in the gore and you are detached from it. The horrors of slavery and war are presented with unblinking calmness. Readers who enjoy literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.

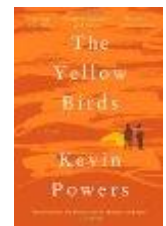


[The Yellow Birds](#)

Powers, Kevin

[10/10/12](#)

Choices. Every war provides talented writers with the experience to convey to readers something similar and something different about the horror of battle. Kevin Powers displays his lyrical writing skill and thoughtful insight in a debut novel titled [The Yellow Birds](#). Two young male protagonists, Bartle and Murphy, are developed just enough for readers



to be engaged in the Iraq War and its aftermath. Powers does a fine job in exploring their choices, and the trauma they experience. Had this novel been twice as long, it would have been half as good. Powers' poetic language describes the places and their experience with clarity and horror. If there's one debut novel you're likely to read in the next few months, make it this one.

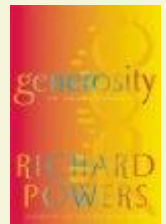
Geonome. Novels that are idea-based can often be preachy and I usually find them annoying as they try to express a point of view especially on social issues. Richard Powers' finely written new novel, Generosity: An Enhancement, is a satisfying departure from that approach. Protagonist Russell Stone accepts an extra job as a night school teacher, and one of his students, an Algerian named Thassa Amzwar, seems too good to be true. Her personality leads other students to call her Miss Generosity, and her spirit remains optimistic and positive no matter what curves life throws in her direction. Thassa's individuality attracts the interest of a charismatic genetic engineer who wants to commercialize her natural condition so others can be more like Thassa. Powers presents ideas and issues in ways that are so elegantly done that the literary fiction soars and the messages and possibilities shift in and out of a reader's mind.

Symphonic. Among the 1,000 books I've read in the past five years, Richard Powers' novel, Orfeo, ranks among the top five. Powers builds layer after layer of meaning as he draws readers into the life of protagonist Peter Els, a retired composer with an interest in chemistry. In the same way that a symphony uses multiple instruments and motifs to build toward a single, integrated work, this novel weaves out a narrative of the present and the past, leading a reader to a very complete work of art.

Generosity: An Enhancement

Powers, Richard

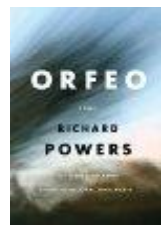
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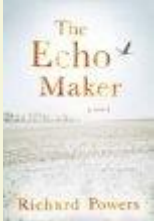
Orfeo

Powers, Richard

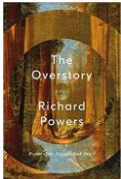
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What is discord, harmony, life, meaning? What is the power of music? Powers takes the myth of Orpheus and brings it to life for contemporary readers using great skill and offering us hours of engaged and interesting reading. If you love music, or life's big questions, chances are you'll love this novel as much as I did.

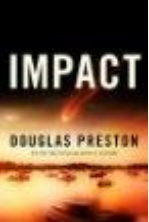

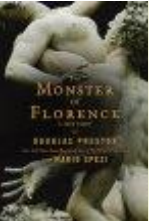
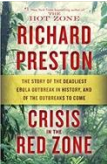
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| The Echo Maker | Powers, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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Trees. It was a coincidence that I finished reading Richard Powers finely written novel titled, The Overstory, on Earth Day. Powers tells readers things about trees that most of us never learned in school, and as a result of reading this novel, I will never see trees in the same way again. He finds creative ways of conveying science, the importance of environmentalism, and a view of harmonious living while laying out an interesting cast of characters and their interwoven stories. The structure of this novel will delight close readers because it progresses in ways similar to how trees grow: a ring at a time. After five hundred pages, the whole forest is lush and diverse, and man's time and place on this planet seems short and small. It takes a long time to realize how the stories are connected, as it may take a while to accept the notion that the lives of people and the lives of trees are similar. It demands a special writer to change our perspective about the world in which we live. Powers did that for me in this epic novel.

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| <u>The Overstory</u> | Powers, Richard | ***** | <u>4/23/18</u> |  |
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| Hamlet's BlackBerry: A Practical Philosophy for Building a Good Life in the Digital Age | Powers, William | Unread | | After stalling out in the middle of this book for a very long time, I finally gave up. I had the sense that this was a cogent essay that stretched into a full length book. Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| The White House Tapes: Eavesdropping on the President | Prados, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| From the Bottom Up: One Man's Crusade to Clean America's Rivers | Pregracke, Chad and Jeff Barrow | **** | Sep 07 | Mission. Inspiring and exciting story of how a teenager decided to clean up the garbage in the Mississippi River, and did it. Throw out <i>Who Moved My Cheese</i> and have your team read this tale of hard work, accountability, teamwork, and persistence. |  |
| River of Fire: My Spiritual Journey | Prejean, Sister Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| The Secrets We Kept | Prescott, Lara | **** | 2/21/20 | Pasternak. Take the vodka bottle out of the freezer, and pour yourself a healthy drink as you settle down to read Lara Prescott's debut novel titled, The Secrets We Kept . She gives us Boris Pasternak living under Soviet oppression, and unsure that he will ever see the publication of <i>Dr. Zhivago</i> . We see his complicated life with both wife and mistress. Prescott also describes the situation of women in the CIA during the cold war, when their roles as secretaries exposed them to secrets of all sorts, and some of them were able to pursue spy craft. We see the effort to use <i>Dr. Zhivago</i> as a way to turn Soviet citizens against communism. Thanks to Prescott's fine prose and effective character development, we are pulled into places and times |  |

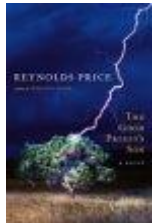
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| | | | | that merge the historical and fictional with skill. As I raised my glass of vodka upon finishing the novel, I toasted Pasternak: “ <i>Vechnaya pamyat</i> ” (let him be remembered forever). <i>Na zdorovye</i> . | |
| <u>Beautiful Souls: Saying No, Breaking Ranks, and Heeding the Voice of Conscience in Dark Times</u> | Press, Eyal | *** | <u>4/19/12</u> | <p>Nonconformists. Eyal Press’ short book, <u>Beautiful Souls: Saying No, Breaking Ranks, and Heeding the Voice of Conscience in Dark Times</u>, presents a reflection on a dimension of human behavior: standing alone for one’s convictions. He tells the stories of nonconformists who exhibit moral courage in taking stances that conflict with the will of their superiors or peers. This book provides a thought-provoking launching point for conversation with friends or colleagues about the decisions we make to conform or to stand our ground. Readers looking for inspiring stories of courageous behavior will find those here. Readers looking for an interesting book club selection will find this book will stimulate lively discussion.</p> |  |
| Cleopatra and Antony: Power, Love, and Politics in the Ancient World | Preston, Diana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| <u>Eight Days at Yalta: How Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin Shaped the Post-War World</u> | Preston, Diana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

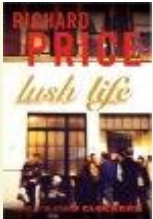
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| Impact | Preston, Douglas | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| The Codex | Preston, Douglas J. | * | Sep 04 | Reunion. Too much bad writing, even for what should have been a perfect beach novel. Weak dialogue, erratic character development, predictable plot patterns, and too many clichés. |  |
| The Monster of Florence | Preston, Douglas with Mario Spezi | *** | Dec 08 | Scary. That true life is often more bizarre than fiction is proven in this book that describes the author's investigation into unsolved serial murders that includes his own interrogation by police, and his co-author's arrest. |  |
| Crisis in the Red Zone: The Story of the Deadliest Ebola Outbreak in History, and of the Outbreaks to Come | Preston, Richard | **** | 6/2/20 | Mutations. For a real change of virus from Covid-19 to Ebola, I decided to read Richard Preston's book titled, Crisis in the Red Zone: The Story of the Deadliest Ebola Outbreak in History, and of the Outbreaks to Come . The book reads like a thriller, packed with an interesting cast of characters. In addition to the focus on the 2013-2014 Ebola pandemic, he brings readers back to earlier Ebola outbreaks in Africa. Readers become caught up with the stories of the victims of the virus, the caregivers and the scientists. There's a heightened sensitivity to the issues Preston raises in this book especially about mutations, the uncertainty of treatments and vulnerability during the Covid-19 pandemic. I'm still thinking about the difficult choices about limited resources, drugs and making decisions about who receives treatment. |  |


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| <u>The Demon in the Freezer</u> | Preston, Richard | *** | <u>Jan 03</u> | Dark Biology. Before you line up for your smallpox shot, read this book. It's more likely that a modified smallpox would be used as a weapon, and the vaccine would do no good. |  |
| The Wild Trees: A Story of Passion and Daring | Preston, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| <u>The Cobra Event</u> | Preston, Robert | *** | <u>Feb 02</u> | 1997 novel presents accurate science about the real threats of biological terrorism. Scary, suspenseful, gory. |  |
| Hannibal crosses the Alps : the enigma re- examined | Prevas, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Ready to lead?</u> | Price, Alan | ** | <u>July 05</u> | Dreamy. Another leadership fable with characters too good to be true. The brevity and simplicity will appeal to those who like this genre and who may find some beneficial takeaways. |  |
| <u>101 Places Not to See Before You Die</u> | Price, Catherine | ** | <u>11/18/10</u> | Stretched. There are a dozen or so funny pages in Catherine Price's book, <u>101 Places Not to See Before You Die</u> . Having taken the contrarian approach to the bucket list genre, Price must have easily come up with thirty or forty choices for her list, and was able to write witty prose that provided the bulk of the entertainment in this book. It seemed to me that to come up with her target of 101 places, she had to stretch quite a bit, and the humor often disappeared, and the shtick became tiresome. |  |

Readers who like a quick laugh will find some chuckles here, but getting to them requires a journey to some places that are better left unvisited. Readers with the patience to move briskly past the boring parts will be rewarded with some good laughs.

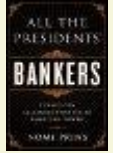
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| How to Break Up with Your Phone: The 30-Day Plan to Take Back Your Life | Price, Catherine | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
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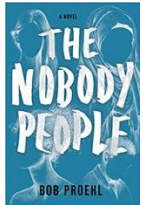
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| The Good Priest's Son | Price, Reynolds | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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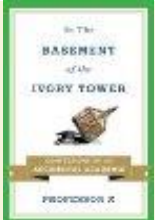
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| Lush Life | Price, Richard | *** | Oct 08 | Scars. Crime novel set on Lower East Side of Manhattan presents huge cast of well developed characters, each of them scarred by life's struggles. Rich detail and fine dialogue throughout. |  |
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| Top Secret America: The Rise of the New American Security State | Priest, Dana and William Arkin | *** | 9/23/11 | Transparency. Investigative journalist Dana Priest and her <i>Washington Post</i> colleague William Arkin, have aggregated their long-held interests in and writing about the national security infrastructure in a finely written new book titled, Top Secret America: The Rise of the New American Security State . Their fine reporting and exhaustive and careful analysis provide citizens with an alarming story about just how huge and costly the security infrastructure has become in response to 9/11. My first reaction was along the lines of "enough already!" A second reaction was sobering: |  |
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the expectation that even more costs are being incurred that Priest and Arkin were unable to reveal because of the secrecy surrounding many activities conducted in our name. Every reader will come away from this book with new information and knowledge, and perhaps with an interest in reform.

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| All the Presidents' Bankers: The Hidden Alliances that Drive American Power | Prins, Nomi | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
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| <u>The Nobody People</u> | Proehl, Bob | **** | <u>1/2/20</u> | <p>Different. Fans of science fiction and dystopian novels are those readers most likely to enjoy Bob Proehl's novel titled, <u>The Nobody People</u>. Proehl introduces us to individuals called Resonants who have a wide range of special abilities. The five hundred pages of this novel describe the ways in which the Resonants interact with the larger population. The novel explores how we treat those who are perceived as different, and how good and evil co-exist, sometimes in the same individual. This is a story of love, community and hope alongside fear, hatred and violence. The five hundred pages required patience at times, and resolution of the story will have to wait until the next novel which is to be released in Fall 2020.</p> |  |
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| In the Basement of the Ivory Tower: Confessions of an Accidental Academic | Professor X | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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Lovers at the Chameleon Club

Prose, Francine

6/25/14

Voices. Paris provides a great backdrop for a novel set during any time period, and the 1930s gave Francine Prose plenty of atmosphere for her novel titled, Lovers at the Chameleon Club. Readers who enjoy literary fiction will find the writing here to bring delight, although I found it challenging to stay alert as Prose shifts narrators often and uses multiple perspectives to present this story. As most readers would expect, the truth lies somewhere among these different views. The variety in the novel will find things many readers will love or hate: cross-dressing, athletics, Olympics, Nazi espionage, photography, nightlife. I found it slow to get into the novel, but once I became accustomed to the structure, I zipped to the end, enjoying the fine writing and engaging story.



Goldengrove

Prose, Francine

Dec 08

Mourning. Finely written coming of age novel in which a thirteen-year-old narrator mourns the death of her sister while maturing into her own identity.



Mister Monkey

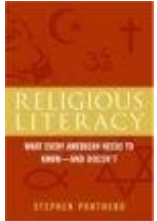
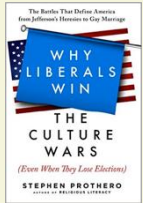
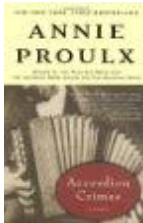
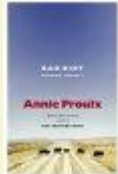
Prose, Francine

1/24/17

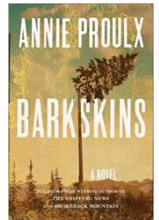
Disturbed. I was shaken out of my comfort zone from the first few pages of Francine Prose's novel titled, Mister Monkey. I found myself becoming interested in what was happening on the set of a very terrible children's musical. Once hooked, Prose had me laughing while watching her draw out the humanity of a wide cast of characters as she examines their lives closely. As I read on, I kept thinking about love, laughing, and wincing. There are millions of stories in the city, and Francine Prose knows how to create characters who may disturb and delight us at the same time. Let's not even get started about Darwin, or dating. At every turn, Prose kept me with her, asking for more.



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|---|-------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>My New American Life</u> | Prose, Francine | *** | <u>1/23/12</u> | Plucky. Twenty-six year old Albanian immigrant Lula is the protagonist of Francine Prose's novel, <u>My New American Life</u> . Prose captures many aspects of contemporary life circa 2005, and assembles a cast of characters to flesh out that time and show the contrast between suburban malaise and an immigrant's struggle post-9/11. The plucky Lula is a survivor who stumbles through ways to make it in America. All the Albanian characters have a liveliness that contrasts with the sadness of the American characters. Readers who enjoy novels of social commentary are those most likely to enjoy this book. |  |
| <u>What to Read and Why</u> | Prose, Francine | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Fly Fishing the 41st: Around the World on the 41st Parallel</u> | Prosek, James | *** | <u>July 03</u> | Hooked. Well-written story of author's journey around the world, fishing, painting, and writing about these adventures. All readers will enjoy the anecdotes, characters and adventure, whether we fish or not. |  |
| American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon | Prothero, Stephen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World--and Why Their Differences Matter</u> | Prothero, Stephen | *** | <u>2/4/11</u> | Understanding. Stephen Prothero's new book, <u>God Is Not One</u> , is a finely written primer on the fundamental tenets and practices of eight major world religions. Prothero attacks those who gloss over the differences among religions as insignificant because they represent different paths to the same God. Prothero highlights the differences, explains them, and focuses our attention on why the differences are important in |  |

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| | | | | gaining understanding and insight. Any reader with limited knowledge about different religions will find this book fascinating. Those readers who already understand much about different religions may find this book inadequate and far too basic. I found that I learned more about the Yoruba and Confucianism from this book than I had gleaned from others. | |
| Religious Liberty | Prothero, Stephen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Why Liberals Win the Culture Wars (Even When They Lose Elections): The Battles That Define America from Jefferson's Heresies to Gay Marriage</u> | Prothero, Stephen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| Accordion Crimes | Proulx, Annie | Unread | | Really loved <i>The Shipping News</i> and picked this up sometime in 1997. Sits unread, never opened. |  |
| <u>Bad Dirt: Wyoming Stories 2</u> | Proulx, Annie | *** | <u>Feb 05</u> | Cowboys. Author's past confusing poetic drabble replaced with clear prose in presenting rural cowboy life with humor and poignancy. |  |

Timber. Just in time for summer, readers can spend weeks relaxing with over 700 pages of Annie Proulx's finely written prose in her novel titled, Barkskins. We've come to look to Proulx for insight into our complicated relationship with nature, and on the topic of the exploration of forests, she is prolific. Spanning three hundred years and multiple generations of two families, the novel draws readers into the destruction of forests and the radical change in culture involving these families. Because of alternating chapters on the families, I found it challenging to keep characters straight, especially because of the large number of people Proulx presents. Even with brief treatment, she presents these characters with complex nuances, and by using descriptive language so lyrically, we can experience violence and loss as a normal part of life. The forest and the trees are also characters, and their plight is a whole other matter. I never thought I would say this about a novel over 700 pages in length: I wish she had written more! If you want to do a small thing to help our forests survive, read the e-book version.



Barkskins

Proulx, Annie

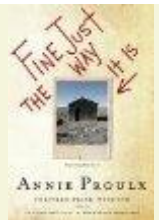
6/24/16

Fine Just the Way It Is: Wyoming Stories 3

Proulx, Annie

Nov 08

Devilish. Nine more masterful short stories with finely developed characters and a description of hard life out West. Even the devil makes an appearance.



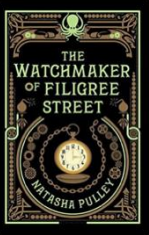
That Old Ace in the Hole

Proulx, Annie

June 03

Annie Got Her Gun. No more obtuse prose from Proulx. Funny, satiric, absorbing story. Anti-big business, coming of age, community values.



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|---|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Music Through the Floor | Puchner, Eric | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Dark Tide: The Great Boston Molasses Flood of 1919</u> | Puleo, Stephen | *** | <u>July 04</u> | Corners Cut. Captivating tale of ruptured tank of molasses that caused death and mayhem in a Boston neighborhood. Lessons for today's managers throughout, especially from transcripts of court testimony by company officials. |  |
| <u>The Watchmaker of Filigree Street</u> | Pulley, Natasha | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>The Book of Dust: La Belle Sauvage</u> | Pullman, Philip | ***** | <u>1/23/18</u> | Exciting. The first novel in Philip Pullman's <i>The Book of Dust</i> trilogy is titled, <u>La Belle Sauvage</u> . Packed with action from the first pages, fans of Pullman will enjoy eleven-year-old protagonist Malcolm and his competent and exciting care for Lara, the child of Asriel. Pullman fans will be pleased to learn that daemons are back, and the lines between good and evil are drawn very clearly. The adventure in this first novel proceeds at a rapid pace and lays a groundwork for the rest of the trilogy. I was thoroughly entertained from beginning to end. |  |
| <u>The Book of Dust: The Secret Commonwealth</u> | Pullman, Philip | **** | <u>7/15/20</u> | Journey. The second installment of Philip Pullman's Book of Dust trilogy is a novel titled, <u>The Book of Dust: The Secret Commonwealth</u> . Don't even think about reading this without having read the earlier novel. For returning fans, Lyra and Malcolm are back, and over the course of 650 pages, they are on a journey. As with most middle |  |

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| | | | | novels of a trilogy, there's lots of exposition and little resolution in this installment. We're left with a cliffhanger and an unknown publication date for the finale. Some journeys take longer than others, so we wait. Maybe George R.R. Martin will fill our time with something new. | |
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From Big Bang to Big Mystery

Purcell, Brendan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

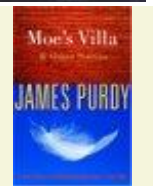


Moe's villa & other stories

Purdy, James

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



For Common Things

Purdy, Jedediah

A fresh voice takes on irony. Sincere and well-written. We'll hear more from Purdy. Give it a try.

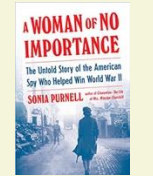


A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II

Purnell, Sonia

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

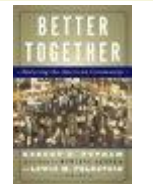



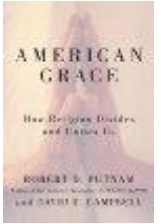

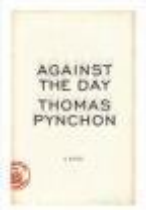
Better Together: Restoring the American Community

Putnam, Robert D.



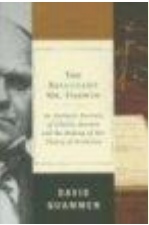
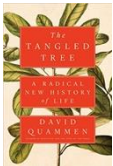
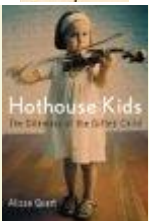
Oct 03

Capital. Something to think about and learn from the twelve case studies of how different people are trying to build social capital from branch libraries to schoolchildren leading community change. Read excerpt about how UPS builds social capital.



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| <u>Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis</u> | Putnam, Robert D. | ***** | <u>4/24/15</u> | Contrasts. Economics can make for dismal reading, and sociology can be tedious. Readers who are apprehensive about a book that combines both can relax and enjoy Robert Putnam's fine writing in his book titled, <u>Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis</u> . Putnam brings to life the inequality in American society through his presentation of data and the personal stories that he injects into the text, including his own life. The combination of data and anecdote can nudge a reader toward Putnam's own conclusions. Whether one agrees with him or not, this well-written book presents the inequality challenge for every reader's consideration and reflection. |  |
| American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us | Putnam, Robert D. and David E. Campbell | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| <u>Omerta</u> | Puzo, Mario | *** | | The last in the series by the late author. Go ahead and read it. |  |
| Against the Day | Pynchon, Thomas | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2007 |  |

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|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Bleeding Edge | Pynchon, Thomas | ***** | 11/19/13 | <p>Conspiracy. Here's my advice if you decide to read Thomas Pynchon's novel, Bleeding Edge: sit back, relax, laugh, and let him take you to people and places for amusement and entertainment. Don't bother trying to keep track or figure things out: this is a plot-free novel. It's a romp through New York City with protagonist Maxine Tarnow whose investigation provides the action for the novel. Pynchon sets the novel at the end of the dot.com bubble, and while we know 9/11 is coming, he handles that with precision. Thoughts about conspiracies abound, and shady characters are found everywhere, even in virtual reality called "DeepArcher." The writing soars on every page, and the realistic dialogue made me feel like I was in Manhattan. While I caught many of his references, I know I missed more than I caught. I could care less about what I might have missed because I laughed a lot, and enjoyed the time spent reading these 500 pages.</p> |  |
| Inherent Vice | Pynchon, Thomas | *** | 8/28/09 | <p>Mood. Thomas Pynchon transports readers of his new novel, Inherent Vice, to the early 1970s in Southern California. He captures the mood of that time in many dimensions, especially in the form of drugs, rock and roll and movies. There must be references to four dozen songs that will delight music lovers. Pynchon's prose is word perfect, the dialogue perfect for the era, and the plots were hilarious. Protagonist Larry Doc Sportello is larger than life, mellow on weed, and in the thick of so many subplots that each successive one is funnier than the one before. The names of Pynchon's characters were also funny, and the presence of the early Internet will make even geeks laugh. Inherent Vice provides an amusing and entertaining excursion to a place and time that seems more amusing and quaint now than it seemed at the time.</p> |  |

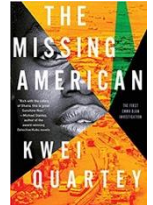
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| American Crescent: A Muslim Cleric on the Power of His Faith, the Struggle Against Prejudice, and the Future of Islam and America | Qazwani, Hassan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic | Quammen, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| The Reluctant Mr. Darwin | Quammen, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>The Tangled Tree: A Radical New History of Life</u> | Quammen, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Hothouse Kids | Quart, Alissa | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

The Missing American

Quartey, Kwei

8/5/20

Emma. Kwei Quartey has started a new crime fiction series featuring a young private detective in Accra, Ghana named Emma Djan. In this first novel titled, The Missing American, Emma finds herself sacked by the police department after she refused sexual advances from a senior officer and is then hired by a private investigator who values her detecting skills. Her first case involves, as the title indicates, a missing person. Quartey pulls readers into the world of successful internet scams as well as political corruption. Most readers will enjoy how all the threads of the plot come together and how easy it is to spend time with Emma and to enjoy the ways in which she gets the job done and achieves satisfaction.

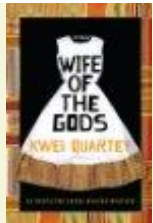


Wife of the Gods

Quartey, Kwei

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010







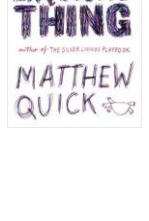
Fire Sermon

Quatro, Jamie

3/9/18

Fidelity. Clear out a book club evening to discuss Jamie Quatro's debut novel titled, Fire Sermon. Protagonist Maggie is struggling with being faithful to her husband, Thomas, as she desires to deepen her relationship with a colleague, James. If Maggie's growing desire for James were the dominant theme, this novel would have been unmemorable. Quatro adds Maggie's spirituality to the mix and places her behavior with James on a collision course with her desire to do what God wants her to do. Quatro maintains tension between Maggie's head and heart and conveys her deep longing. Falling in love turns life upside down, and Quatro spins readers with finely written prose as she presents interesting and complex characters struggling with making the right choices.



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|--|----------------|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| I Want To Show You More | Quatro, Jamie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Closing Time: A Memoir | Queenan, Joe | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Queenan Country: A Reluctant Anglophile's Pilgrimage to the Mother Country | Queenan, Joe | * | Dec 05 | Dull. Witty writer provides dull prose in this account of his 2002 trip to his wife's homeland. What annoys Queenan is likely to bore most readers. |  |
| Every Exquisite Thing | Quick, Matthew | **** | 2/3/17 | Rebellion. I'm not especially influenced by the genre designation that some publishers assign to appeal to a target market. I think Matthew Quick's novel titled, Every Exquisite Thing , wound up in the Young Adult section of the bookstore and library. I've read several other novels by Quick, and thought this story of rebellion was a highly entertaining story. There is an act of rebellion by the protagonist set against a fictional work about rebellion that propels the action. This clever and interesting approach kept me interested and engaged from beginning to end. |  |
| Love May Fail | Quick, Matthew | **** | 2/25/16 | Redemption. I can recommend Matthew Quick's novel titled, Love May Fail , based solely on his quirky and fully developed characters. A bonus comes from his exploration of redemption that comes from making bold choices and following a |  |

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| | | | | <p>path of hope toward love. A teacher influenced a life in profound ways and that led to a series of events that brought that teacher from despair to joy. If you are in any way overwhelmed by the evil in the world or the depths of sadness and disappointment, read this book and come away with a renewed sense of goodness, kindness and virtue from the unlikelyst of sources.</p> | |
| <u>The Good Luck of Right Now</u> | Quick, Matthew | ***** | <u>5/9/14</u> | <p>Understanding. Readers looking for a charming novel that helps you feel good about humanity should consider reading Matthew Quick's <u>The Good Luck of Right Now</u>. This may be the most unusual novel I've read in a long time. Protagonist Bartholomew Neil grieves the death of his mother, with whom he has lived for all thirty-eight years of his life. Structured as a series of letters that Bartholomew writes to Richard Gere, we follow the cast of troubled characters on a journey toward understanding and a future that leads them to rely and depend on each other.</p> |  |
| <u>The Reason You're Alive</u> | Quick, Matthew | ***** | <u>9/18/17</u> | <p>Portrait. Far along in Matthew Quick's novel titled, <u>The Reason You're Alive</u>, readers learn that the title of the book is also the title of a painting. By the time we learn that fact, we've come to know protagonist David Granger quite well. This sixty-eight-year-old Vietnam vet becomes obsessed with finding a Native American soldier from his past. Granger is struggling with the meaning of his life, and trying to understand why the country he loves has changed so much. The novel is a portrait of a person and of our society. Quick explores the ways in which it becomes necessary to reconcile ourselves with the past and let go of burdens that have been carried far too long.</p> |  |

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|---------------------------------|----------------|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Alternate Side | Quindlen, Anna | **** | 4/23/18 | <p>Fragility. Affluent and privileged people can have troubles too, and even the slightest first world problems can uncover cracks in fragile relationships. Anna Quindlen sets her novel titled, Alternate Side, on a dead-end street in Manhattan. Nora Nolan and her husband Charlie have a great life together until they don't. Dramatic inequality is evident every day in Manhattan, and Quindlen provides different characters in this novel that describe the consequences of economic differences. Quindlen describes the dream of life in Manhattan grounded in the reality of marriage and neighbors and what can happen to anyone.</p> |  |
| Blessings | Quindlen, Anna | *** | Nov 02 | <p>Secrets. Old and young, rich and poor, unite through the secrets that bind them. A warm story about people trying to deal with love, redemption, and creating community.</p> |  |
| Every Last One | Quindlen, Anna | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| Miller's Valley | Quindlen, Anna | **** | 8/4/16 | <p>Mimi. Book club members looking for a novel with a huge cast of characters, interesting family relationships and prose that describes the setting with clarity, should consider Anna Quindlen's novel, Miller's Valley. Quindlen presents the life of Mimi Miller, whose family has farmed on low lying ground in Pennsylvania for generations. The small town faces dramatic change as the valley will be flooded by the government after the land is taken by eminent domain. The joining of people and the places where we live can make for great reading, and Quindlen drew me into the lives of these people in this place. I was thoroughly entertained by all the</p> |  |

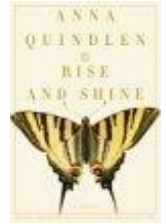
ups and downs of their lives, and found Mimi to be the perfect protagonist for this novel.

Rise and Shine

Quindlen, Anna

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

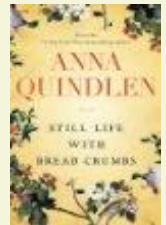


Still Life with Bread Crumbs

Quindlen, Anna

2/20/14

Rediscovery. The title of Anna Quindlen's novel, Still Life with Bread Crumbs, refers to a photograph by protagonist Rebecca Winter. Rebecca finds herself at age 60 still recognized as a prominent photographer, but her work is selling at a slow pace. Life in New York City is expensive, especially as the cost of care for her aging parents has become a strain. She moves to a cottage more rustic than quaint, and the opportunity for a renewed life presents itself. This novel will appeal to book clubs, especially those comprised of women of a similar age to the protagonist. The novel is a love story, endearing and gentle. If that's what you like, there's plenty of it in this novel.



Building the bridge as you walk on it: a guide for leading change

Quinn, Robert E.

Unread

Shelf of Reproach 2005

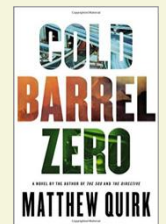


Cold Barrel Zero

Quirk, Matthew

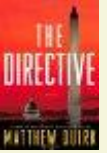
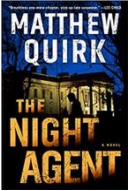
8/4/16

Racing. It didn't take many paragraphs in his novel titled, Cold Barrel Zero, for Matthew Quirk to get my heart racing. Fans of military thrillers will find plenty of black ops action in this novel. Readers who would like an escape from the terror reports almost every day should avoid this novel. Quirk masters plot momentum in this novel, presents interesting characters, and gives readers entertaining twists that will surprise many who are





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| | | | | trying to figure out who are the enemies and who are the allies. | |
| <u>Dead Man Switch</u> | Quirk, Matthew | **** | <u>5/23/17</u> | <p>Vulnerable. Fans of action thrillers will be pleased that Matthew Quirk has reprised protagonist John Hayes for a second novel titled, <u>Dead Man Switch</u>. Hayes and three dozen friends are part of Cold Harvest, a covert paramilitary group. Hayes has allowed his reputation to be tarnished to reduce the vulnerability of his family to retaliation. The plot momentum involves the execution of a step by step plan to liquidate the members of Cold Harvest, and Quirk keeps the action constant, and the twists exciting. Fans will be pleased that even after this exciting installment, John Hayes' work is not yet done.</p> |  |
| <u>Hour of the Assassin</u> | Quirk, Matthew | **** | <u>8/19/20</u> | <p>Scapegoat. Be careful about what you eat and drink before and while reading Matthew Quirk's novel titled, <u>Hour of the Assassin</u>. The violence and blood in the narrative can be off-putting, especially for delicate stomachs. Within the first few pages of the novel protagonist and former Secret Service agent Nick Averose realizes that he has been set up as the scapegoat for a murder he didn't commit. Quirk keeps the action moving quickly as Nick uses all his skills to find out what's going on and come out of his predicament alive. Fans of crime thrillers are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The 500</u> | Quirk, Matthew | *** | <u>6/7/12</u> | <p>Exciting. Matthew Quirk's debut novel, <u>The 500</u>, has arrived just in time to please those summer readers who love a heart-pounding fast-paced plot. Protagonist Mike Ford has been recruited out of Harvard to work for the Davies Group, the most powerful consulting firm in D.C. Much of the action in the novel is so implausible that every reader's willing suspension of disbelief is severely tested. I can almost imagine Quirk's strain in deciding how to place Ford into a particular sticky situation, and</p> |  |


then struggling to get him out. I kept reading because I found the excitement to become fun as the novel progressed, and once I gave in, it was easy to reach the end. I'm always willing to overlook a few clunky elements in a debut novel, and I was entertained by this one. Readers willing to give a first-time novelist a try should consider reading this novel.

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| <u>The Directive</u> | Quirk, Matthew | **** | <u>7/28/14</u> | <p>Trust. Matthew Quirk reprises protagonist Mike Ford from his debut novel, <i>The 500</i>, and keeps the thrilling action moving at a rapid pace in a novel titled, <u>The Directive</u>. The title refers to the policy decision from the Federal Reserve that is sent to the New York Fed to implement in the capital markets. The bad guys want to intercept the directive to trade on it ahead of the market. The novel develops the complexity of the character of Mike Ford as he struggles to decide who can be trusted, and as he chooses to cross some lines that will have significant consequences for his future. Readers who like action thrillers will find a lot to enjoy in this book. I read it quickly and was thoroughly entertained.</p> |  |
| <u>The Night Agent</u> | Quirk, Matthew | **** | <u>3/6/19</u> | <p>Mole. Fans of spy fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy a novel by Matthew Quirk titled, <u>The Night Agent</u>. 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.</p> |  |

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| My Holy War | Raban, Jonathan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
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| Surveillance | Raban, Jonathan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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| <u>The Imperfectionists</u> | Rachman, Tom | *** | <u>6/22/10</u> | <p>Assembly. If you're willing to give a debut novel a chance, consider Tom Rachman's fine offering, <u>The Imperfectionists</u>. With great skill, Rachman presents portraits of characters, each with his or her own chapter, like individual sections of the failing newspaper that draws them together. Rachman paints these portraits with a consistent level of depth across ages and gender so that by the end of the book, I came away with great satisfaction in having spent time getting to know authentic characters displaying a full range of human behavior. Any reader who prefers taking a book in small doses can enjoy these chapters in a leisurely way.</p> |  |
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| <u>The Italian Teacher</u> | Rachman, Tom | **** | <u>4/23/18</u> | <p>Legacy. Second only to the complexity of mother and daughter relationships is the often fraught relationship between fathers and sons. Pinch is the protagonist of Tom Rachman's novel titled, <u>The Italian Teacher</u>, and he has lived his life in the shadow of his father, a renowned painter, Bear Bavinsky. Bear has been larger than life for Pinch, and whatever limited attention Pinch gets from Bear becomes magnified in its impact. This novel about artists is finely written, and Rachman moves</p> |  |
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beyond the dimensions of the father and son relationship into the whole nature of legacy and what that means. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

Loved. Readers should sit in a comfortable chair with a fastened seat belt to travel across three continents and thirty years through the 400 pages of Tom Rachman's novel titled, [The Rise & Fall of Great Powers](#). We spend time with protagonist Matilda 'Tooly' Zylberberg in her childhood in 1988, at the turn of the millennium, and in 2011. Tooly is alternately loved and abandoned by four other characters who appear in these time segments. I was reminded by this novel that a child never has too many people in her life who love her. Tooly is watched over and loved, and thanks to Rachman's fine writing, her unusual life becomes clearer for readers who can tolerate the erratic structure of the novel. I was delighted by what I read.



[The Rise & Fall of Great Powers](#)

Rachman, Tom

[7/28/14](#)

[The Long Road Home: A Story of War and Family](#)

Raddatz, Martha

[Sep 07](#)

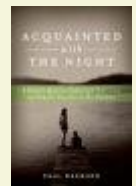
One. TV reporter writes about one 2004 battle in Iraq and what it meant for the soldiers and their families. Descriptive, detailed and teary story of sacrifice.



Acquainted with the night : a parent's quest to understand depression and bipolar disorder in his children

Raeburn, Paul

Read, but not reviewed.



The Billionaire's
Apprentice: The
Rise of The
Indian-
American Elite
and The Fall of
The Galleon
Hedge Fund

Raghavan, Anita

10/25/13

Edge. If Anita Raghavan's book, The Billionaire's Apprentice: The Rise of The Indian-American Elite and The Fall of The Galleon Hedge Fund, were fiction, I would have set it aside concluding that the behavior of the characters was outside any willing suspension of disbelief. Instead, this is non-fiction, presenting a large cast of characters with a deficit of integrity. Raghavan presents the story of self-dealing business leaders: Raj Rajaratnam, owner of the Galleon Hedge Fund who pushed employees to gain an edge by cultivating insiders and getting non-public information from them; and the downfall of one of Raj's insiders, Rajat Gupta former CEO McKinsey and former independent director at Goldman Sachs. These and other wealthy, sad and greedy individuals populate over 500 pages of lively reading. Raghavan puts everything in context and the result is a finely written book that any reader with an interest in business, ethics or Wall Street finance will find well worth reading.

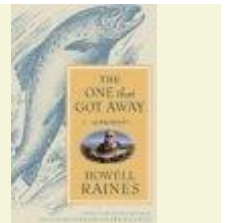


The One That
Got Away

Raines, Howell

August
06

Release. Introspective and instructive memoir full of wisdom and fine writing by fired *New York Times* executive editor and avid fly fisherman.



Follow Me to
Ground


Rainsford, Sue

2/14/20

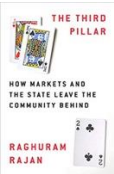
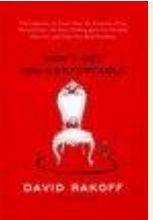
Cures. Will the Earth heal us? In her debut novel titled, Follow Me to Ground, Sue Rainsford creates a setting where short or long periods buried in the ground cure people. Protagonist Ada and her father provide healing to the people who come to them, who they call "Cures." Ada lives with her father at the outer edge of a village, and they are neither inside nor outside the community. The sick are pleased to be healed. Ada is caught between working with her father and finding love with a

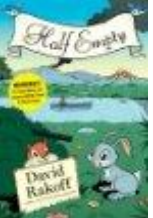



man. What does it mean to be a woman? Is burying in the ground a prelude to resurrection? Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this unusual novel.

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| Waterline | Raisin, Ross | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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The Third Pillar:
How Markets
and the State
Leave the
Community
Behind

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| | Rajan, Raghuram | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Don't Get Too Comfortable</u> | Rakoff, David | ** | <u>Mar 06</u> | Phrasing. Irreverent wit in collection of essays, full of well-turned phrases, mostly of the skewering sort. |  |

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| Half Empty | Rakoff, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
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| <u>Love, Dishonor, Marry, Die, Cherish, Perish</u> | Rakoff, David | **** | <u>11/26/13</u> | Rhyme. It takes an unusual writer to even consider writing a novel in verse. It requires a very skilled writer to pull it off, especially in just over one hundred pages. The late David Rakoff accomplished both successfully in his final book, <u>Love, Dishonor, Marry, Die, Cherish, Perish</u> . I felt compelled to experience this novel in two ways: I read it on paper, and then listened to it being read |  |
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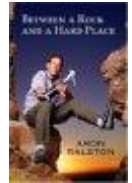
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| | | | by Rakoff. With my knowledge that he was dying as he recorded, I found myself listening even more closely to his expression and delivery. This novel does what we want any good novel to do: hold up for us life in all its richness and help us see and feel the wonders of human behavior. I highly recommend that you consider reading this novel, and then consider listening to Rakoff reading it to you. | |
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Between a Rock
and a Hard
Place

Ralston, Aron

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



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| <u>The Farm</u> | Ramos, Joanne | ***** | <u>7/26/19</u> | <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> | |
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Pushkin and the Queen of Spades

Randall, Alice

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004



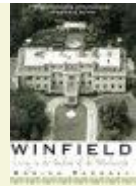
[Winfield: Living in the Shadow of the Woolworths](#)

Randall, Monica

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[Feb 04](#)

Haunting. The rare reader with a love of historic preservation, an interest in reading personal stories of individuals obsessed with the past, and a tolerance for weird ghost stories will love this book. All others: do not trespass here.



[Even Dogs in the Wild](#)

Rankin Ian

[5/4/16](#)

Fox. Fans of crime fiction will find a few hours of entertainment in a novel by Ian Rankin titled, [Even Dogs in the Wild](#). Even though he has retired, John Rebus is back at work in this novel, and longtime fans will roar when they see what he does to help Big Ger Cafferty. While Rebus is on the case, it is Clarke and Fox who are running the show. The rapid development of Malcolm Fox in the field may indicate that as Rebus declines, Fox will increase. Good news for crime fiction fans all around.

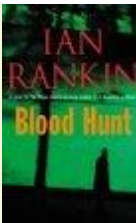


[Blood Hunt](#)

Rankin, Ian

[Apr 06](#)

Revenge. After protagonist Gordon Reeve gets on the trail of his brother's killers, he finds a former Special Forces mate with whom he has a major score to settle. Fast-paced suspense.



[Doors Open](#)

Rankin, Ian

[3/12/11](#)

Deception. Ian Rankin's crime novel, [Doors Open](#), presents an entertaining tale of deception about a highly improbable art theft and a cast of characters who have personal motivations that involve multiple levels of deception. A shadow over this novel is the missing character from earlier Rankin novels: Inspector Rebus. For those readers who can overlook this, and consider this novel on its own, the story becomes entertaining and interesting.



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| <u>Exit Music</u> | Rankin, Ian | *** | <u>4/18/09</u> | <p>Finale. Could <u>Exit Music</u> really be Ian Rankin's last John Rebus novel? The Edinburgh detective faces mandatory retirement and has ten days to bring Big Ger Cafferty to justice while solving the murder of a Russian poet. There are more than enough plot twists in <u>Exit Music</u> and a cast of fascinating and distracting characters to keep readers alert and engaged from the first through the last page. Detective Sergeant Siobhan Clarke does her best to give Rebus the opportunity to make his final days as a detective productive and successful, despite his spending part of the time on suspension. Rankin respects the intelligence of readers, and <u>Exit Music</u> will keep your brain active as you try to figure out who did what.</p> |  |
| <u>In a House of Lies</u> | Rankin, Ian | **** | <u>2/21/19</u> | <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, consider reading this novel or this series anyway. The writing is great, especially for those readers who like crime fiction.</p> |  |
| <u>Rather Be the Devil</u> | Rankin, Ian | **** | <u>3/23/17</u> | <p>Energized. For a retired detective with health issues, John Rebus seems highly energized as he's back on the job, of sorts, in the twenty-first novel in this series by Ian Rankin. In the book titled, <u>Rather Be the Devil</u>, Rebus reopens a cold case and issues from the past converge through multiple plot lines</p> |  |

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| | | | | with lots of criminal action in the present. Big Ger Cafferty is back as well, along with detectives Clarke and Fox. Cafferty is no more retired than Rebus, and the spring in Big Ger's step may lead to more adventures. Fans of character-driven crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this entertaining novel and the entire series. | |
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Saints of the Shadow Bible

Rankin, Ian

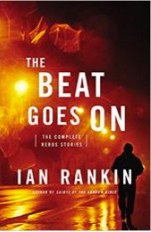

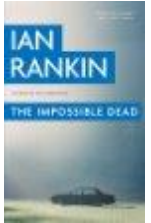
6/25/14

Loyalty. Fans of Ian Rankin will be thrilled that he's continued to develop the characters of both John Rebus and Malcolm Fox in his novel titled, Saints of the Shadow Bible. The interplay of by-the-book Fox with off-the-reservation Rebus provides a lot of pleasure in this novel, especially when it becomes clear that they are coming to understand and like each other. The action in the case involves the behavior of some former detectives with whom Rebus was associated as a rookie detective decades earlier. The loyalty he committed to the group in the book's title comes under pressure when he investigates a murder from thirty years ago. Fans of crime fiction, especially this series, will find a lot to enjoy in this installment.




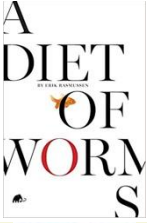
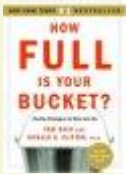
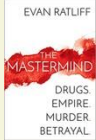
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| <u>Standing in Another Man's Grave</u> | Rankin, Ian | ***** | <u>4/12/13</u> | Civilian. Whether <u>Standing in Another Man's Grave</u> is the first detective novel you've read that features John Rebus, or if you read every one of these terrific novels from Ian Rankin, chances are you will enjoy the characters, plot and complexity of this novel. Rebus is an old school detective and while now retired, he is working as a civilian in a cold case unit, and is considering a return to the police force. Having saved the life of a criminal, Ger Cafferty, in a prior novel, Rebus now has a fortnightly drink with Ger. That causes suspicion from an old nemesis of Rebus, DI Malcolm Fox of the Complaints (also known as Internal Affairs or Ethics and Standards). Through good luck, Rebus stumbles into a case, and charges ahead with his | |
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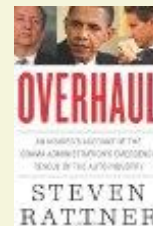
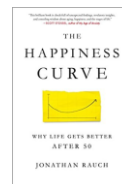


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| | | | | usual persistence, instinct, and skill. Some characters from earlier novels show up and the new ones are well drawn. I enjoyed every page of this finely written novel. | |
| <u>The Beat Goes On</u> | Rankin, Ian | ***** | <u>9/15/15</u> | <p>Abundance. I am often entertained by reading crime fiction. One of my favorite protagonists is the detective John Rebus created by Ian Rankin. While I've read Rebus novels in the past, I've never read any of the short stories, so I was overwhelmed and delighted by the scope and abundance of the 31 stories in the collection titled, <u>The Beat Goes On</u>. From rookie to role model, the Rebus stories in this collection were a delight to read, and will likely entertain any reader who enjoys character-driven crime fiction.</p> |  |
| <u>The Complaints</u> | Rankin, Ian | ***** | <u>5/8/11</u> | <p>Roles. About a hundred pages into Ian Rankin's latest detective novel, <u>The Complaints</u>, my grief at the loss of long-time series protagonist Inspector Rebus departed. The protagonist of this novel is Malcolm Fox, and all he shares in common with Rebus is police work. Rankin presents and develops Fox as a complex character and places him in a complex plot with challenging twists and turns for readers to navigate as Rankin explores the roles that we play and how characters can transcend their roles and be victims of roles, often at the same time. It was when I realized how much I liked the novel and Fox that I let my grief for Rebus pass. Then I relaxed and enjoyed this finely written, interesting and entertaining detective novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The Impossible Dead</u> | Rankin, Ian | ***** | <u>2/3/12</u> | <p>Outsider. Ian Rankin is a master of character-based crime fiction, and his skills are prodigious in his latest Malcolm Fox novel titled, <u>The Impossible Dead</u>. Fox is a police detective outsider, assigned to the professional standards unit or internal affairs, called by most, the Complaints. Sent to the Fife Constabulary on a case, he ends up investigating</p> |  |


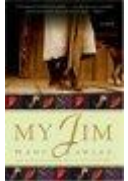
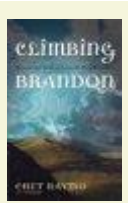

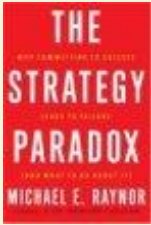
murder, while being drawn back home to visit his ill father and repair his relationship with his sister. Fox is a complex individual that Rankin creates in ways that make him familiar, fully human, and prompts readers to care for what happens to him. Rankin provides realistic dialogue, a captivating plot, and deep character development that will appeal to all readers who like those elements in well-written fiction.

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| <u>The Naming of the Dead</u> | Rankin, Ian | *** | <u>Aug 07</u> | Demonstration. Inspector John Rebus returns for the eighteenth time as the G8 summit arrives in Scotland to media frenzy, demonstrations, and murder. The names of the dead are spoken so they'd know they weren't forgotten. |  |
| <u>Watchman</u> | Rankin, Ian | *** | <u>July 08</u> | Spies. First U.S. edition of a 1988 spy novel from author who otherwise wrote detective mysteries. Reliable entertainment, especially for those readers who like spy novels. |  |
| <u>Westwind</u> | Rankin, Ian | **** | <u>2/14/20</u> | Prescient. Ian Rankin wrote the novel, <u>Westwind</u> , in 1990, but it was first published in the United States in 2020. This is a thrilling story of alliances and betrayal that stands up well thirty years later, and in many ways was prescient about today's world. While this novel is nothing like the author's Rebus series, the plot is entertaining, the characters interesting and the story plausible. |  |
| <u>The Culture Code</u> | Rapaille, Clotaire | *** | <u>Sept 06</u> | Congruity. Marketing guru and psychoanalyst describes a process for distilling why people do what they do in different cultures into a code which allows marketers to tailor messages in ways that resonate for targeted audiences. |  |

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| Mazel Tov: Celebrities' Bar and Bat Mitzvahs | Rappaport, Jill | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| A Diet of Worms | Rasmussen, Erik | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| How Full Is Your Bucket? Positive Strategies for Work and Life | Rath, Tom and Donald O. Clifton | *** | Jan 05 | Overflowing. Grandson and late grandfather (co-author of Now, Discover Your Strengths) present results of 50 years of research showing that positive interactions are good for all. |  |
| What Unites Us: Reflections on Patriotism | Rather, Dan | *** | 1/12/18 | Optimism. Dan Rather has written a book of reflective essays titled, What Unites Us: Reflections on Patriotism . Often sentimental in tone, Rather reminds readers of what makes us strong. Any reader looking for a primer on good citizenship can look to this book for hope and guidance. Despite all the expressed concerns about divisions in American society, Rather expresses optimism that we continue to share common values and our patriotism can draw us together. |  |
| The Mastermind: Drugs. Empire. Murder. Betrayal. | Ratliff, Evan | **** | 4/4/19 | Gripping. Investigative journalist Evan Ratliff tells the story of criminal genius Paul Calder Le Roux in a book titled, The Mastermind: Drugs. Empire. Murder. Betrayal. . 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 |  |

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| | | | | 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. | |
| <u>The Ideas That Made America: A Brief History</u> | Ratner-Rosenhagan, Jennifer | *** | <u>3/26/20</u> | <p>Survey. In her book titled, <u>The Ideas That Made America: A Brief History</u>, Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagan offers a brisk survey of key thinkers and ideas from the Enlightenment to today, and how those ideas have helped shape the United States of America. After I finished reading the book, I was mildly satisfied. I didn't necessarily learn anything new. I felt I was exposed to one person's assessment of some influential ideas and placed them in context with evolving life in America and with each other idea. If a reader knows a lot about any of the ideas she surveys in this book, that section may seem too light. I think the purpose of the book was to give an overview, and let readers decide where they would do more reading. I realized it's time for me to revisit some of the transcendentalists. Read a sample and decide where your thinking about thinking needs to go next.</p> |  |
| Overhaul: An Insider's Account of the Obama Administration's Emergency Rescue of the Auto Industry | Rattner, Steven | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| <u>The Happiness Curve</u> | Rauch, Jonathan | ***** | <u>11/17/18</u> | <p>Natural. The middle stage of life has often been referred to as a "crisis." Using lots of data in a book titled, <u>The Happiness Curve</u>, Jonathan Rauch describes this part of life as a natural and essential slump that leads to an incline toward greater happiness. One friend of mine many years ago</p> |  |

called his midlife transition a period of “values clarification.” Rauch would agree. If you’re in a midlife slump, relax. It gets better. Read the book and understand how and why.

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| <u>Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms</u> | Ravitch, Diane | *** | | A comprehensive explanation of what worked and what didn’t in all the major attempts at school reforms during the 20 th century by the foremost authority on the subject. |  |
| My Jim | Rawles, Nancy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| Climbing Brandon: Science and Faith on Ireland’s Holy Mountain | Raymo, Chet | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>Eating crow : a novel</u> | Rayner, Jay | ** | <u>Dec 04</u> | Sorry. Light and unusual novel of restaurant critic who turns professional apologist following his apology for the suicide of a chef after a biting review. |  |
| <u>The Strategy Paradox: Why committing to success leads to failure (and what to do about it)</u> | Raynor, Michael E. | *** | <u>10/24/09</u> | Luck. Anyone who plays a role in strategy will find much of interest in Michael Raynor’s book, <u>The Strategy Paradox</u> . The paradox he explores in this book is described by the subtitle: the same strategy that can lead to tremendous success can also lead to colossal failure. Luck plays a huge role in how perfectly reasonable strategic choices turn out. You have to commit to a certain future to get something done. A big bet on achieving a planned outcome can be a high risk dice roll that leads to failure. Raynor proposes a balanced approach to strategy. The |  |

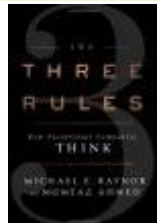
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| | | | | management of uncertainty requires an attention and a vigilance that can seem at odds with a specific commitment of resources to achieve a desired outcome. The risk reward tradeoffs can change rapidly, and falling in love with one approach can lead to disaster. An executive reader will come away from The Strategy Paradox with useful ideas and challenges especially on who within an organization should be doing what when it comes to strategy and the management of uncertainty. | |
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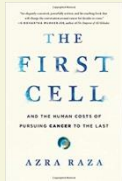
The Three Rules: How Exceptional Companies Think

Raynor, Michael E. and Muntaz Ahmed

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



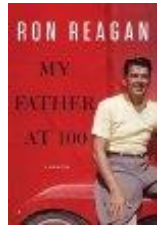
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| The First Cell: And the Human Costs of Pursuing Cancer to the Last | Raza, Azra | **** | 1/10/20 | Blunt. Experienced oncologist Azra Raza offers in her book titled, The First Cell: And the Human Costs of Pursuing Cancer to the Last , an informed and personal assessment of the state of cancer treatment. Her blunt conclusion is that we need to do a reset. We are wasting resources. Our cancer treatments come too late and do a lot of harm to healthy cells. We should refocus on early detection and prevention. Widespread and targeted late stage treatment has costs that she describes through cases presented in this book, including her husband's leukemia. When I finished this book, I had the sense that this doctor knows her stuff, and that the President of the United States should appoint Raza to direct the allocation of cancer research funds from the government. |  |
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My Father at
100

Reagan, Ron

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011

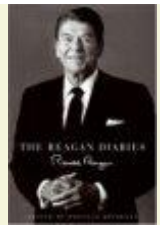


[The Reagan Diaries](#)

Reagan, Ronald

[Nov 07](#)

Chronicle. 785 pages of diary entries from both Presidential terms chronicle reflections on the big issues of the day alongside haircuts, movies and expressions of love for the First Lady.



[Martin Sloane](#)

Redhill, Michael

[Sep 02](#)

Well-written portrait of an artist: his recent life; formative years; a lover's search for him.

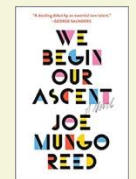


[We Begin Our Ascent](#)

Reed, Joe Mungo

[8/3/18](#)

Loyalty. Any reader looking to read sports related fiction should consider Joe Mungo Reed's debut novel titled, [We Begin Our Ascent](#). Sol is a professional cyclist and his wife, Liz, works in a research lab. They are new parents and face an array of challenges as Sol rides in *Le Tour de France* and stumbles into doping. Reed explores a theme of loyalty, Sol to the team, and Liz and Sol to each other. Reed's writing is top-notch, and you need not be a cycling fan to appreciate this novel. Anyone who has faced one's own ambition and goals will appreciate the ways in which Reed explores competition and the consequences of a powerful desire to win.

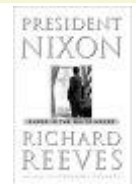


[President Nixon: Alone in the White House](#)

Reeves, Richard

[Jun 02](#)

Consistent and repeated images of Nixon working on his own from 1969 through 1973. Adds to understanding the enigmatic Richard Nixon.

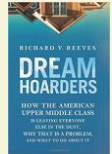


[Dream Hoarders: How the American Upper Middle Class Is Leaving Everyone Else in the Dust, Why That Is a Problem, and What to Do about It](#)

Reeves, Richard V.

[7/20/17](#)

Ouch. All parents want what is best for our children, and we will do everything we can to help them on their journey to become who they want to be. Among several themes in his book titled, [Dream Hoarders: How the American Upper Middle Class Is Leaving Everyone Else in the Dust, Why That Is a Problem, and What to Do about It](#), Brookings senior fellow Richard V. Reeves explores the ways in which the top 20% of earners are securing advantages for us and their progeny. Ouch. If you thought economic inequality is because of the earnings of the top small fraction of 1%, Reeves wants you to look in the mirror. Reeves forces upper middle class readers to think about class in the United States, and the consequences of ongoing inequality as the upper middle class solidifies its position across generations. He punches holes in the myth of a meritocracy because of the advantages that come with birth into an upper middle class family. Agree or disagree, this book is worth reading by anyone interested in public policy.

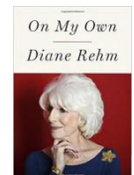


[On My Own](#)

Rehm, Diane

[4/6/16](#)

Conversational. Readers who have listened to *The Diane Rehm Show* will hear the voice and tone of Ms. Rehm on every page of her memoir titled, [On My Own](#). While much of the book covers the death of her husband and her grief at that loss, there is also a lifelong backstory inserted, and a message about supporting the right to die. This is a heartfelt and candid account of a difficult time in life and the impetus it provided for the next chapter in the author's life. Every fan of Diane Rehm will enjoy reading this book, and for those few who have never heard her syndicated radio show, this book will introduce you to a great American treasure.



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| <u>When My Time Comes: Conversations About Whether Those Who Are Dying Should Have the Right to Determine When Life Should End</u> | Rehm, Diane | ***** | <u>11/17/20</u> | <p>Preparation. End of life care in the United States takes many different forms based on where one lives. In her book titled, <u>When My Time Comes: Conversations About Whether Those Who Are Dying Should Have the Right to Determine When Life Should End</u>, Diane Rehm interviews lots of people about the issue and presents support for her position, medical help in dying, while allowing space for those who have other views. We do all kinds of preparation in our lives, and end of life planning is just one more consideration for each of us to make. Any reader interested in gathering information on this topic can find a strong case for the author's viewpoint as well as a wide enough range of alternatives to assist in making personal decisions or advocate changes in laws.</p> |  |
| <u>Toward Commitment: A Dialogue About Marriage</u> | Rehm, Diane and John Rehm | * | <u>Dec 02</u> | <p>Eavesdropping. Listen in on reflections and dialogue about marriage from radio talk show host and retired lawyer. Unless your own relationship is in deep trouble, or unless your morbid sense of curiosity about someone else's marital reality is strong, take a pass.</p> |  |
| <u>Centennial Crisis: The Disputed Election of 1876</u> | Rehnquist, William H. | *** | <u>Aug 04</u> | <p>Robes. Supreme Court Chief Justice provides backgrounds of justices, Tilden, Hayes and a context for justices accepting extrajudicial roles, with striking parallels to the 2000 election.</p> |  |
| <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</p> |  |

schemes twist and turn, with Riske in the middle of everything. Fans of action thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.

Network. I've felt a little apprehensive about all my iDevices after reading Christopher Reich's novel titled, Invasion of Privacy. This fast-paced suspense novel presents a surveillance system that takes the surrender of liberty to a whole new level. Reich knows how to engage a reader's interest, and in this novel he explores money and power. If you've given any thought at all to cybersecurity, or if you've noticed an increase in surveillance cameras, chances are you'll enjoy how Reich takes pieces of our current situation, and leads us to a very logical and frightening conclusion.

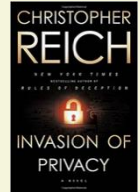
Alliances. Christopher Reich presents a third installment in his "Rules" series of spy thrillers titled, Rules of Betrayal. Doctor Jonathan Ransom and his wife Emma the spy return in another fast-paced heart-stopping thriller. In this installment, there's more Jonathan than Emma, and more questions about loyalty and who works for whom. As in the earlier novels, the efforts of well-developed characters can seem superhuman, but their emotions are familiar. Those readers who enjoy spy novels and thrillers are most likely to enjoy this novel.

Rooked. Things are not as they appear and people are not who they say they are in this page-turning thriller. Readers are likely to be both hooked and rooked.

Invasion of Privacy

Reich,
Christopher

11/6/15



Rules of Betrayal

Reich,
Christopher

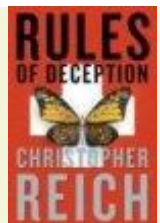
7/20/10



Rules of Deception

Reich,
Christopher

Nov 08

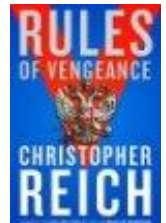


Rules of Vengeance

Reich,
Christopher

7/2/09

Superdoc. Christopher Reich has reprised characters from his suspense-filled novel Rules of Deception for his latest thriller titled Rules of Vengeance. Protagonists Emma Ransom and her husband Dr. Jonathan Ransom continue in this novel to display a range of skills that border on the superhuman. While Rules of Vengeance is a sequel, a reader need not have read the earlier book to enjoy this one. Jonathan Ransom is a physician who lately has been working for Doctors Without Borders in Africa. Emma is a spy, and who she really works for is part of the thrill of this story. There are few doctors who could escape as many close calls as Jonathan Ransom faces over the 400+ pages of Rules of Vengeance. Emma's ability to appear and disappear earns her the appellation, "the ghost." Reich excels at maintaining a pace that can be heart-pounding at times. The chapters move quickly, and surprises are frequent enough to become expected whenever the plot seems to be reaching a satisfying conclusion. Readers who enjoy action thrillers are likely to find ample reading pleasure in Rules of Vengeance, especially if you overlook the ability of the two main characters to overcome all odds and do things that only the rarest of humans could achieve.



The Devil's Banker

Reich,
Christopher

**

Read, but not reviewed.

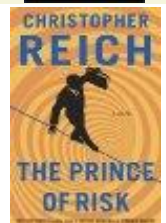


The Prince of Risk

Reich,
Christopher


2/7/14

Combination. Christopher Reich packs two thrillers into one in his novel, The Prince of Risk. One of the thrillers involves a financial high wire act by a hedge fund manager who bets the house on a devaluation of the Chinese currency. The other thriller is a conspiracy to spy on 57,000 influential



people around the world who are key players in business and government. Reich grabs the attention of readers with the violence he presents in the first chapter. The desire to answer the question, “what was that about?,” draws readers into the rest of the plot. Those readers who like action thrillers, especially when there’s a financial angle, are those most likely to enjoy the time spent with this entertaining novel.

Riske. Fans of thriller novels are those readers most likely to enjoy the latest from Christopher Reich titled, The Take. Simon Riske is a well-developed and interesting protagonist, full of skills and an interesting backstory. The fast-paced plot twists entertained me thoroughly. Riske faces some worthy adversaries as he tries to settle some scores of his own while carrying out a clandestine job.

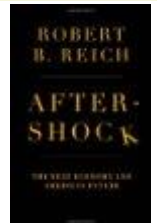
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|-----------------|--------------------|-------|----------------|--|---|
| <u>The Take</u> | Reich, Christopher | ***** | <u>6/20/18</u> | |  |
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Aftershock: The Next Economy and America's Future

Reich, Robert B.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011



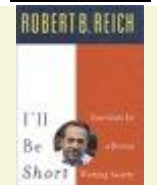
I'll Be Short: Essentials for a Decent Working Society

Reich, Robert B.

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Oct 02

His Long Suit. Former Labor Secretary Reich presents his straightforward, unabashed, liberal opinions in a lively way, and with great passion.

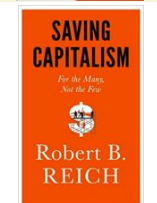


Saving Capitalism: For the Many, Not the Few

Reich, Robert B.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



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|---|------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Supercapitalism : The Transformation of Business, Democracy, and Everyday Life</u> | Reich, Robert B. | *** | <u>Nov 07</u> | <p>Citizenship. Former Labor Secretary pleads with us to separate our role as citizen from those of consumer and investor and reclaim what we have ceded to corporations. Separate capitalism from democracy and stop corporations from setting the rules.</p> |  |
| <u>The Common Good</u> | Reich, Robert B. | **** | <u>5/3/18</u> | <p>Cogent. Former Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich has written a short book titled, <u>The Common Good</u>. Instead of engaging in the latest form of partisan finger pointing, Reich calls for us to consider how the common good is a fundamental element of our society that has been eroding. Reich chronicles the key actions by a variety of individuals and groups that have moved norms of behavior from a focus on “we” to an exclusive focus on “me.” He reminds us about something important that we are veering away from by our own practices and what we are willing to tolerate from others.</p> |  |
| Remembrance of things Paris : sixty years of writing from Gourmet | Reichl, Ruth | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>A Fine Mess: A Global Quest for a Simpler, Fairer, and More Efficient Tax System</u> | Reid, T.R. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Health Care</u> | Reid, T.R. | **** | <u>9/19/09</u> | <p>Morality. For readers open to listening to a calm and reasoned exploration of how health care is managed by countries around the world, T.R. Reid’s book, <u>The Healing of America</u>, fills the bill. He defines four basic models that are being followed, each of which is used to some degree in the United States. He sets a low key emotional tone for the</p> |  |

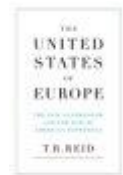
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| | | | | book, and lightens the top further by describing the many approaches used around the world to treat his own bum shoulder. I came away from the book with more light than heat about systems used in Canada and Europe, and the ways in which treatment decisions are made. In his analysis of our unique approach in the United States, Reid focuses on the key decision ahead being a moral one: do we have the will to provide all our citizens with health care? | |
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The United States of Europe : the new superpower and the end of American supremacy

Reid, T.R.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



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|---|--------------|---|------------------------|--|--|
| Hard Sell: The Evolution of a Viagra Salesman | Reidy, Jamie | * | Oct 05 | Slacker. Few readers need Reidy's prescription: how to con your employer, not do your job and quit when on the brink of achieving success. Take a pass. | |
|---|--------------|---|------------------------|--|--|

[We Are Unprepared](#)

Reilly, Meg Little

[12/20/16](#)

Storm. Don't read Meg Little Reilly's debut novel titled, [We Are Unprepared](#) while you are sitting at home awaiting the arrival of a superstorm. We usually want fiction to take us away from our own reality, and that's exactly what Reilly did for me when I read this novel at home under fair skies. A young couple, Pia and Ash, have moved from Brooklyn to a small Vermont town in a quest for a simpler life with greater contact with the land and more self-reliance. Forecasts of a superstorm have divided the community into the preppers who are hunkering down individually and authorities who want to shore up community defenses. Pia joins the preppers and Ash the authorities. Reilly uses the



tension of the coming storm to drive the plot while she closely examines the psychological issues at play and explores the relationship between Pia and Ash. Reilly unveils all the ways in which we can be unprepared for what life brings, and readers who enjoy literary fiction and are willing to try out a debut novel are those most likely to appreciate this book.

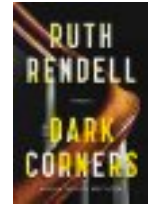
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|---|----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| I Remember Me | Reiner, Carl | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>My Anecdotal Life</u> | Reiner, Carl | *** | <u>June 03</u> | Yuks. Funny and poignant stories from Reiner's life make readers feel like we're sitting across the dinner table listening to him relate anecdotes that lead us to laughing or crying with him. |  |
| NNNNN | Reiner, Carl | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| The First Desire | Reisman, Nancy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama | Remnick, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |

Dark Corners

Rendell, Ruth

5/4/16

Carl. If it turns out that Dark Corners is the last novel by prolific author Ruth Rendell, readers can appreciate her ending on a note of great success. Protagonist Carl Martin is an unusual man with a host of strange relationships. Rendell squeezes every possible psychological stress out of Carl as we watch his life progress. Misfortune in the lives of others can provide great entertainment for some readers, and Rendell offers plenty of misfortune in this novel.



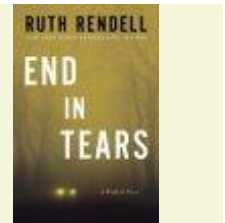
End in Tears

Rendell, Ruth

**

Jan 07

Exposition. This installment of the Chief Inspector Wexford series was the first Rendell novel read, and it may not have been an ideal starting place. Somewhat tedious, with lots of unnecessary exposition.

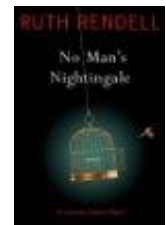


No Man's
Nightingale

Rendell, Ruth

5/16/14

Retired. Some of the fictional detectives I like most seemed frozen in time, while others age along with the rest of us. The 24th Inspector Wexford novel by Ruth Rendell titled, No Man's Nightingale, presents this character very well settled into his retirement. His current project is reading *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. What gets him out of his reading chair is the murder of a female vicar who is biracial and a single mother. Social issues of the present trump the story of the past, so Reg Wexford leaps at the request of Detective Superintendent Burden to join him on the case. Rendell does her usual fine job of laying out lots of suspects and letting Wexford be himself. Readers who like this series and detective crime fiction in general are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



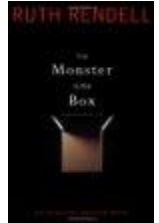
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|---|---------------|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Not in the Flesh</u> | Rendell, Ruth | *** | <u>Aug 08</u> | <p>Desire. Long-buried bodies provide the backdrop for Chief Inspector Wexford to explore the ways in which desire directs human behavior.</p> |  |
| <u>Portobello</u> | Rendell, Ruth | *** | <u>12/21/10</u> | <p>Neighbors. While there is crime in Ruth Rendell's novel, <u>Portobello</u>, I found this book to be a portrait of a neighborhood, and a character study about habits, relationships, and the interconnected lives of the rich and poor who live as neighbors. In some ways, Rendell does for Portobello Road what Alexander McCall Smith has done for Edinburgh. Rendell brings each character to life with efficiency and clarity, and places them in situations that move the plot along briskly over the three pages of the novel. Her skill entails packing a lot of people and action into a setting that she presents with just enough description to make the place come alive. Any reader who appreciates a dose of social commentary injected into a well crafted story is likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The Girl Next Door</u> | Rendell, Ruth | *** | <u>12/27/14</u> | <p>Wrinklies. The elderly characters in this novel annoyed the hell out of me. Now that I've dissed the wrinklies and gotten that out of my system, I can offer a few comments about Ruth Rendell's novel titled, <u>The Girl Next Door</u>. We learn of a murder at the beginning of the book, so there is no mystery as to who did it. The plot involves the cast of characters decades later and their lives and connections to that past event and to each other. Readers who like crime fiction that explores psychological insight are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel. I struggled through to the end, finding the development of each character a bit tedious, and I caught myself not caring a wit about any of them.</p> |  |

[The Monster in the Box: An Inspector Wexford Novel](#)

Rendell, Ruth

[1/9/10](#)

Obsession. Ruth Rendell has said that the 22nd Inspector Wexford novel, [The Monster in the Box](#), will be the last. If that's so, it's a worthy finale. Reginald Wexford is one of the most finely developed fictional detectives, who exudes confidence and professionalism, all the while absorbed with coming to terms with the lives of others and why they do what they do. The monster in the title is Eric Targo, whom Wexford encountered early in his police career. Convinced then and now that Targo is a murderer, Wexford narrows his focus to come to terms with Targo. Rendell does a great job in moving the action forward as she also provides a look to the past to understand the context of current activities of both Wexford and Targo. Any mystery fan will love the fine writing in [The Monster in the Box](#).

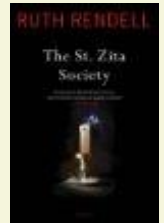


[The St. Zita Society](#)

Rendell, Ruth

[11/8/12](#)

Doors. I can almost picture Ruth Rendell sitting on a bench and observing the comings and goings of residents and their employees on a block in London. She imagined the upstairs and downstairs lives of these people and presents them in a tightly written novel titled, [The St. Zita Society](#), a reference to a newly formed association of the employees on this street. In fewer than three hundred pages, Rendell's introduces a cast of characters, develops them vividly, and presents a plot that was absorbing and entertaining. She takes us behind closed doors and reveals the life inside. Readers who like finely written crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this book.



[The Vault](#)

Rendell, Ruth

[1/18/12](#)

Advisor. The retired life of former chief inspector Reginald Wexford takes on spikes of adrenalin in the latest novel titled [The Vault](#), in this popular series by Ruth Rendell. Wexford has been asked to assist Tom Ede of the Metropolitan Police as an unpaid advisor helping solve a complicated



multiple murder case. Wexford relishes the work, and finds himself forgetting that he's no longer on the force since the work he is doing is so familiar. Rendell adds complexity to Wexford's family life and those events close to home make Wexford even sharper as he unravels a complicated puzzle one piece at a time. Readers who like finely written mystery or crime novels are those most likely to enjoy this book.

Neighbors. The neighbors in and around Lichfield House provide the interest and tension in Ruth Rendell's novel, Tigerlily's Orchids. She presents these characters in ways that increase a reader's interest as we come to see that these people are not who they seem to be. The ways in which their lives become intertwined reveal Rendell's writing skills and provide rich entertainment for readers. The fact that there is a murder becomes incidental to this mystery writer's ability to keep readers engaged.

Tigerlily's Orchids

Rendell, Ruth

7/9/11

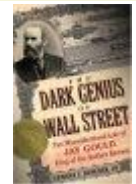


The Dark
Genius of Wall
Street

Renehan, Jr.,
Edward J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



Late Migrations:
A Natural
History of Love
and Loss

Renkl, Margaret

3/6/20

Observations. I guarantee that after you read Margaret Renkl's book titled, Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss, you will notice more as you meander through the world. If at the least, you look up from a screen and into the great outdoors, you will observe something beautiful. As we read the ways in which she explores her own grief, using finely crafted prose, we can reflect about our own losses with new insight. I may never again consider something in nature common or ordinary. I endeavor to notice more and recognize



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| | | | | with clarity my place in the world for however long it lasts. | |
| American Mafia: A History of Its Rise to Power | Repetto, Thomas A. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Dogs of God | Reston, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>A Rift in the Earth: Art, Memory, and the Fight for a Vietnam War Memorial</u> | Reston, Jr., James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| The Conviction of Richard Nixon | Reston, Jr., James | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| Adam Haberberg | Reza, Yasmina | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Prisoner: My 544 Days in an Iranian Prison—Solitary Confinement, a</u> | Rezaian, Jason | **** | <u>3/18/19</u> | 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</u> |  |

[Sham Trial, High-Stakes Diplomacy, and the Extraordinary Efforts It Took to Get Me Out](#)

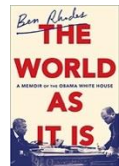
[Extraordinary Efforts It Took to Get Me Out](#), Washington Post journalist Jason Rezia tells us the harrowing story of his ordeal in Iran during 2014 and 2015. While he writes from the perspective of his life after he returned home to the United States, I marveled at his description of how he dealt 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.

[The World As It Is: A Memoir of the Obama White House](#)

Rhodes, Ben

[9/24/18](#)

Clearheaded. I enjoyed every minute I spent reading Ben Rhodes finely written book titled, [The World As It Is: A Memoir of the Obama White House](#). Rhodes worked as a speechwriter and deputy national security advisor, serving as an aide to President Obama during the entire administration. His reflections are clear and finely written: readers get an insider's view of the White House, and readers get to spend time with an intelligent young man whose idealism and perspective and humanity appear on every well-written page of this book. Many political memoirs are so slanted in perspective that they come across as grossly incomplete. Here, we get a broad perspective, warts and all, of a young man's complete and formative experience in the job and opportunity of a lifetime.

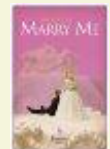


[Marry Me](#)

Rhodes, Dan

[12/27/14](#)

Funny. I laughed throughout the witty new book by Dan Rhodes titled, [Marry Me](#). In the course of 79 short and shorter stories, Rhodes riffs on marital relationships from good times to bad and worse. Newlyweds might find the content a bit off putting, but anyone married for at least five years, especially those who are happily married, will find many pages of finely written wit. Those who are



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| | | | | comfortably divorced will also find a lot of funny writing throughout these stories. | |
| Arsenals of Folly: Nuclear Weapons in the Cold War | Rhodes, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| <u>Hedy's Folly: The Life and Breakthrough Inventions of Hedy Lamarr, the Most Beautiful Woman in the World</u> | Rhodes, Richard | *** | <u>5/18/12</u> | Spectrum. If, like me, you know nothing about the scientific achievements of the late actress, Hedy Lamarr, consider reading Richard Rhodes' book, <u>Hedy's Folly: The Life and Breakthrough Inventions of Hedy Lamarr, the Most Beautiful Woman in the World</u> . Lamarr worked with composer George Antheil and they came up with a technology during World War II that is used today in cell phones: frequency hopping. Thanks to Rhodes' lively writing, this book will entertain interested readers from beginning to end. |  |
| Happiness | Ricard, Matthieu | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Blood Canticle</u> | Rice, Ann | ** | <u>Jan 04</u> | Love. Rice claims this is her last Vampire Chronicles novel. Considering how Lestat is presented as a kind and generous lover, she may be right. Imaginative, as always, and not very well written. |  |
| <u>Angel Time: The Songs of the Seraphim</u> | Rice, Anne | *** | <u>2/12/10</u> | Heavenly. The post-vampire writing of Anne Rice probably attracts a different audience, although her writing remains constant in delivering an engaging and imaginative story that captivates readers. Her latest novel, <u>Angel Time</u> , presents a contemporary character, Toby O'Dare, who meets an angel after |  |

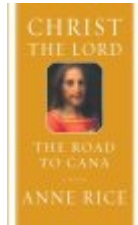
Toby has murdered someone in a California hotel room. This angel needs Toby for a mission in 13th century England, and Toby agrees to go there to help people who are outcasts and suffering persecution. Rice's skill in plot, character and dialogue provides reliable and escapist entertainment for those readers who lean toward this genre. Of course anyone who believes in guardian angels will be delighted by [Angel Time](#).

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|---|------------|-----|-------------------------|--|---|
| Blackwood Farm | Rice, Anne | ** | Jan 03 | <p>How r u gonna keep 'em? New vampire Tarquin Blackwood narrates this tedious tale to old vampire standby Lestat, who should have killed Quinn to make a long story short. Usual Rice.</p> |  |
| Blood Communion | Rice, Anne | *** | 12/6/18 | <p>Fans. Longtime fans of Anne Rice's Vampire Chronicles are those readers most likely to enjoy the latest installment titled, Blood Communion. The huge cast of characters might put off new readers, as would the references back to many earlier novels. This relatively short novel was quick to read, and since I've read the earlier novels, the large ensemble didn't divert me from the current story. The series seems a bit tired to me, but while I've been a loyal reader, I've never been a huge fan. If you've liked the earlier novels or the movies, chances are you'll enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt | Rice, Anne | *** | Jan 06 | <p>Childlike. The doyenne of vampire novels shifts to Christianity, and offers a version of what the life of Jesus may have been like at the time of the return from Egypt. She makes the 7 year old Jesus the first person narrator, adding a childlike quality to the writing, endearing to some and irritating to other readers.</p> |  |

Christ the Lord:
The Road to
Cana

Rice, Anne

Read, but not reviewed.



Of Love and Evil

Rice, Anne

12/21/10

Installment. Anne Rice's second installment in her Songs of the Seraphim series is titled Of Love and Evil. Protagonist Toby O'Dare returns and is sent on an assignment back to Rome in the 16th century. The story is imaginative and entertaining, and very brief, coming in at under two hundred pages. I recall that Rice's vampire novels were longer and more intricately written. I felt that this novel was more like a chapter in her early novels. Perhaps the dark side was easier to expand than the stories of angels. The early part of this novel refers back to the first in the series, and a cliffhanger ending prepares readers for a sequel. Those readers who started the series will enjoy spending a short while with the second. First time readers can sample here, and move back if interested. This is light entertainment that the author seems to be dribbling out in small installments.



Prince Lestat

Rice, Anne

11/21/14

Ensemble. The progenitor of the modern vampire novel, Anne Rice, is back after a decade with another book in this genre titled, Prince Lestat. I spend a pleasant few days during an early cold snap reading this novel in my warm home and recalling when and where I read all the earlier novels in this series. Fans of the series are those most likely to enjoy this updating and maturing of the huge cast of characters reprised from the earlier novels along with new ones updated for this decade. This ensemble cast requires a reference guide, which Rice offers for any of us who may have trouble keeping them all these characters straight. While I



read this novel quickly, I noted just how much tedious exposition detracts from the core story. First time readers who start here may find the action timid, the dialogue brief, and the exposition somewhat long. By the time I finished, I concluded that I've enjoyed these chronicles from the beginning, and was content along with many of the characters that they have become mature and settled in their lives.

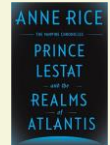
Makers. Fans of Anne Rice's Vampire Chronicles will enjoy the twelfth installment titled, Prince Lestat and the Realms of Atlantis. Rice has been writing about some of these characters for five decades and she continues to develop them individually and collectively. That means fans will be excited by the return of old friends, and may enjoy seeing them behave in new ways. A whole new group of non-human characters appear in this installment. The Makers of carefully designed creatures sent them on a mission and things haven't quite worked out as expected. All the backstory and new adventures will provide hours of reading pleasure to fans of this series.

Mutation. Prolific author Anne Rice has returned to her fan base with the first 400 page novel in what readers will hope is a new series. The Wolf Gift features protagonist Reuben Golding, who has become a werewolf. Similar to the characters in her vampire novels, these werewolves are heroic monsters who battle evildoers. While long philosophical passages may bore some readers, the action moves quickly, there's a love story, and the contemporary setting brings the story to life. This is a satisfying story to those readers who have come to enjoy Rice.

Prince Lestat and the Realms of Atlantis

Rice, Anne

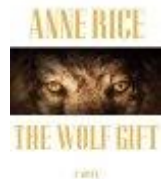
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The Wolf Gift

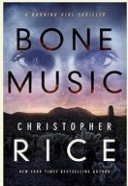
Rice, Anne

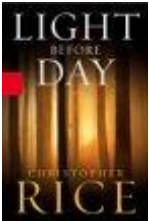
3/2/12




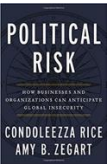
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| <u>The Wolves of Midwinter</u> | Rice, Anne | **** | <u>3/22/14</u> | <p>Christmastime. The second entertaining novel in Anne Rice's Wolf Gift series is titled <u>The Wolves of Midwinter</u>. Fans of Rice will find two strong elements in this novel: the development of interesting characters, and an engaging plot. Rice slowly conveys more information about the man wolf, or morphenkind. Many characters are reprised from the first novel, and readers may be more satisfied with this installment if the earlier book is read first. For fans of Rice's vampire novels, this new type of immortal beings will be both familiar and different. This novel is set at Christmastime, and the nature of family and children is explored in a gentle way. Most satisfied readers will await what happens in the next installment in this series.</p> |  |
| <u>Ramses the Damned: The Passion of Cleopatra</u> | Rice, Anne and Christopher Rice | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Blind Fall | Rice, Christopher | * | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Blood Echo</u> | Rice, Christopher | **** | <u>6/10/20</u> | <p>Pacing. The second novel in Christopher Rice's Burning Girl series is titled, <u>Blood Echo</u>. If you've not read the first novel, go ahead and start there. In this book, Burning Girl Charlotte Rowe is back with her superpower and on a mission that brings trouble to her hometown. Rice starts this novel with a rapidly paced plot and maintains momentum that will keep readers turning the pages for longer than one planned. Just when we're invested in one plot line, things turn and get very interesting. Fans of</p> |  |

fast-paced thrillers and this series are those most likely to enjoy this installment and look forward to the next.

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| <u>Bone Music</u> | Rice, Christopher | *** | <u>3/3/18</u> | <p>Origin. I don't know how many books Christopher Rice plans for his Burning Girl series, but the first novel titled, <u>Bone Music</u>, lays a solid foundation on which to build multiple stories. Protagonist Charlotte Rowe is Burning Girl named for a formative event in her childhood. Having been raised by serial killers, her nurturing was minimal to say the least. She has thrown off the power of others to control her and thanks to receiving an experimental drug she has acquired a power that she calls bone music. This opening novel brings us to the moment after she has just used her power to fight evil and leads us to her choice of what to do next.</p> |  |
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| Light Before Day | Rice, Christopher | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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| The Heavens Rise | Rice, Christopher | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
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| <u>Political Risk: How Businesses and Organizations Can Anticipate Global Insecurity</u> | Rice, Condoleeza and Amy Zegart | **** | <u>8/3/18</u> | <p>Primer. Every business faces political risk, but not all have tried to manage this risk in an orderly manner. Former United States Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice has written a book with Amy Zegart based on a course that they have taught together at Stanford. Titled, <u>Political Risk: How Businesses and Organizations Can Anticipate</u></p> |  |
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Global Insecurity, this is a primer on the steps to follow when managing risk, especially political risk. What could have become a boring business book became enlivened through the stories of the successes and failures of companies described in this book.

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| <u>Democracy: Stories from the Long Road to Freedom</u> | Rice, Condoleezza | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family</u> | Rice, Condoleezza | *** | <u>1/4/11</u> | <p>Sweet. Condoleezza Rice's memoir, <u>Extraordinary, Ordinary People</u> is a loving recollection of her parents and their family life. Whatever you think of Rice and her politics, you're likely to enjoy reading about this family. Birmingham Alabama in the 1960s was a hotbed of racism and the Rice family's experience of that time and place was one of the most finely written parts of the book. Music, football and religion are covered with grace and ease, bringing to life people and places. The struggles with illness and loss in the Rice family will resonate for any reader. This is a sweet story about people who loved and cared for each other. Any reader looking for a happy memoir to read will find much to enjoy from this book.</p> |  |
| <u>No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington</u> | Rice, Condoleezza | *** | <u>2/3/12</u> | <p>Personal. It took a lot of perseverance for me to slog through the 750+ pages of Condoleezza Rice's memoir of her time in Washington, titled <u>No Higher Honor</u>. Rice tells her side of the story of that time, following memoirs by Rumsfeld, Bush and Cheney, each of whom has told a version of the same events. Rice settles some scores with Rumsfeld and Cheney in a gentle way, and remains fully loyal to Bush, as readers would expect. While I disagree with most of the policies she pursued, I</p> |  |

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| | | | was charmed often while reading this book when she'd inject personal asides and anecdotes. Those lively paragraphs made up for dense chapters and reminded me of the humanity of political figures who can become depersonalized through the lens of policy differences. Partisans and fans of Rice will find this as required reading, and readers with a strong interest in contemporary politics are those most likely to enjoy this memoir. | |
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[Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For](#)

Rice, Susan

[3/13/20](#)

Optimistic. Some memoirs come across as inauthentic and lacking candor, especially when struggles are skipped over in favor of successes. In her memoir titled, [Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For](#), Susan Rice comes across as candid and complete: the good, the bad and the ugly are all presented for our consideration. The result is a book that lays out the high expectations she faced as she grew up, family troubles, and a smart and thoughtful career of service to the United States. Her life has been one rooted in optimism, and that spirit remains through the end of this memoir as she shares the lessons of her life with readers.

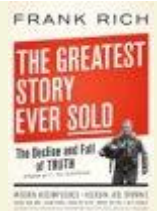


[The Greatest Story Ever Sold](#)

Rich, Frank

[Dec 06](#)

Polemic. Rich documents the ways in which the Bush administration presented a public relations version of reality that departed from the truth, and formed public opinions based on an alternate reality. We expect politicians to lie, but not this much.



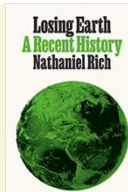
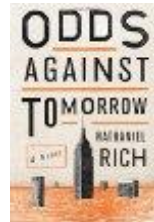

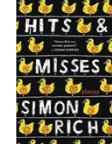


[King Zeno](#)

Rich, Nathaniel

Unread

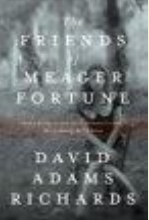
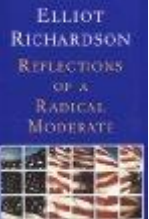
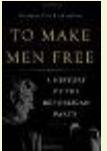

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

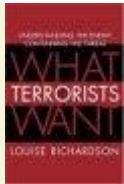




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| <u>Losing Earth: A Climate History</u> | Rich, Nathaniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Odds Against Tomorrow | Rich, Nathaniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| The Mayor's Tongue | Rich, Nathaniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| <u>Hits and Misses</u> | Rich, Simon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Spoiled Brats</u> | Rich, Simon | ***** | <u>4/11/15</u> | Clever. The clever, funny and imaginative stories in a collection by Simon Rich titled, <u>Spoiled Brats</u> , kept me amused and entertained from beginning to end. Rich observes our contemporary behavior closely and draws the humor out of our self-absorption. Any reader who needs a good laugh should pick up this collection and read any or all of the humorous stories by this very talented writer. I laughed a lot as I enjoyed and admired Rich's creativity. |  |
| <u>Make Trouble: Standing Up, Speaking Out, and Finding the Courage to</u> | Richards, Cecile | ***** | <u>10/5/18</u> | Activist. Cecile Richards' memoir is titled, <u>Make Trouble: Standing Up, Speaking Out, and Finding the Courage to Lead--My Life Story</u> . The former head of Planned Parenthood describes her life of activism with clarity through telling great stories. |  |

Lead--My Life Story

As the daughter of the late Texas governor, Ann Richards, Cecile Richards learned straight talking and outreach to the needy from early childhood. Her father was a civil rights attorney and their home was always abuzz with people supporting one cause or another. She worked as a labor organizer prior to leading Planned Parenthood. Women looking for positive role models in leadership positions are those readers most likely to appreciate the practical advice and guidance in this book. Thanks to leaders like Cecile Richards, more people have a voice in public affairs.

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|---|-------------------------|--------|-------------|--|---|
| The Friends of Meager Fortune | Richards, David Adams | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Reflections of a Radical Moderate</u> | Richardson, Elliot | *** | <u>2/00</u> | Learn more about one of the finest executives and public servants of his generation. |  |
| To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party | Richardson, Heather Cox | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| My Father the Spy: An Investigative Memoir | Richardson, John H. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |

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|---|--------------------|--------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| What Terrorists Want | Richardson, Louise | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>A Deadly Wandering: A Tale of Tragedy and Redemption in the Age of Attention</u> | Richtel, Matt | ***** | <u>11/15/14</u> | <p>Guilt. Accidents happen. During an early morning commute in 2006, two rocket scientists in Utah were killed in an auto accident caused by college student Reggie Shaw who was texting while driving. Matt Richtel presents the full story in a finely written book titled, <u>A Deadly Wandering: A Tale of Tragedy and Redemption in the Age of Attention</u>. I expected that the story warranted a brief magazine article, but not a full book, so I thought I'd turn a few pages and set the book aside. Instead, Richtel's fine writing about the case and about brain science drew me in. Richtel presents each character in this story with great detail, so we come to understand the motivations behind each person's behavior. The brain science is presented with clarity for general readers to understand and appreciate. Reggie's guilt, as described by Richtel, matches the descriptions by our finest fiction writers, and the redemption as it happened goes beyond what readers would willingly believe in fiction. The result is a finely written book, packed with a message for all of us: even great drivers are distracted, and all it takes for lives to change forever is inattention during the wrong few seconds.</p> |  |
| <u>Dead on Arrival</u> | Richtel, Matt | ***** | <u>8/24/17</u> | <p>Pause. Take a pause from whatever tech diversion has grabbed your attention and read Matt Richtel's thriller novel titled, <u>Dead on Arrival</u>. I guarantee that you'll approach your diversions with a little more attention from now on. Richtel uses a great structure and plot to bring readers forward and backward in time as he scares readers about the perils of technology as our devices have become the</p> |  |

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| | | | <p>path of least resistance as we escape and disengage. A Google engineer has found a way to slow the world down to allow for a rebooting of humanity, a big pause. What could possibly go wrong? I needed to read a thriller like this before the end of summer, and I was thoroughly entertained. Readers who love the storytelling of a thrilling novel are those most likely to enjoy reading this one.</p> | |
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Hooked

Richtel, Matt

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



Churchill and Orwell: The Fight for Freedom

Ricks, Thomas E.

6/27/17

Language. I'm glad that I spent a few days in early Summer reading Thomas E. Ricks' book titled, Churchill and Orwell: The Fight for Freedom. I was curious to see what links Ricks would present to tie these interesting lives together. One of the connections involves their common love of language, and the ways in which their insight and words have an impact into the present. I knew far more about Churchill than Orwell, and thanks to Ricks I have an increased appreciation for Orwell. Readers interested in either individual are those most likely to enjoy this finely written book.

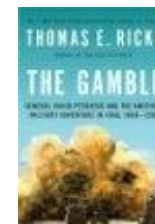


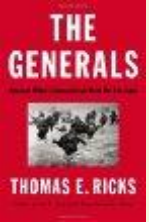
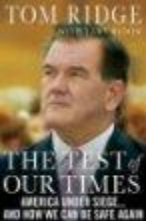
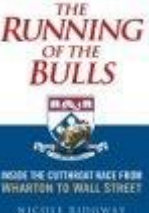
The Gamble:
General David Petraeus and
the American
Military
Adventure in
Iraq, 2006-
2008

Ricks, Thomas E.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009



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| <p><u>The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today</u></p> | <p>Ricks, Thomas E.</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>12/18/12</u></p> | <p>Stars. Readers interested in the American military or leadership are those most likely to enjoy Thomas E. Rick's book, <u>The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today</u>. Ricks explores an interesting question: why is it that the generals in World War II were respected and successful, while most since then have failed. I found this book to be well-researched and presented with clarity and insight. Ricks explores the isolation of modern generals, who are treated like rock stars. There's a modern bias toward conformity and a culture of entitlement. Because rotation takes place so often leaders don't know their subordinates. Leaders are rarely relieved of duty when they fail. The model of effective military leadership, George Marshall, behaved quite differently when he fired ineffective generals and rewarded individuality by selecting the right person for the right job. My blood boiled when I read Rick's insight into some of our modern generals.</p> |  |
| <p>The Test of Our Times: America Under Siege...And How We Can Be Safe Again</p> | <p>Ridge, Tom</p> | <p>Unread</p> | | <p>Shelf of Ennui 2010</p> |  |
| <p>The Running of the Bulls</p> | <p>Ridgway, Nicole</p> | <p>Unread</p> | | <p>Shelf of Ennui 2006</p> |  |

The Heir
Apparent: A Life
of Edward VII,
the Playboy
Prince

Ridley, Jane

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.

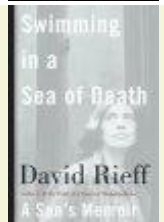


Swimming in a
Sea of Death

Rieff, David

Apr 08

Tribute. Beautifully written memoir by a son about how he and his mother, the writer Susan Sontag, tried to do everything possible to battle a deadly form of leukemia. How did he as caregiver behave? Mostly he felt at sea.

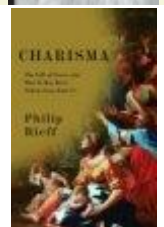


Charisma

Rieff, Philip

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



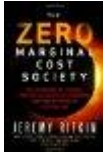
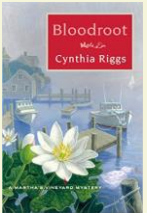

The Divorce
Papers

Rieger, Susan

6/11/14

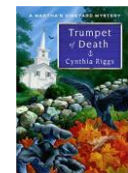

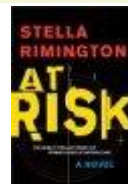
Documents. I opened Susan Rieger's debut novel, The Divorce Papers, expecting to find it tedious. Instead of a traditional narrator, Rieger uses paperwork, a variety of different documents including email, court filings and letters, to tell the story. I anticipated that this structure would fall apart after a few dozen documents. I was pleasantly surprised that the structured delighted me, and added to the pleasure of the story. Rieger presents a cast of characters who are fully human: some likeable and some not. Protagonist Sophie Diehl is a 29-year-old criminal defense attorney for a small firm in a New England state. She reluctantly agrees to the request of the managing partner that she handle the divorce of the daughter of the CEO of one of the firm's biggest clients. All of the characters become fleshed out through their email and notes, and I was impressed with how well

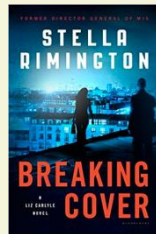


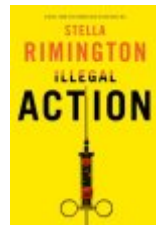


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| | | | | Rieger pulled that off. Readers looking for something innovative in fiction and willing to look at a debut novel should consider reading this one. | |
| The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, the Collaborative Commons, and the Eclipse of Capitalism | Rifkin, Jeremy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| <u>Bloodroot</u> | Riggs, Cynthia | *** | <u>3/2/17</u> | <p>Indomitable. The twelfth novel in the Martha's Vineyard mystery series by Cynthia Riggs featuring 92-year-old poet Victoria Trumbull is titled, <u>Bloodroot</u>. Readers who enjoy this series and murder mysteries in general will find plot development at a moderate pace, a variety of red herrings, a robust cast of characters loaded with flaws and distractions, and the indomitable Victoria well equipped to solve the case. I was entertained by this form of a visit to the Vineyard.</p> <p>Invasive. Despite a warning that the plant honesty is invasive, protagonist Victoria Trumbull decides to plant some anyway. The truth eventually comes out in Cynthia Riggs' latest Martha's Vineyard mystery, <u>Death and Honesty</u>. At age 92, Victoria settles for nothing less than the truth. In this mystery, she finds a dead body in the home of one of the town's assessors. The assessors concocted a scheme to skim funds from taxpayers, and Victoria uncovers their fraud with dispatch. Murders and poisoning follow, and Victoria remains on top of everything, tying up all the threads by the book's end. While I guessed the murderer's identity early in the book, Riggs kept my interest throughout this entertaining novel. Victoria</p> |  |
| <u>Death and Honesty</u> | Riggs, Cynthia | *** | <u>5/23/09</u> | |  |

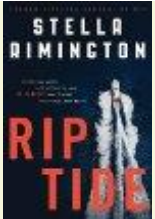
Trumbull is the senior citizen we all want to become: vibrant in our nineties; mental faculties intact and then some; munching on bacon for breakfast; and sloshing down a stiff drink with friends. Sit in your beach chair or porch rocker with a cold drink and enjoy reading [Death and Honesty](#).

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|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------------------|--|---|
| Indian Pipes | Riggs, Cynthia | *** | Sept 06 | <p>Marple. Mystery fans will enjoy the ways in which the sensible and practical ninety-two year old deputy sheriff Victoria Trumbull solves this Martha's Vineyard mystery with an aplomb that makes her an American Miss Marple.</p> |  |
| The Bee Balm Murders | Riggs, Cynthia | *** | 5/29/11 | <p>Cons. The latest Martha's Vineyard novel from Cynthia Riggs is titled, The Bee Balm Murders. While the Miss Marple-like detective Victoria Trumbull is slightly slowed down by medication, her mind pierces through the con at the center of this story, and resolves the mystery in grand style, thanks to the first class transportation provided to her by the sons of a murder victim. Most readers can start and finish this book during a relaxing day at the beach.</p> |  |
| Touch-Me-Not | Riggs, Cynthia | *** | 9/22/10 | <p>Stalkers. Protagonist Victoria Trumbull returns in the latest Martha's Vineyard novel by Cynthia Riggs titled, Touch-Me-Not. Three generations of strong Trumbull women are featured in this novel, along with an interesting set of characters and a plot that draws on everything Victoria has learned over her ninety-two years. Although Victoria's daughter arrived on the Island expecting to move Victoria into some form of assisted living, it is Victoria who provides the needed assistance. Victoria and her granddaughter have a warm relationship and it's unclear who takes more care of whom. The theme of the novel involves stalkers and the havoc they wreak. A group of mathematical knitters provide lots of local color. Any reader who likes a simple</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>mystery with compelling characters will find a lot to enjoy in this novel.</p> <p>Mushrooms. The thirteenth novel by Cynthia Riggs set on Martha's Vineyard is titled, <u>Trumpet of Death</u>. Fans of the series will enjoy the latest sleuthing by 92-year-old protagonist Victoria Turnbull, and the loads of suspects in the murders on the island. The plant featured in this installment and the title is a mushroom and there is some confusion among characters as to whether it's a delicacy or a poison. It's the mushrooming suspects that move the plot along, and Victoria's clear thinking as a beacon for the cluelessness surrounding her. This is light vacation reading that's quick to read and easy to forget.</p> |  |
| <u>Trumpet of Death</u> | Riggs, Cynthia | *** | <u>7/20/17</u> | | |
| <u>Widow's Wreath</u> | Riggs, Cynthia | **** | <u>11/24/18</u> | <p>Rocco. The fourteenth Martha's Vineyard mystery by Cynthia Riggs is titled, <u>Widow's Wreath</u>. Fans of the series will enjoy spending more time with 92-year-old Victoria Trumbull. In this installment, she has agreed to host a wedding reception for her cousin, Penny, who thinks her fiancée, Rocco, is wealthy. Rocco thinks Penny is wealthy. Both are sorely mistaken. Murder is afoot, and Victoria is in the middle of things, as usual. Fans of the series are those readers most likely to enjoy this installment. I was pleased to reach the ending and recognize that the case is closed.</p> |  |
| At Risk | Rimington, Stella | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2005 | |  |

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|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Breaking Cover</u> | Rimington, Stella | **** | <u>9/26/17</u> | <p>Infiltration. Spy novel fans are those readers most likely to applaud the return of protagonist Liz Carlyle in the latest novel by former MI-5 head Stella Rimington titled, <u>Breaking Cover</u>. As with the earlier novels in this series, the characters are well-developed and the plot proceeds at a stately and engaging pace. In this installment, Liz gets information that certain undercover Russian spies in England post a clear and imminent risk to security. I was entertained and well-satisfied by this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Close Call</u> | Rimington, Stella | **** | <u>9/15/14</u> | <p>Lucky. Fans of spy novels are likely to enjoy the latest Liz Carlyle novel by former MI5 head, Stella Rimington, titled <u>Close Call</u>. Luck turns out to be both good and bad for various characters in this fast-paced story grabbed from the headlines. Middle East tension, gun smuggling, and terror at home keep the action moving in this novel. I read it quickly and was entertained. The title turns out to be particularly apt.</p> |  |
| <u>Dead Line</u> | Rimington, Stella | *** | <u>8/16/10</u> | <p>Individuals. Retired MI5 director Stella Rimington presents another spy novel featuring MI 5 operative Liz Carlyle. In <u>Dead Line</u>, Liz tries to separate truth from fiction in rumored plots to disrupt a Middle East peace conference in Gleneagles, Scotland. Liz proceeds methodically, and readers are treated to the leaps of her intuition, and her ability to unravel all the confusing threads. This series continues to provide entertaining and reliable plots for fans of espionage fiction.</p> |  |
| <u>Illegal Action</u> | Rimington, Stella | *** | <u>1/27/09</u> | <p>Allegiances. I read Stella Rimington's latest novel, <u>Illegal Action</u>, in two sittings. She grabbed my interest in the first few pages, and then kept it with character development, plot, and reasonably fast moving action. As the former head of MI5, Rimington brings an insider's expertise to her subject. In this novel, MI5 agent Liz Carlyle is</p> |  |

assigned to the counter-espionage unit, where she takes on the case of a Russian oligarch living in London, who may be the target of a plot from Moscow to let all the oligarchs know they cannot escape the long arm of the state. Through the errors of her boss, missteps by colleagues and failures in communication, Liz herself becomes a target. It was especially interesting to see Rimington reveal some aspects of management behavior that show competence and some that show a cluelessness that can lead to disaster. [Illegal Action](#) provides much of what any reader of a spy novel wants: the machinations of behind the scenes controllers; a plausible and entertaining plot; enough twists and turns to keep the brain engaged, and a satisfactory resolution of tension.

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| Rip Tide | Rimington, Stella | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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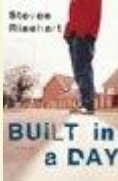
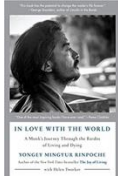
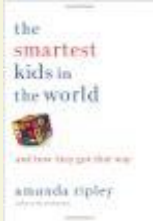
[The Geneva Trap](#)


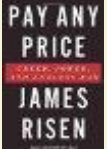
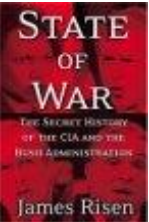

Rimington, Stella

[10/29/12](#)

Loyalty. Stella Rimington's latest Liz Carlyle novel is titled [The Geneva Trap](#). Readers who like fast-paced spy novels are those most likely to enjoy this one. The puzzle pieces are complex enough to keep most readers interested to the end, as Liz tries to solve a case that has connections to her past and to loved ones. Rimington's own MI5 experience informs the ways in which she presents the world of espionage. I read this novel quickly and was entertained by both characters and plot.



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|---|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Moscow Sleepers</u> | Rimington, Stella | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>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</u> | Rinaldi, Karen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Built in a Day: a novel | Rinehart, Steven | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>In Love with the World: A Monk's Journey Through the Bardos of Living and Dying</u> | Rinpoche, Yongey Mingyur | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way</u> | Ripley, Amanda | **** | <u>2/20/14</u> | Rigor. Amanda Ripley examines what education is like in Finland, South Korea and Poland in her book titled, <u>The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way</u> . What could have been cold and boring comes alive through the stories of three American exchange students in those countries. Those countries that are doing well in education hold in common one theme: rigor. They use rigor in |  |

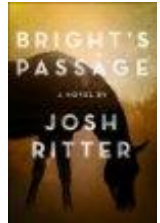
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| | | | | the teacher selection process, ensuring that only the best and brightest join the teaching profession. They also apply rigor in the classroom: setting high expectations for students and following a disciplined approach to ensuring those expectations are met. Any reader with an interest in education should consider this book as required reading. | |
| The Face of a Naked Lady: An Omaha Family Mystery | Rips, Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| Pay Any Price: Greed, Power, and Endless War | Risen, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| State of War | Risen, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>The Knife</u> | Ritchell, Ross | ***** | <u>9/23/15</u> | Valor. Ross Ritchell's debut novel titled, <u>The Knife</u> , offers 99% of Americans a glimpse at the valor of those soldiers we don't know who are fighting our contemporary wars. Given Ritchell's experience as an Army Ranger, we can assume that his novel is authentic to the experiences of our special forces. I was blown away by the skill with which Ritchell reveals the introspection and ambiguity that our members of the military deal with every day. Ritchell has great skill as a writer, and any reader who wants a deeper understanding of those who are fighting for us in our contemporary wars will find insight on these pages. |  |

[Bright's Passage](#)

Ritter, Josh

[8/19/11](#)

Curiosity. It was curiosity that led me to read the debut novel, [Bright's Passage](#), by songwriter Josh Ritter. Would this be an example of someone trying to extend a personal brand to make more money with a weak effort, or could Ritter's skill be more than musical? I concluded that Ritter can write a good novel, and he did so in this first attempt. Protagonist Henry Bright returns to West Virginia after World War I to a life that is as out of control as his war experience. Ritter's descriptive language and poignant character development allow this novel to be a reflection on the ravages of war and the search for peace. Readers who are curious and willing to give a debut novel a chance are likely to find good entertainment from this book.

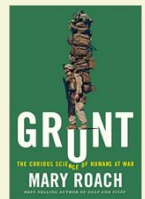


[Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War](#)

Roach, Mary

[9/16/16](#)

Questioning. Whenever questions enter Mary Roach's fertile mind, she searches for answers, then shares them with readers, to our great benefit. Her latest book titled, [Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War](#), explores the science of how the military tries to keep its members healthy and safe. Any given topic could become a comprehensive book-length study, but Roach contains herself as she chooses to distill lots of observations into cogent anecdotes that both inform and entertain. She explores such diverse topics as heat exposure, shark repellent, sleep, and diarrhea. On these topics and others, readers can count on lively writing, interesting anecdotes and some sating of Roach's curiosity and ours.



[Gulp: Adventures on the Alimentary Canal](#)

Roach, Mary

[6/20/13](#)

Pipeline. Readers who enjoy science writing that's both humorous and informative should consider reading Mary Roach's [Gulp: Adventures on the Alimentary Canal](#). I enjoyed the way she explored this critical pipeline from one end to the other. The pages flew by as she methodically related what goes



on in our digestive processes. Read a sample to see if her wit gives you something tasty to swallow.

Curiosity. Mary Roach has a lot of curiosity and she exercises that quality with abundance in her new book, [Packing for Mars](#). Every question I've ever thought of about life in zero gravity and the space program, Roach asks and answers in this book, with a verve and sense of humor that had me laughing out loud. I hadn't considered what a friend gravity is until she explored the challenge of hygiene in space, and now I know more about the topic that I ever really wanted to know. Roach presents a history of the space program as part of this book and passes along many of the aspects of the program that NASA may not appreciate, and the candor of astronauts was lively. Any reader with an interest in odd science writing and a good sense of humor will enjoy this book.

[Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void](#)

Roach, Mary

[9/21/10](#)

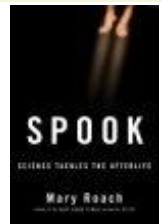


Spook: Science Tackles the Afterlife

Roach, Mary

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

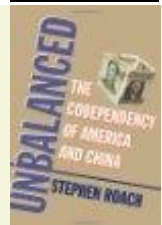


Unbalanced: The Codependency of America and China

Roach, Stephen

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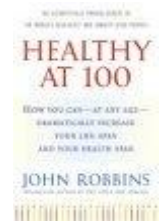


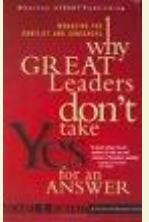
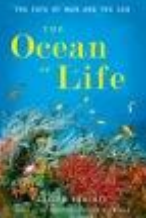
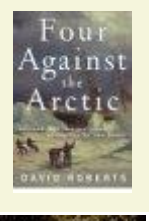
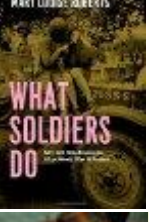

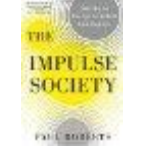
Healthy at 100

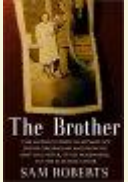

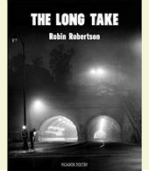
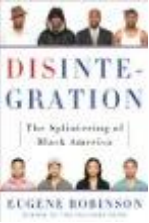


Robbins, John

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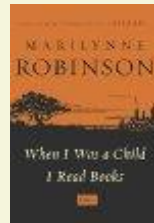

Shelf of Ennui 2007


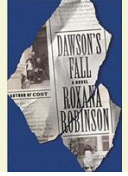
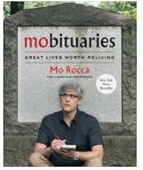
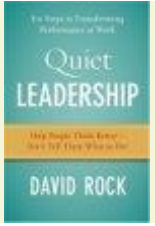
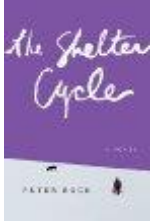


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| Why Great Leaders Don't Take Yes for an Answer | Roberto, Michael A. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| The Ocean of Life: The Fate of Man and the Sea | Roberts, Callum | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| Four Against the Arctic: Shipwrecked for Six Years At the Top of the World | Roberts, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II France | Roberts, Mary Louise | Unread | | I read a few pages and decided that this was a story I would prefer not to read. Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Reader, I Married Him | Roberts, Michele | * | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| The Impulse Society: America in the Age of Instant Gratification | Roberts, Paul | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |


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|---|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Brother</u> | Roberts, Sam | ** | <u>May 02</u> | David Greenglass betrayed his sister and his country. He went to jail and she, Ethel Rosenberg, was electrocuted with her husband, Julius. Roberts tells all in 500 + pages. |  |
| The Testament of Gideon Mack | Robertson, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>The Long Take</u> | Robertson, Robin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Disintegration: The Splintering of Black America | Robinson, Eugene | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| <u>Officer Friendly and Other Stories</u> | Robinson, Lewis | *** | <u>Feb 03</u> | Maine Man. Debut collection of stories from Maine writer Lewis Robinson reveals great talent. Lovers of short stories shouldn't overlook this writer. |  |
| Home | Robinson, Marilyn | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |

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|------------------------|---------------------|-------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Gilead | Robinson, Marilynne | *** | Aug 05 | <p>Legacy. Pulitzer prize winning novel structured as a 1956 letter from a 76 year old preacher to his 7 year old son, with prose that's packed with beauty, insight, truth and spirituality.</p> |  |
| Jack | Robinson, Marilynne | **** | 12/17/20 | <p>Prodigal. For the fourth time, Marilynne Robinson takes readers to the fictional town of Gilead, Ohio to tell us things about ourselves that we need to know. The novel titled, Jack, features John Ames Boughton, the wayward son of the Presbyterian minister in earlier novels. The long opening of the novel is a spellbinding conversation conducted overnight in a cemetery between Jack and a Black woman named Della Miles, a local high school teacher. Their love blooms quickly, despite their inability to marry at that time. The conversation in the cemetery is a masterpiece of carefully constructed sentences that engage the two characters and all readers in a deep dialogue about life. The first three novels in this series brought us to this cemetery and to the challenges that Jack and Della have to face in the world, despite their abiding love for each other. Robinson compels us to feel with them as they turn away from the world toward each other and into what is most important.</p> |  |
| Lila | Robinson, Marilynne | ***** | 11/24/14 | <p>Opposites. I had the great pleasure of reading Marilynne Robinson's novel, Lila, in a single setting one evening. It was a delight to return to the town of Gilead and to see the kindness of Reverend John Ames in a new light. Most of all, I was overwhelmed by Robinson's fine prose and the ways in which she presents Lila, an abused, neglected and uneducated young woman. Full of questions and with a deep inner life, Lila seems so opposite from John Ames that the likelihood of them developing a close relationship would seem remote. Instead, there is</p> |  |

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| | | | | love and richness in life found in Gilead in unexpected ways. | |
| <u>The Givenness of Things</u> | Robinson, Marilynne | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>When I Was a Child I Read Books: Essays</u> | Robinson, Marilynne | *** | <u>4/27/12</u> | Cogent. I read each of the ten essays in Marilynne Robinson's collection, <u>When I Was a Child I Read Books</u> , in a single sitting on separate days. I needed to engage my wits to follow her thorough and thoughtful arguments, and then needed a rest afterwards to absorb what I read. She must be the kind of teacher for whom alert students should schedule free time after her class for recovery. In many respects, she comes across as a writer's writer, with her careful choice of words and deliberative style. There may not be a better contemporary description of liberal Christianity and its sources and demands. Readers of her novels will gain insight from these essays and may consider re-reading the novels in light of the revelations from these essays. Any reader who appreciates fine writing and cogent reflection should consider reading the book. |  |
| Playing With Fire | Robinson, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Strange Affair | Robinson, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |

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|---|------------------|--------|-------------------------|--|---|
| A Perfect Stranger | Robinson, Roxana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| Dawson's Fall | Robinson, Roxana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Mobituaries: Great Lives Worth Reliving | Rocca, Mo | ***** | 3/26/20 | <p>Eclectic. Personally, I can't get enough of Mo Rocca's eclectic and humorous stories. In a collection titled, Mobituaries: Great Lives Worth Reliving, he tells readers about the lives of people, some of whom we know well, and others we're glad to know thanks to his storytelling. This is a fun book to read and is often at its best when you feel the quirky nature of Rocca's observations and insights. Read one or two of these, and I expect you'll want to read them all. I was well-entertained.</p> |  |
| Quiet Leadership | Rock, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| The Shelter Cycle | Rock, Peter | *** | 8/27/13 | <p>Cult. I finished reading Peter Rock's The Shelter Cycle and found myself thinking about the many ways in which my past formed me into the person I am today. Protagonists Francine and Colville grew up in a cult, and when they reunite after fifteen years, their past takes center stage. They are survivors but remain in a state of emotional constraint as a result of their experience. Rock writes with great skill that many readers will enjoy. I found myself disinterested in the characters and</p> |  |

the plot. Read an excerpt before plunging into this book.

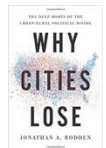
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| <u>An American Diplomat in Franco Spain</u> | Rockland, Michael Aaron | *** | <u>10/5/12</u> | <p>Lively. Some memoirs plod along in a comprehensive chronicle packed with details, while others bring a person, time and place to life through well told crisp anecdotes. Michael Rockland's <u>An American Diplomat in Franco Spain</u> falls into the latter group. I was thoroughly entertained by the stories of his role as cultural attaché to the American embassy in Spain during the 1960s. The concise and lively stories of his life during this time made me feel like I was having dinner with him listening to great stories while we're enjoying delicious Spanish cuisine. Did I tell you about the time Martin Luther King Junior came to Madrid? How about Ted Kennedy? Any reader with an interest in Spain, the 60s, foreign service, and interesting lives will find something to enjoy in this book.</p> |  |
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[Why Cities Lose: The Deep Roots of the Urban-Rural Political Divide](#)

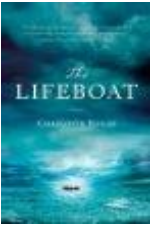
Rodden, Jonathan A.

Unread

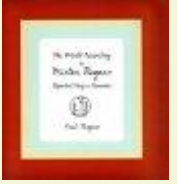
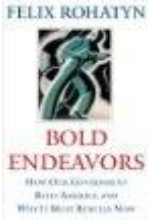
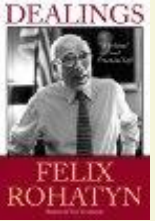
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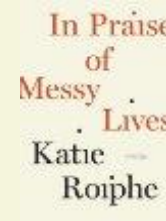
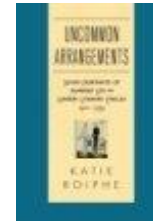
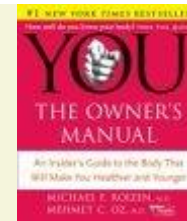



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| <u>The Great Eastern</u> | Rodman, Howard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
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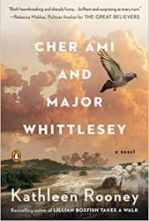
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| <u>The Lifeboat</u> | Rogan, Charlotte | *** | <u>5/25/12</u> | <p>Survival. Charlotte Rogan's debut novel, <u>The Lifeboat</u>, packs a wallop of psychological insight into fewer than three hundred pages. The unlikeable protagonist, Grace Winter, has survived a shipwreck in 1914, and finds herself on trial with others for murder because of what happened on their lifeboat. As readers come to learn her story, the many ways in which she has deceived herself,</p> |  |
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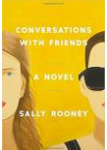
perhaps as a form of survival, become apparent. Rogan's prose is taut and her descriptions are vivid. This would be a great selection for a book club to discuss. Readers who like literary fiction and psychological novels are those most likely to enjoy this book.

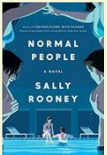
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| <u>The World According to Mister Rogers: Important Things to Remember</u> | Rogers, Fred | *** | <u>Apr 04</u> | Special. Stressed executives, especially those trying to do some task well, will find encouragement on the pages of this book. |  |
| <u>Bold Endeavors: How Our Government Built America, and Why It Must Rebuild Now</u> | Rohatyn, Felix | *** | <u>5/5/10</u> | Activism. It's rare to find a book from an investment banker that represents a call to action in the form of government activism. Former Lazard Freres leader Felix Rohatyn's new book is titled <u>Bold Endeavors: How Our Government Built America, and Why It Must Rebuild Now</u> . Rohatyn provides ten examples of how the government has been the indispensable investor in our nation. It's not often fun to read about infrastructure, but Rohatyn makes the call for investment one that's backed by facts, and lively to read. Those believers of the view that government is the problem will find a contrary position in this book. |  |
| <u>Dealings: A Political and Financial Life</u> | Rohatyn, Felix | *** | <u>3/27/11</u> | Succinct. I found myself thinking often while reading Felix Rohatyn's memoir, <u>Dealings</u> , that there's more to the story than he's saying. Readers have to wait for a biography to learn more because Rohatyn seems uncomfortable at times talking too much about himself, or tooting his own horn. That's refreshing in a memoir: he conveys a key point and moves on. From his long time Wall Street perch at Lazard Freres, Rohatyn was at the center of many of the most memorable deals in the last half of the 20 th century. New York might have gone bankrupt |  |

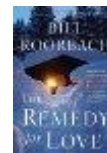
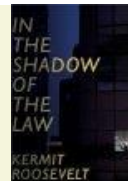
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| | | | | without him. All this is covered in the book in an unassuming way by a towering figure. | |
| Secrets of the City | Roiphe, Anne Richardson | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| In Praise of Messy Lives | Roiphe, Katie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Uncommon Arrangements | Roiphe, Katie | * | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| You--The Owner's Manual | Roizen, Michael F., et. al. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>The Hopkins Touch: Harry Hopkins and the Forging of the Alliance to Defeat Hitler</u> | Roll, David | **** | <u>5/21/13</u> | <p>Middleman. Since I share a surname with Harry Hopkins, I've noted his accomplishments for decades, often referring to him fondly as "Cousin Harry," while we are unrelated. When I saw David Roll's book, <u>The Hopkins Touch: Harry Hopkins and the Forging of the Alliance to Defeat Hitler</u>, I knew I had to read it. Roll presents the many ways in which Hopkins served Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the United States, especially during World War II. Hopkins' role as confidant to FDR and middleman to Churchill, Stalin and others, was</p> |  |

critical to the success of the allies in fighting the war. Roll ascribes Hopkins' success to his affable personal style and deep understanding of the individuals with whom he interacted, what Roll calls "The Hopkins Touch." Readers who enjoy history will find this book fascinating and informative, especially those who want to know more about the mid-twentieth century and World War II.

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| <u>Cher Ami and Major Whittlesey</u> | Rooney, Kathleen | ***** | <u>9/8/20</u> | <p>Pluck. I didn't expect that I would have the patience to allow much time for a pigeon narrator to keep my attention while reading Kathleen Rooney's novel titled, <u>Cher Ami and Major Whittlesey</u>. Thanks to Rooney's fine writing, I easily warmed to the voice of a homing pigeon and anticipated the return to that voice after Major Whittlesey provided his point of view as the alternating narrator. The pair were joined together in World War I when the pigeon Cher Ami flew through enemy lines to deliver a message that the major and his battalion were cut off from the rest of the army and were the objects of friendly fire. Rooney took this historical event and brought it to life through imagining those times from two very different perspectives. She explores the wounds to both narrators and the deep cost of war.</p> |  |
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| <u>Conversations with Friends</u> | Rooney, Sally | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
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| <u>Normal People</u> | Rooney, Sally | ***** | <u>5/9/19</u> | <p>Relationship. The protagonists of Sally Rooney's novel titled, <u>Normal People</u>, 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</p> |  |
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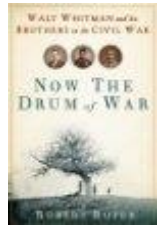
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| | | | | <p>and out of sync with each other, just as other normal people do. Their dialogue seems familiar. Marianne communicates her truth with clarity. Connell seems reluctant and often regrets not saying what he could have. As readers, we come 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.</p> <p>Intimacy. This has been a good winter for reading Bill Roorbach's novel titled, The Remedy for Love. Set in Maine during a major snowstorm, the novel pairs two troubled and dysfunctional protagonists who end up trapped together and have to deal with more intimacy than either expected. This novel may appeal to multiple audiences. I enjoyed reading it for the psychological insight into the struggles of the characters and the nature of rescue. Some readers will enjoy the novel because of the love story. Fans of thrillers will like the plot that pits the characters against nature in a struggle to survive the snow and cold. I recommend reading a sample to see if you're likely to fall into one of these audiences. Roorbach's writing is likely to be satisfying for most readers who like to read an entertaining story.</p> | |
| The Remedy for Love | Roorbach, Bill | **** | 3/20/15 | |  |
| In the Shadow of the Law | Roosevelt, Kermit | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2005 |  |

Now the Drum
of War: Walt
Whitman and
His Brothers in
the Civil War

Roper, Robert

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009

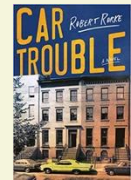


Car Trouble

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 book, as will anyone affected in any way by alcohol abuse.



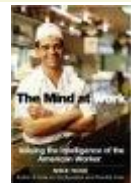
The Mind at
Work

Rose, Mike

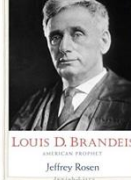
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Jan 05

Marginalized. UCLA professor's research shows that blue collar workers are usually undervalued for the cognitive abilities they apply at work.



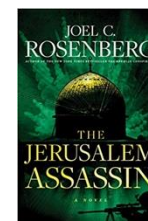
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| <u>The End of Average: How We Succeed in a World That Values Sameness</u> | Rose, Todd | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
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| <u>Louis D. Brandeis American Prophet</u> | Rosen, Jeffrey | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
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| iDisorder: Understanding Our Obsession with Technology and Overcoming Its Hold on Us | Rosen, Larry D. | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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| <u>The Jerusalem Assassin</u> | Rosenberg, Joel C. | ***** | <u>6/24/20</u> |
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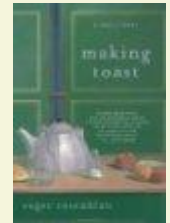
Tense. The third novel by Joel C. Rosenberg to feature former U.S. Secret Service agent Marcus Ryker is titled, [The Jerusalem Assassin](#). Unknown terrorists are meeting with success in targeting key players, so when President Clarke announces a new Mideast peace plan and wants to go to Jerusalem, Ryker is engaged to try to keep the President and others safe. The tension remains taut throughout this thriller, and the terrorists are worthy adversaries, usually keeping a step ahead of Ryker and others. As always, a reader feels the plot comes straight from recent headlines, and Rosenberg situates the issues among different countries in the region with great skill. Now that my heart rate has come back down, I can say I was thoroughly entertained by this novel.



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| <u>The Kremlin Conspiracy</u> | Rosenberg, Joel C. | ***** | <u>11/17/18</u> | <p>Headlines. Readers who enjoy political thrillers that seem pulled from newspaper headlines are those most likely to appreciate the novel by Joel C. Rosenberg titled, <u>The Kremlin Conspiracy</u>. A Russian President, not unlike Putin, plots to restore Russian greatness, while deceiving the world with various forms of treachery. Rosenberg's protagonist is Marcus Ryker who served with distinction as a Marine in Afghanistan, and as a Secret Service agent. The pace of this thriller never lets up, and there are enough twists and surprises to delight most readers. Readers who look to novels for escape may find this fiction too close to reality to provide any welcome comfort.</p> |  |
| <u>The Persian Gamble</u> | Rosenberg, Joel C. | ***** | <u>5/9/19</u> | <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> |  |
| This is Not Civilization | Rosenberg, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>Kayak Morning: Reflections on Love, Grief, and Small Boats</u> | Rosenblatt, Roger | *** | <u>2/24/12</u> | <p>Breathing. Roger Rosenblatt's fine writing rescues a scattered collection of thoughts and turns them into lucid reflections that many readers will find comforting. Titled <u>Kayak Morning: Reflections on Love, Grief, and Small Boats</u>, Rosenblatt uses this book to continue to share with readers the ways in</p> |  |

which he has been dealing with the death of his daughter. Sometimes it comes down to breathing. Readers who have experienced the loss of a loved one will find in this book an expression of feelings and behavior that will be familiar.

Grief. In the usual order of life, children do not die before their parents. When the unusual occurs, the grief can become overwhelming. Roger Rosenblatt's book, [Making Toast](#), describes the change in his life and that of his wife following the sudden death of their daughter at age 38. The Rosenblatts moved in with their son-in-law to take care of three young grandchildren. While most readers will tear up when reading some pages, this book celebrates life, and how even unimaginable tragedy can lead to even the most mundane activities, like making toast, taking on meaning and purpose. Rosenblatt's fine writing and the light touch he uses to tell this story will appeal to any reader experiencing grief, and especially to those looking for comfort.



[Making Toast](#)

Rosenblatt,
Roger

[12/21/10](#)

[Rules for Aging:
Resist Normal
Impulses Live
Longer Attain
Perfection](#)

Rosenblatt,
Roger

[07/01](#)

Funny rules to live by. Some laugh-out-loud.



The Book of
Love:
Improvisations
on a Crazy Little
Thing

Rosenblatt,
Roger

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

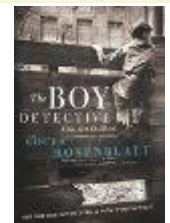


[The Boy
Detective: A
New York
Childhood](#)

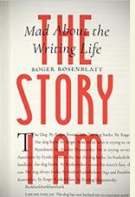
Rosenblatt,
Roger

[10/29/14](#)

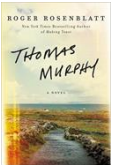
Walk. If you were born before the mid-1950s, and spent any part of your childhood in New York City, those early years will come alive as you read Roger Rosenblatt's memoir titled, [The Boy Detective: A New York Childhood](#). Part of the book is structured as reflections as Rosenblatt walks around Gramercy




Park. Readers feel as if we are walking with him. The detective motif adds to the pleasure of this book: the detecting involves gaining some understanding about what kind of life he's had. The walks trigger memories of the detecting by his nine-year-old self. He reflects on detectives and writers who walked these same New York streets. Above all, Rosenblatt's lyrical writing brings pleasure to any reader who appreciates fine writing no matter what the subject matter.

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| <u>The Story I Am: Mad About the Writing Life</u> | Rosenblatt, Roger | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
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Poet. Take your aging mind and engage it with Roger Rosenblatt's novel, [Thomas Murphy](#), in which the irrepressible poet, Murph, wonders about his own aging mind, reflects on his life's relationships, and charms every reader on every page. Once engaged, give yourself over to dreams, and beauty and laughter and all that remains possible for every day that we are alive. This novel is a song to life, sung by a great lover of life, an intelligent character created by a thoughtful writer. How much of the mind of either of them, or a reader, may be misfiring is another matter altogether. Leave that for another day.

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| <u>Thomas Murphy</u> | Rosenblatt, Roger | ***** | <u>10/10/16</u> | |  |
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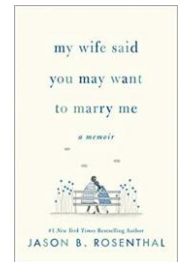
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| Chocolate: A Bittersweet Saga of Dark and Light | Rosenblum, Mort | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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[My Wife Said You May Want to Marry Me](#)

Rosenthal, Jason B.

[5/26/20](#)

More. Have tissues or a handkerchief nearby as you read Jason B. Rosenthal's book titled, [My Wife Said You May Want to Marry Me](#). Two weeks before she died of ovarian cancer, Jason's wife, Amy Krause Rosenthal, wrote an op-ed piece for the Modern Love column in *The New York Times* titled, "You May Want to Marry My Husband." This book is the story of Amy's vibrant life, their marriage and family life, and the ways in which she made our world better through everything she did. Amy's first word was "more." Jason tells this story with grace and skill, pulling all readers into leading a meaningful life.

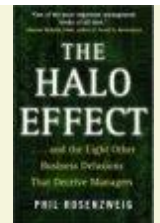


[The Halo Effect: ... and the Eight Other Business Delusions That Deceive Managers](#)

Rosenzweig, Phil

[Apr 08](#)

Duped. IMD professor pokes fun at management advice books, shows the scientific errors and shortfalls of their methods, offers no success formulas of his own, but helps executives examine more critically the advice they get from others.

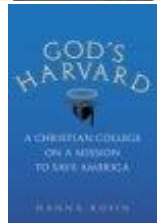


God's Harvard:
A Christian
College on a
Mission to Save
America

Rosin, Hanna

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

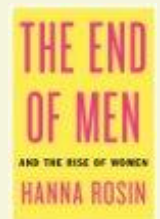




[The End of Men: And The Rise of Women](#)

Rosin, Hanna

[2/4/13](#)

Meandering. Having read Hanna Rosin's essay in the *Atlantic* on this subject, I wondered how much more would be in her book, [The End of Men: And The Rise of Women](#). Answer: not a whole lot. I had the impression that Rosin padded the book with just enough anecdotes and interviews to fill 300 pages. Her core observation is supported by the data: women are making economic progress and men are experiencing economic decline. In an attempt to project what this may mean for our society, Rosin meanders from chapter to chapter



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| | | | | <p>making half-hearted arguments or half-baked positions that never coalesce to a coherent whole. I found the book interesting, her prose enjoyable, but the facts came across as selective and her premises speculative. Some journalists excel in the short form, and Rosin does that expertly. For the subject matter of this book, a better choice would be something from the expert hands of a skilled and disciplined social scientist.</p> | |
| <p><u>Ladies and Gentlemen</u></p> | <p>Ross, Adam</p> | <p>***</p> | <p><u>7/22/11</u></p> | <p>Lesser. After I finished reading the seven short stories from Adam Ross titled after one, <u>Ladies and Gentlemen</u>, I found myself wishing he had spent his time on a novel instead. Ross' debut novel, <i>Mr. Peanut</i>, took the time and space to explore and develop characters in ways that kept me interested and engaged. The quality in this story collection was mixed. I found myself satisfied with two or three, and found the majority less absorbing. I had the feeling that Ross knocked off some of these stories as a break from writing something longer, and he didn't devote the same time and energy to these as he did to his novel. For readers who like short stories, these are worth a sampling.</p> |  |
| <p><u>Mr. Peanut</u></p> | <p>Ross, Adam</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>8/7/10</u></p> | <p>Marriage. Adam Ross' debut novel, <u>Mr. Peanut</u>, will not appeal to those readers who prefer fiction to fit into specific genre, and who like a well-told tale presented in a straightforward manner. This is also not a book that a reader can savor casually paying limited attention. Ross presents an oddly constructed and convoluted novel that requires great patience and attention. The payoff for readers willing to extend that patience comes in the form of creative, imaginative and well-written prose. Ross presents marriage in ways that I don't think I've ever read or experienced. I finished the book feeling that I experienced something unique, and</p> |  |

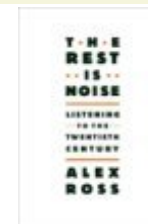
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| | | | | recommend this novel to those readers looking for something far off the beaten path. | |
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The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century

Ross, Alex

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008



Many Unhappy Returns: One Man's Quest To Turn Around The Most Unpopular Organization In America (Leadership for the Common Good)

Rossotti, Charles O.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

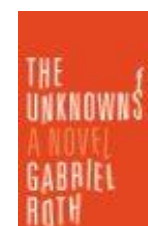


[The Unknowns](#)

Roth, Gabriel

[2/7/14](#)

Nerdy. The more I read Gabriel Roth's debut novel, [The Unknowns](#), the more I liked it. Protagonist Eric Mueller excels at writing computer code, and has struggled in relationships. The novel is narrated by Eric, so we see from his point of view the challenge of trying to apply the orderliness of code to the messiness of relationships. Roth keeps the narrative witty and clever, while building underneath a warm story of love, with a key question for all of us: is it always better to know? Readers who lean on the nerdy side are those most likely to enjoy this promising debut.



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|------------------------------------|--------------|------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Everyman</u> | Roth, Philip | *** | <u>July 06</u> | Loss. A gloomy reflection on the life of an average man, which thanks to the author's talent, becomes a clear mirror on modern American life, and especially on our losses. |  |
| <u>Exit Ghost</u> | Roth, Philip | *** | <u>Dec 07</u> | Finale. The ninth and final Nathan Zuckerman novel brings the writer to a post-9/11 Manhattan, and connections with his past. Neither the best nor worst Roth novel. |  |
| <u>Indignation</u> | Roth, Philip | *** | <u>Nov 08</u> | If. Roth's 25 th novel set after World War II explores how certain episodes of life change everything. |  |
| <u>Nemesis</u> | Roth, Philip | **** | <u>10/15/10</u> | Invincible. Philip Roth's new novel, <u>Nemesis</u> , displays that fine writer's skill in packing so much into a short work. Set in Newark in summer of 1944, protagonist Bucky Cantor is changed forever by events and decisions that unfold with quick dispatch. Bucky's eyesight made him unfit to join his pals in fighting in the war, but his life seems charmed as he becomes engaged to be married, and is a hero to the children he supervises at a playground due to his athleticism and skilled javelin throwing. A polio epidemic breaks out in the city, and Bucky's choices about his job, his fiancée and his life become the core of the novel. It takes until close to the end for readers to learn who the narrator is, and by then we understand Bucky's character and are left to think about the consequences of guilt, evil and the reality that no one is invincible. |  |

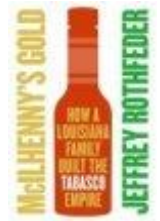
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|---|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Human Stain</u> | Roth, Philip | *** | <u>6/00</u> | Volume 3 in Roth's post war trilogy. |  |
| The Humbling | Roth, Philip | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| <u>The Plot Against America</u> | Roth, Philip | *** | <u>Dec 04</u> | Sensational. Engaging novel of what life might have been like, especially for Jews, had Lindbergh been elected President in 1940 instead of Roosevelt. Fine writing and parallels to today's homeland security anxiety. |  |
| <u>Chosen Ones</u> | Roth, Veronica | **** | <u>6/24/20</u> | Dark. Fans of thrilling and twisting stories are those readers most likely to enjoy Veronica Roth's novel titled, <u>Chosen Ones</u> . Set in a slightly altered Chicago with a parallel darker Chicago attached, this imaginative novel keeps a fast-paced plot moving along while we get to enjoy the development of interesting and complex, nuanced characters. Protagonist Sloane heads toward a nemesis, the Dark One, and feels the heavy weight of responsibility to prevent chaos. |  |
| Banktown: The Rise and Struggles of Charlotte's Big Banks | Rothacker, Rick | Unread | | I endured until page 112 and then quit. Shelf of Ennui 2011. |  |

McIlhenny's Gold: How a Louisiana Family Built the Tabasco Empire

Rothfeder, Jeffrey

Feb 08

Hot. Turns out there's quite a colorful and interesting story behind the family that has made the sauce in those Tabasco sauce bottles since 1869. Give this one a taste.

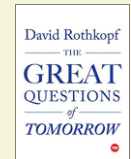


The Great Questions of Tomorrow

Rothkopf, David

4/3/18

Essay. Readers looking to stimulate or to provoke one's thoughts should consider reading David Rothkopf's book titled, The Great Questions of Tomorrow. This short book is an essay presenting the author's perspective on the questions that we should be asking today and tomorrow. I enjoyed this cogent presentation and realized that it stimulated my own thinking about the "right" questions that I and all should be asking.

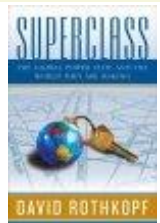


Superclass: The Global Power Elite and the World They are Making

Rothkopf, David J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

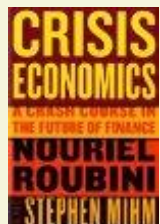


Crisis Economics: A Crash Course in the Future of Finance

Roubini, Nouriel

7/20/10

Context. Nouriel Roubini provides at least two important perspectives for readers of his book, Crisis Economics. First, he provides a context from the 19th and 20th centuries for understanding financial markets, and especially the ways in which bankers and governments deal with markets. Second, he uses that context to explain the recent financial crisis in terms that are easily understood, and prescribes ways of using the crisis to make key changes in regulation and in behavior.



You Know You Want This

Roupenian, Kristen

2/21/19

Satisfying. There are twelve finely written short stories in a collection by Kristen Roupenian titled, You Know You Want This. 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.

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|---|----------------|--------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Courage and Consequence: My Life as a Conservative in the Fight | Rove, Karl | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Seven Brief Lessons on Physics | Rovelli, Carlo | ***** | 7/22/16 | <p>Bounce. If you can't remember the last time you read a book about physics, treat yourself to 100 crisp pages in Carlo Rovelli's book titled, Seven Brief Lessons on Physics. The lessons are brief, easy to follow, interesting and informative. I learned that a better way to think of the big bang is more like a big bounce. Scientists are curious, and Rovelli shows how the questions of curious scientists have led to answers to big and deep questions.</p> |  |
| The Order of Time | Rovelli, Carlo | ***** | 11/6/18 | <p>Mysterious. Every now and then I step out of my comfort zone and try to read something in the sciences that I find unfamiliar. Carlo Rovelli presents a view of modern physics for non-scientists in his book titled, The Order of Time. Using plain language, he updates us on the contemporary understanding of time, and explores how much mystery remains on the subject. As expected, I finished the book with some head scratching, some bewilderment and a little more understanding about a subject I know a little better now than before I read this book.</p> |  |

[The Train of Small Mercies](#)

Rowell, David

[8/6/12](#)

Perspectives. David Rowell's debut novel, [The Train of Small Mercies](#), uses the funeral train of Robert Kennedy in 1968 as the backdrop for describing American life at that time. Rowell develops multiple perspectives of a half dozen characters to illuminate readers about ordinary lives that combine to form our society. We are the combination of our stories, both individual and shared, and Rowell's fine writing kept me absorbed in this novel from beginning to end.

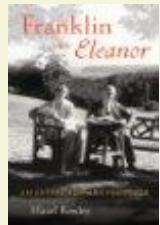


[Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage](#)

Rowley, Hazel

[1/25/11](#)

Bonds. Hazel Rowley's new book, [Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage](#), explores the lives of these fascinating characters with a special focus on their marriage, with all its ups and downs. FDR's infidelity could have ended their marriage, but Eleanor loved him enough to remain his wife, although her independence and her own relationships provided her with the affection her marriage didn't. Rowley clearly has affection for her subjects, and presents them and their unusual marriage with insight. This was a political relationship that endured many setbacks, and it was a marriage that survived prolonged separations and conflicting relationships. Rowley presents it all in a way that provides all readers with good history and an absorbing personal story.



[Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, Parts I & II](#)




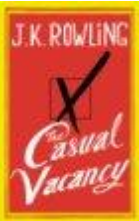
Rowling, J.K.


[12/9/16](#)

Time. The eighth book in the Harry Potter series titled, [Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, Parts I & II](#), is the script of a play set two decades after the last novel. Harry's son, Albus, is at Hogwarts, and the play delves into the theme of parents and children, while using the structure of time to move the action. I liked it well enough for what it is: something different in form, structure and time period. I didn't hate it much for what it isn't: a big sprawling novel that absorbs one's total attention



like the earlier installments, a book I might have enjoyed more than this one.

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|--|---------------|-----|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows</u> | Rowling, J.K. | *** | <u>Sep 07</u> | Finished. The last book in the series contains 784 pages, almost half of which would not be missed. Be part of the global cultural experience and read it now, or wait for the movie. |  |
| <u>Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince</u> | Rowling, J.K. | *** | <u>Aug 05</u> | Terror. Potter's a year older, and his maturity leads to deeper and more complicated relationships, as Hogwarts and the wizarding world face terror from Voldemort and his followers and not all turns out well in the end. |  |
| <u>Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix</u> | Rowling, J.K. | *** | <u>Aug 03</u> | Growing Up. Finest installment in the series so far. Adolescent Harry behaves erratically, and even Dumbledore appears vulnerable. The new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher brings bureaucracy to Hogwarts. |  |
| <u>The Casual Vacancy</u> | Rowling, J.K. | ** | <u>2/22/13</u> | Cruelty. The gloomy town inhabited by the troubled characters in J.K. Rowling's novel, <u>The Casual Vacancy</u> , presents the worst possible components of community. People here are cruel to each other, neglect their needs and live close to one another but in separate worlds. The most appealing character in the novel dies in the first few pages. I slogged through all 500 pages immersed in the sadness of the many lives Rowling presents to readers. Some of the teens are more mature than the adults, and all characters have something to hide or are dealing with one struggle or another. I found that I finished the novel feeling depressed and saddened and concluded that the time I spent reading it could have been spent in better ways. |  |

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|---|---------------|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Tales of Beedle the Bard</u> | Rowling, J.K. | *** | <u>12/20/08</u> | Playful. Unlike the pleasure of curling up for days on end with a hefty Harry Potter book, this new book contains five stories and can be read in a single sitting before a pot of tea would get cold. The stories are playful and a pleasure to read, but the real bonus is the commentary on each story written by Albus Dumbledore. I especially enjoyed the mildly veiled references to the Beatrix Potter stories. Net proceeds from the sale of this book are being given to a charity, the Children's High Level Group, co-founded by Rowling to help make life better for vulnerable young people. |  |
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[All the Lives We Never Lived](#)

Roy, Anuradha

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



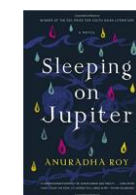
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| An Atlas of Impossible Longing | Roy, Anuradha | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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[Sleeping on Jupiter](#)

Roy, Anuradha

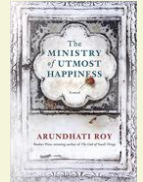
[1/24/17](#)

Abuse. Fans of dark fiction can wallow in a few hundred pages of violence and abuse in Anuradha Roy's novel titled, [Sleeping on Jupiter](#). With a large cast of characters, many of whom are travelers, Roy sets most of the action in a fictional seaside Indian town where many temples draw visitors. She stimulates the interest of readers in a large cast of characters and changes time periods to mix up the momentum. What first appears dark becomes joyful on further development. Violence and abuse are not the final state for any character. If you surrender yourself to Roy to take this journey to



India, you are likely to join many characters in uncovering joy in life, no matter what.

Marginalized. Having waited two decades for another novel by Arundhati Roy, I dove into her new book titled, [The Ministry of Utmost Happiness](#). I'm glad I did. She pulls readers into the sights, smells, sounds and people of India, especially the marginalized ones. Don't worry about keeping track of everything that's going on. Let Roy take you across the subcontinent and over decades of time. Her prose is finely written in this epic novel and those readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction are those most likely to appreciate this novel.



[The Ministry of Utmost Happiness](#)

Roy, Arundhati

[10/26/17](#)

Until She Comes Home

Roy, Lori

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

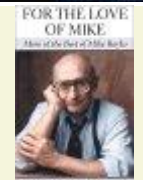


[For the Love of Mike](#)

Royko, Mike

[07/01](#)

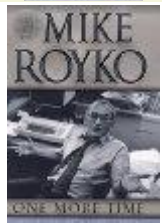
More of the best Royko columns. Fine writing.

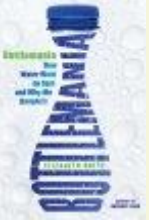
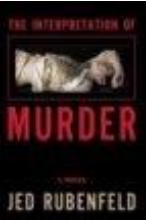



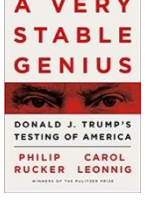


One More Time:
The Best of
Mike Royko

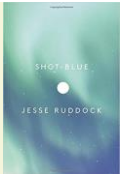


Royko, Mike

Another chance to revisit the best columns of one of America's best writers, the late Mike Royko.



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|--|-------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Bottlemania: How Water Went on Sale and Why We Bought It</u> | Royte, Elizabeth | *** | <u>Sep 08</u> | Tap. Fascinating presentation of the challenges of drinking water. Readers will learn more new things than expected about drinking water, and may select tap water more often. |  |
| The Interpretation of Murder | Rubinfeld, Jed | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>The American Story: Conversations with Master Historians</u> | Rubenstein, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives</u> | Rubin, Gretchen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>In An Uncertain World: Tough Choices From Wall Street to Washington</u> | Rubin, Robert E. | *** | <u>Feb 04</u> | Reality. According to Rubin, "...reality is always more complex than models." That perspective and others fill this thoughtful book about public policy. The bonus is finding out more about Rubin. Seekers of cabinet-level kiss and tell need to look elsewhere. |  |
| <u>A Very Stable Genius: Donald J. Trump's Testing of America</u> | Rucker, Philip and Carol D. Leonnig | **** | <u>5/5/20</u> | Chaos. Since I read Philip Rucker and Carol D. Leonnig's book titled, <u>A Very Stable Genius: Donald J. Trump's Testing of America</u> , during the April 2020 coronavirus White House briefings, the context for their book became for me "the good old days." The authors are journalists at <i>The Washington Post</i> , so some readers will dismiss them as fake news and consider their book fiction |  |

or certainly biased. Other readers will find detailed reporting of the chaos during the first few years of the Trump administration. The authors clearly sourced material from people who were “in the room” and present readers with lots of material about the president and those around him. Many potential readers are weary of the chaos, but those interested in public affairs will find this book to be one of the best to report this ongoing story.

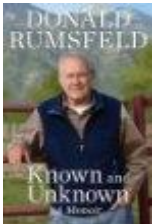
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|---------------------------|----------------|--------|--|----------------------|--|
| Shot-Blue | Ruddock, Jesse | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Bad Monkeys | Ruff, Matt | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| In Times of Fading Light | Ruge, Eugen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |

[Known and Unknown](#)


Rumsfeld, Donald

[5/19/11](#)

Right. I found no surprises on the more than 800 pages of Donald Rumsfeld’s memoir, [Known and Unknown](#). As I expected, he presents his perspective on his life and the key decisions he made or recommended while in public service for a major part of his working life. He footnotes many of his points, and seems to be using this book (and the website) to provide a reservoir of documentation that shows how often he was right in what he did or recommended. It also comes as no surprise that he states that his brusque comments were often



misunderstood or misperceived. His major regret was not resigning after the Abu Ghraib incident. Even that regret is not his fault: it was the fault of President Bush who refused to accept his multiple resignations. Rumsfeld uses the passive voice so often that I had to put the book down after each chapter and take a breather. Another expectation well met is that he speaks his mind about those players with whom he disagreed, and puts them in their place, with footnotes. Readers who like politics will find this book rewarding, whether one has been for or against Rumsfeld, his policies and his actions. Most readers will bore easily, and those opposed to his politics will face elevated blood pressure while reading most chapters.

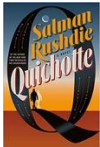
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| Subtle Bodies | Rush, Norman | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
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Quichotte

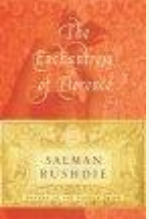
Rushdie, Salman


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

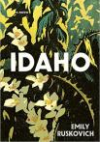


understanding the importance of reconciliation in our lives.

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|--|-----------------|-----|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Enchantress of Florence</u> | Rushdie, Salman | *** | <u>Sep 08</u> | Magical. Expansively written fairy tale for grownups. The power of stories can captivate readers and this unusual novel provides storytelling magic. |  |
|--|-----------------|-----|-------------------------------|---|---|

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|---|-----------------|-------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Golden House</u> | Rushdie, Salman | ***** | <u>9/25/17</u> | Current. There's whimsy and wit throughout Salman Rushdie's novel titled, <u>The Golden House</u> . Set from about 2009 to the present, the protagonist Nero Golden is a fascinating international wealthy character, and he, his wife, his three sons move to an exclusive enclave in New York City in grand style. Rushdie riffs on contemporary life on one page and explores the history of cinema on the next page. He makes the Golden's mysterious and then explains everything through their backstory. Along the way, the prose is beautiful, the humor entertaining, and the entertainment delightful. |  |
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|---|-----------------|-------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights</u> | Rushdie, Salman | ***** | <u>5/4/16</u> | Jinn. I hope that Salman Rushdie had as much fun writing <u>Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights</u> as I had reading it. There's comedy, satire, great storytelling, fantasy, philosophy and page after page of outstanding writing. Rushdie presents a hilarious cast of characters who are jinn, creatures so much like us and more so. The powers of the jinn will delight and entertain most readers. I can assure most readers that you have never read a novel quite like this one. |  |
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|------------------------------|------------------|-------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Idaho</u> | Ruskovich, Emily | ***** | <u>2/3/17</u> | Loss. I was overwhelmed by the depth of insight about our human condition while I was reading Emily Ruskovich's debut novel titled, <u>Idaho</u> . Readers who can tolerate ambiguity from multiple voices and time periods will be rewarded with deep character development and an exploration of loss |  |
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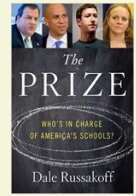
and suffering. The losses are deep and life altering and the response to loss and suffering must be love in whatever form that takes to provide hope and redemption. In many ways, this is a novel we could expect from an author who has lived a long and full life. What a gift to discover a young writer with wisdom beyond her years and the fine writing skills to offer that wisdom to readers through deeply developed characters and lyrical prose.

Newark. Any reader interested in public education in the United States should read Dale Russakoff's book titled, The Prize: Who's in Charge of America's Schools? In this finely written book, Russakoff relates the story of the Newark school system over the past five years. She takes readers from the magical time in 2010 when Cory Booker, Mark Zuckerberg and Chris Christie came together with power and money to change the school system and provide a model for other school systems to follow. We learn how a lot of money was spent, how a community reacted to changes from outside, and the impact of this effort to date. I finished this book and felt informed and angry.

The Prize:
Who's in Charge
of America's
Schools?

Russakoff, Dale

9/23/15

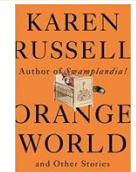


Orange World
and Other
Stories

Russell, Karen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



St. Lucy's Home
for Girls Raised
by Wolves

Russell, Karen

Dec 06

Imaginative. 25 year old author's debut collection of short stories are creative and imaginative, with a unique voice.



Swamplandia!

Russell, Karen

2/18/11

Journey. Swamplandia! might be the most unusual coming-of-age novel I've ever read. I enjoyed the creativity in Karen Russell's debut short story collection, *St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves*, and that same unique and quirky voice soars in Swamplandia! The title refers to the alligator amusement park owned and operated by the Bigtree family, that has fallen on hard times following the death of star alligator wrestler, Hilola Bigtree. Her daughter, 13-year-old protagonist Ava Bigtree, decides to search the swamp for missing sister, Osceola, 16, who left home to marry a ghost. Their father moved to the mainland, and 17-year-old brother, Kiwi, has gone to work for a competing amusement park, the World of Darkness. Ava's journey is described in language that led me to reread some sentences as I savored the carefully chosen words a second time. Readers willing to try out a new and young author, and who enjoy unpredictable writing are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

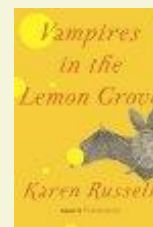


Vampires in the Lemon Grove: Stories

Russell, Karen

4/5/13

Fantasies. We often want authors to transport us somewhere new and in that setting reveal some truths about human nature. Karen Russell's collection of eight stories, Vampires in the Lemon Grove, presents very different fantasies that are intense and revealing. Russell's creativity and originality are almost unmatched among contemporary writers. I can appreciate her odd style in small doses, and I spread my reading of these stories over several weeks. Readers who enjoy fine prose and heightened creativity and originality are those most likely to enjoy this collection.



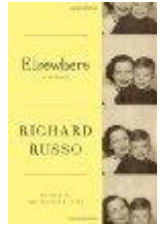
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| <u>Big Russ and Me</u> | Russert, Tim | *** | <u>Nov 04</u> | Everyman. Upbeat memoir packed with positive stories of growing up in 1950s Buffalo, and the powerful lifelong lessons that a son received from a practical and unpretentious father. |  |
| <u>Wisdom of Our Fathers</u> | Russert, Tim | *** | <u>Oct 06</u> | Teary. Selections from the many responses to author's earlier book about his own father and commentary by the author about what daughters and sons had to say about their fathers. Sappy, teary and worth reading. |  |
| <u>Best of Enemies: The Last Great Spy Story of the Cold War</u> | Russo, Gus and Eric Dezenhall | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Winning Decisions: Getting it Right the First Time</u> | Russo, J. Edward | *** | <u>Jul 02</u> | Practical suggestions on four stages of decision-making: framing; intelligence gathering; concluding; and learning from experience. |  |
| <u>Bridge of Sighs</u> | Russo, Richard | *** | <u>Feb 08</u> | Passion. Over 500 well-written pages of how an interesting ensemble of characters lives life to the fullest, in a small town and elsewhere. |  |
| <u>Chances Are</u> | Russo, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

Elsewhere: A
Memoir

Russo, Richard

3/25/13

Obsessive. If Jean Russo had appeared as a character in one of Richard Russo's novels, her behavior would have strained my willing suspension of disbelief. I would have dismissed her as an outlier: no one could be believed who is so odd, obsessive, and controlling. Instead, Jean is Russo's mother, and her behavior provides the focus of attention in the memoir, Elsewhere. Richard Russo is an only child, and Jean was an active demanding presence in his life from his birth in Gloversville, New York, to her death many decades later. At times darkly humorous, and at times sad and bewildering, this memoir presents a close relationship of love and caring, despite unrealizable expectations and heavy demands. I especially enjoyed the detailed descriptions of the many changes in living quarters, from Jean going off to college with Richard, to her pickiness about assisted living accommodations. Any reader whose patience has been strained by any difficult close relationship will delight in reading this finely written memoir.

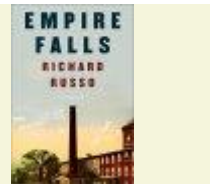


Empire Falls

Russo, Richard

09/01

A fine novel. Russo's character are real, and all their flaws come from being human. There's an idealism sitting alongside cynicism; kindness paired with cruelty.

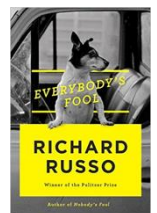


Everybody's
Fool

Russo, Richard

6/3/16

Wounds. Richard Russo's prose has always been a pleasure to read. He sets his novel titled, Everybody's Fool, in North Bath, New York, where he introduced some of these characters in his 1993 novel, *Nobody's Fool*. In addition to getting plot, dialogue and descriptive language so right, Russo does something in this novel that delighted me. He exudes love for these characters in ways that drew me to love them almost as much. During the course of the story, almost every character experiences



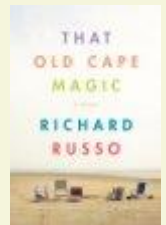
wounds of one sort or another, even the dog. It is from these wounds that all of Russo's wisdom flows, and through which this novel discloses so much of what we and the author know is true about life. Whatever your own wounds may be, take a holiday in North Bath with Russo this summer, and find some healing and pleasure.

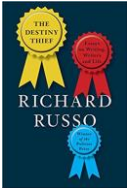
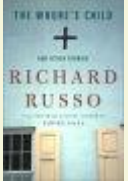
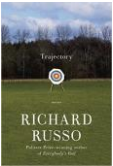
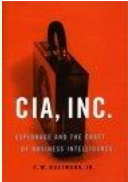

Inheritance. Wisdom about family relationships is planted amid the laughter throughout Richard Russo's new novel, [That Old Cape Magic](#). Structured as a year in the life of 57-year-old protagonist Jack Griffin, the novel begins as Griffin drives to Cape Cod for a wedding, with the year-old ashes of his deceased father in the trunk of his car. His plan is to spread those ashes on the Cape, where he and his college professor parents spent every summer in a different rental house. Memories of those summers overtake Griffin, and his unhappiness leads to a separation from his wife. After his mother dies, he continues to hear her acerbic comments, and also carries her ashes to be scattered on the Cape. All the family dynamics come together with the wedding of Griffin's daughter in Maine. Separation from parents can be healthy or troubled, and when we observe ourselves behaving like our parents, that can be something that makes us feel miserable or happy. All of that appears on the pages of this finely written novel. The wisdom comes through gently, as in this quote from page 248, "Late middle age, he was coming to understand, was a time of life when everything was predictable and yet somehow you failed to see any of it coming." Sometimes what we inherit from our parents can be priceless. [That Old Cape Magic](#) opens the door to memories of family vacations and relationships that may bring joy and nostalgia to

[That Old Cape Magic](#)

Russo, Richard

[8/22/09](#)



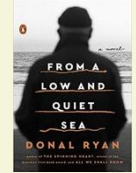
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| | | | | most readers. Russo's fine writing makes reading this novel a real pleasure. | |
| <u>The Destiny Thief: Essays on Writing, Writers and Life</u> | Russo, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>The Whore's Child and Other Stories</u> | Russo, Richard | *** | <u>Aug 02</u> | Seven well-constructed short stories with masterful descriptive language and character development. |  |
| <u>Trajectory</u> | Russo, Richard | **** | <u>5/23/17</u> | Next. Some of us fear what comes next. Richard Russo offers four stories in his book titled, <u>Trajectory</u> . The characters are tied up in knots of one form or another, in relationships, with medical issues, with ambivalence, anxiety and concern about what comes next. Russo mines that fear and shares it with readers using finely written prose that makes us love and hate different characters and want to see them progress on either their current or a different trajectory. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this book. |  |
| <u>CIA, Inc.: Espionage and the Craft of Business Intelligence</u> | Rustmann, Jr., F.W. | * | <u>Sep 02</u> | Primer on the do's and don'ts of engaging in corporate intelligence gathering, including some shady recommendations that should be avoided. |  |
| <u>Last Day</u> | Ruta, Domenica | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

[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 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.



Shock. I should pay more attention to tracking a new genre in contemporary fiction: the post-financial crisis novel. One worthy contribution to this category is Donal Ryan's debut novel, [The Spinning Heart](#). There's shock among the twenty one narrators of this novel in the aftermath of the severe economic downturn in Ireland. A construction company was the major employer in a small town. The multiple voices contribute individual perspectives on what happened and the impact on all lives in the town. Ryan's prose captures the unique voices and I found both his dialogue and descriptive language to be entertaining despite the bleak subject matter. Readers willing to try out a debut novelist will find a lot to enjoy in this finely written book. **Shock.** I should pay more attention to tracking a new genre in contemporary fiction: the post-financial crisis novel. One worthy contribution to this category is Donal Ryan's debut novel, [The Spinning Heart](#). There's shock among the twenty one narrators of this novel in the aftermath of the severe economic downturn in Ireland. A construction company was the major employer in a small town. The multiple

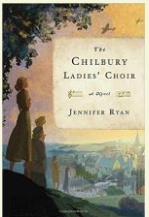


[The Spinning Heart](#)

Ryan, Donal

[3/25/14](#)



voices contribute individual perspectives on what happened and the impact on all lives in the town. Ryan's prose captures the unique voices and I found both his dialogue and descriptive language to be entertaining despite the bleak subject matter. Readers willing to try out a debut novelist will find a lot to enjoy in this finely written book.

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|---|-----------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Chilbury Ladies' Choir</u> | Ryan, Jennifer | ***** | <u>1/23/18</u> | <p>Harmony. There were many places in the debut novel titled, <u>The Chilbury Ladies' Choir</u>, by Jennifer Ryan where she could have veered into soap opera. Instead, this story of World War II life in an English village stayed focused on developing interesting characters and developing an engaging plot. Part of Ryan's structure involves letters from individual characters, and I found that approach fresh and interesting. There's a harmony in this novel beyond the vocal talents of the choir members in the title. Village life during the Battle of Britain drew me into the story and led me to care about every character.</p> |  |
| Last Harvest: How a Cornfield Became New Daleville | Rybczynski, Witold | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| Between Two Worlds: My Life and Captivity in Iran | Saberi, Roxana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |

The Bet: Paul Ehrlich, Julian Simon, and Our Gamble over Earth's Future

Sabin, Paul

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.

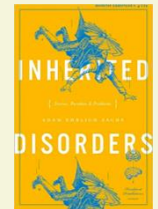


Inherited Disorders: Stories, Parables & Problems

Sachs, Adam Ehrlich

5/26/16

Patrimony. For Father's Day reading, consider the debut by Adam Ehrlich Sachs titled, Inherited Disorders. In over a hundred short and shorter chapters, Sachs riffs on the many different dimensions of father-son relationships. The stories are funny, poignant, sometimes sad, and always witty and well-written. Sometimes the sins of the father are repeated, often the sons take the opposite path from the father. A sense of disorder permeates many stories, as does Sachs' insight into human nature and the ways in which we behave.

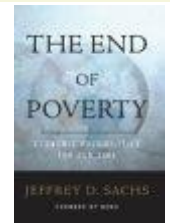


The End of Poverty / Growing The World's Wealth In An Age Of Extremes

Sachs, Jeffrey

Unread

Shelf of Reproach 2005

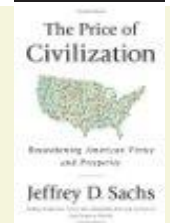


The Price of Civilization: Reawakening American Virtue and Prosperity

Sachs, Jeffrey D.

Unread

Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012.



The Great Partnership: Science, Religion, and the Search for Meaning

Sachs, Jonathan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



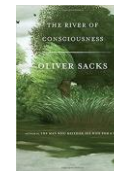
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| <u>Hallucinations</u> | Sachs, Oliver | **** | <u>4/12/13</u> | <p>Varieties. Any reader interested in the workings of the mind should consider reading Oliver Sachs' <u>Hallucinations</u>. Dr. Sachs is a neurologist and professor and in this book he presents a wide variety of types of hallucinations, and presents them in a lively manner through case histories, including his own experience. I found this book to be engaging reading, and in the section where Sachs described his personal experimentation with psychedelics in his youth, I almost said, "I'll have what he's having." Instead, I took a sip of wine and read on. At least I think that's what happened.</p> |  |
| <u>Everything in its Place</u> | Sacks, Oliver | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>The Mind's Eye</u> | Sacks, Oliver | *** | <u>7/27/11</u> | <p>Cases. Readers who enjoy a blend of personal stories and science will be those who most appreciate Oliver Sachs' latest book, <u>The Mind's Eye</u>. This book blends the author's personal story with some medical cases, all of which present a fascinating story about how the mind adapts to changes in vision. Sachs suffers from a condition called "face blindness" in which he cannot visually identify individuals, even those he has met often. Other cases include a professional musician who can no longer see musical scores, but plays now from memory, and a writer who can no longer read, but continues to be able to write. While the book contains footnotes and a bibliography, the reading audience is likely to be general readers, not professionals.</p> |  |

[The River of Consciousness](#)

Sacks, Oliver

[6/2/18](#)

Essays. Fans of the late scientist Oliver Sacks will enjoy reading a book of his essays titled, [The River of Consciousness](#), that he was working on at the time of his death. Each essay reveals Sacks' fine writing, his intelligent curiosity, and his ability to tell interesting stories to general readers. I enjoyed every page of this collection, and closed the last page wanting to read more.



Orkney

Sackville, Amy

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

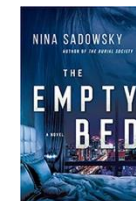


[The Empty Bed](#)


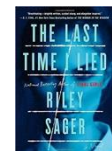
Sadowsky, Nina


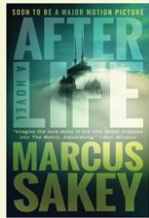
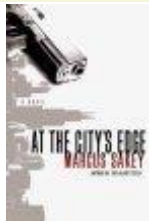
[7/15/20](#)


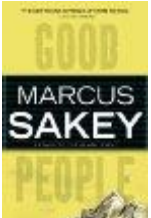
Twists. The twisting and thrilling action in Nina Sadowsky's novel titled, [The Empty Bed](#), starts on the first few pages and never lets up. We meet Eva and Peter in Hong Kong where they have come from London to celebrate their wedding anniversary. When Peter wakes up the morning after their arrival, Eva is missing. As we learn more, we begin to wonder about both Peter and Eva. Peter asks his London boss, Forrest "Holly" Holcomb, for help finding Eva, so Holly calls his former lover, Catherine, who runs the Burial Society, a group that hides people from evildoers. Catherine dispatches two agents to Hong Kong while she heads to Mexico City to protect others. Sadowsky keeps weaving a web of intrigue, tosses a few red herrings, and keeps us wanting to find out more. Fans of suspense thrillers are those most likely to enjoy this novel and the others in the Burial Society series.




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|---|-----------------|------|----------------|--|---|
| <u>Scandalmonger</u> | Safire, William | *** | <u>6/00</u> | A precise historical rendering with a made-up story set in Revolutionary times. |  |
| <u>Spread the Word</u> | Safire, William | *** | | Another chance to read his greatest columns from <i>The New York Times</i> . |  |
| <u>The Book of Vice: Very Naughty Things (and How to Do Them)</u> | Sagal, Peter | *** | <u>Jan 08</u> | Armchair. Sagal reports on the fieldwork he did, often with his wife, to tell the rest of us about seven vices. Smiles and chuckles all around, especially as we learn that many vices are boring. |  |
| <u>Home Before Dark</u> | Sager, Riley | **** | <u>8/19/20</u> | Baneberry. I find that a creepy novel with strange happenings in an old house provides just the right dose of chills to break the heat of summer. In Riley Sager's novel titled, <u>Home Before Dark</u> , the house is Baneberry Hall, and stuff that happened there in the past and present can give slowly paced chills to readers. Protagonist Maggie Holt lived in the house briefly when she was a child. After her father's death twenty-five years later, she inherits Baneberry Hall which she didn't know her father still owned. He profited from a book about their brief time in the house, and that story within a story breaks the pace of this novel by alternating the past and present events in the house. There are just enough twists to satisfy most readers, and for those of us who live in old houses, we might do one more check tonight before heading to bed. |  |

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|---|-----------------|------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Lock Every Door</u> | Sager, Riley | **** | <u>11/14/19</u> | <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>The Last Time I Lied</u> | Sager, Riley | *** | <u>12/6/18</u> | <p>Camp. Riley Sager has set his thriller titled, <u>The Last Time I Lied</u>, in two time periods, now and fifteen years ago, at Camp Nightingale. Protagonist Emma was a camper there fifteen years ago when girls with whom she shared a cabin disappeared. When asked by the camp's owner to return for the camp reopening fifteen years later, Emma agrees, in the hope that the mystery of the disappearance would get resolved. Sager provides the requisite twists and high levels of adrenaline producing tension. Fans of thrillers are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The Year of the Runaways</u> | Sahota, Sunjeev | **** | <u>3/23/17</u> | <p>Desperation. I would have overlooked Sunjeev Sahota's novel titled, <u>The Year of the Runaways</u>, had it not been shortlisted for the Man Booker prize. Thanks to that alert, I enjoyed reading this intense novel about the experience of illegal and legal immigrants from India trying to eke out a living in England. The characters behave in ways that reveal their deep desperation to earn money for families at home, to pay off debts, and to make a new life in a strange country. Whatever your views on immigration, you're likely to be enthralled by</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>this finely told story of the struggles of people just like us.</p> <p>Transitional. I finished reading Marcus Sakey's novel, A Better World, feeling deeply unsatisfied. This sequel to <i>Brilliance</i> moved the story along, but left so many plot themes hanging that an interested reader is forced to await the next installment. I'm likely to read that novel and can consider this book as a transition between the first novel that I loved, and the next one which I hope provides more resolution to the narrative.</p> | |
| A Better World | Sakey, Marcus | *** | 10/18/14 | |  |
| Afterlife | Sakey, Marcus | **** | 11/21/17 | <p>Echo. I like the ways in each of his novels that Marcus Sakey leads readers into thinking about what's important. In his thriller titled, Afterlife, Sakey does his usual battle between good and evil, and adds a creative way of thinking about what happens after we die. Protagonists Will Brody and Claire McCoy work together at the FBI and are both killed by the same criminal. They meet again after death in a setting that looks similar to the "real" world only transformed, more like an echo. Sakey leads them into layers of an afterlife, each one more desolate as they search for a malevolent force feeding on fear and death. The temptation to compromise with evil remains present with every good person, and Sakey enlivens the action of this novel with the nuance of what else might have been. Fans of thrillers will love the action of this novel, and anyone who thinks about what comes after death will be presented with a version here that I found interesting and enjoyable.</p> |  |
| At the City's Edge | Sakey, Marcus | ** | June 08 | <p>Duller. Second novel weaker in character development than his debut, The Blade Itself. This one delivers fast-moving plot and lots of energetic excitement with characters for whom we couldn't care less what happens.</p> |  |

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|------------------------------------|---------------|-------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Brilliance</u> | Sakey, Marcus | ***** | <u>1/21/14</u> | <p>Gifted. I'm a sucker for a good dystopian novel. I loved reading <u>Brilliance</u> by Marcus Sakey because of his skill in a constructing a world just close enough to our own to give me chills. He presents a new way in which we separate "us" versus "them," and constructs a government that manipulates citizens and operates without oversight or accountability. In the world Sakey creates, one percent of the population born since 1980 has a level of giftedness, or brilliance, a special enhanced skill of one kind or another. The majority are called "norms" and the brilliant are labeled, "abnorms." Through testing children, the government identifies and selects the most brilliant, then removes them from their families to attend special schools in which their names are changed and their talents are channeled. Some of the abnorms have become terrorists, and a special unit of the government called "Equitable Services" tracks them down. The protagonist of this novel is Nick Cooper, an abnorm who works for Equitable Services. The suspense and tension of this novel remains sharp from beginning to end. Nick and the other characters are well developed, and the current or near future world that Sakey creates is believable enough to be truly frightening. I loved this novel from beginning to end, and expect that it will appeal to those readers who like action novels with a dystopian twist.</p> |  |
| <u>Good People</u> | Sakey, Marcus | *** | <u>Nov 08</u> | <p>Greedy. Thrilling novel in which ordinary people, Tom and Anna Reed, end up in extraordinary circumstances as Sakey reveals aspects of our nature that we would prefer to pretend do not exist.</p> |  |

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|---|---------------|------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Amateurs</u> | Sakey, Marcus | *** | <u>8/28/09</u> | <p>Games. Each character in Marcus Sakey's new thriller, <u>The Amateurs</u>, exhibits poor judgment consistently. Four individuals have gravitated toward each other for a regular Thursday night bar meeting at which they play games to avert attention from the emptiness of their lives, and their struggle to find meaning, purpose and satisfaction. As Sakey has done in his earlier books, he's created individuals who feel the way many readers feel, but who do things that most of us would never do. What these four amateurs do will require a reader to suspend a lot of disbelief. Sakey keeps the tension high, the action interesting, and allows readers to become immersed in the story. <u>The Amateurs</u> delivers thrilling entertainment.</p> |  |
| <u>The Blade Itself</u> | Sakey, Marcus | *** | <u>Mar 07</u> | <p>Consequences. A promising debut novel with a suspenseful plot, interesting characters and an exploration of the consequences that follow choices.</p> |  |
| <u>The Two Deaths of Daniel Hayes</u> | Sakey, Marcus | *** | <u>12/11/11</u> | <p>Uncertainty. Readers who like creative and thrilling plots are those most likely to enjoy Marcus Sakey's novel, <u>The Two Deaths of Daniel Hayes</u>. Sakey keeps readers uncertain about what's going on especially by having the protagonist suffer amnesia. Readers interpret actions through Hayes' limited and unclear recollections. Sakey also keeps it unclear about who's on Hayes' side and who's the enemy. Despite the thrilling plot, I found that I developed no empathy for any of the characters.</p> |  |
| <u>Written in Fire</u> | Sakey, Marcus | **** | <u>1/10/17</u> | <p>Finale. Readers who spent time reading the first two books in Marcus Sakey's Brilliance Trilogy are those most likely to enjoy reading the finale titled, <u>Written in Fire</u>. Sakey brings all the key players to the New Canaan Holdfast or to Washington, D.C. and the showdown progresses at a rapid pace.</p> |  |

Sakey brings just enough resolution to the story, while leaving possibilities for what may follow after the last page. Readers who enjoy dystopian novels may find this trilogy interesting reading.

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|---|----------------|--------|----------------|---|---|
| Folks, This Ain't Normal: A Farmer's Advice for Happier Hens, Healthier People, and a Better World | Salatin, Joel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>SHAM</u> | Salerno, Steve | *** | <u>Dec 05</u> | Repercussions. Expose of the self-help and actualization movement showcases fraud and lack of empirical results. Alarming conclusions on the impact of quackery on health care, education and psychology. |  |
| <u>The Method to the Madness: Donald Trump's Ascent as Told by Those Who Were Hired, Fired, Inspired--and Inaugurated</u> | Salkin, Allen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Sarah Jane</u> | Sallis, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>All That Is</u> | Salter, James | ***** | <u>9/10/13</u> | Episodes. It was well worth the wait. It's been decades since there's been a new novel from master craftsman James Salter. His new novel, <u>All That Is</u> , is the best novel I've read in a long time. Salter uses disjointed episodes in this life of protagonist Philip Bowman, to reveal the inconsistencies of our human condition. Bowman is a good guy and a bad guy, just like us. You can like him for some things |  |

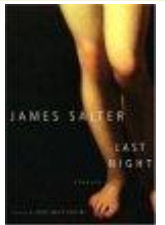
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| | | | | he does, and hate him for others. We first meet Bowman on a ship at the end of World War II. That provides the introduction to Salter's study of his contemporaries: men of the twentieth century, who came of age during war, and followed that experience with ups and downs, joys and screw-ups. Salter builds each sentence through choosing the perfect word every time. He presents aspects of the emptiness of life with a fullness of language. If there's one novel you read this year, make it this one. | |
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Last Night

Salter, James

Feb 06

Absorbing. Ten masterful short stories, easy to absorb slowly, and then yearn to re-read. Characters described precisely and prose is consistently beautiful.

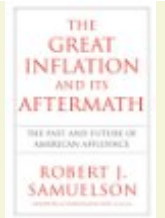


The Great Inflation and Its Aftermath: The Past and Future of American Affluence

Samuelson, Robert J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009



Cold Skin

Sanchez, Albert

Read, but not reviewed.

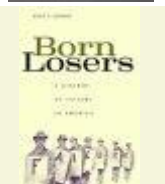


Born Losers: A History of Failure in America

Sandage, Scott A.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead

Sandberg, Sheryl

6/20/13

Equality. Gender issues and viewpoints are often divisive, no place more than at work. Facebook executive Sheryl Sandberg expanded her TED talk on gender equality into a readable book on the subject titled, Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead. Whether you are male or female, and no matter what kind of work you perform, you're likely to find something in this book to engage your attention, draw out your views, and lead you to want to talk about them with someone else. Sandberg has brought fresh attention to this subject, and any reader interested in gender equality should consider reading this book.



Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?

Sandel, Michael J.

2/25/10

Socratic. After reading Michael Sandel's Justice: What's the Right Thing To Do?, I found it easy to understand why his Harvard class is so popular. Sandel makes philosophy feel alive as he poses tough questions about who we are as individuals and within a society and who we strive to be. This is not a finger-pointing presentation of moral philosophy; it's a challenging presentation of questions that we ask ourselves and how others have answered them, leaving gaps and consequences. Many of our current political conflicts relate to matters of virtue and the common good: financial bailouts, taxation, health care, war, national defense. Using Sandel's questions as a guide, we can explore the ways in which we formulate answers both as individuals and within a society.

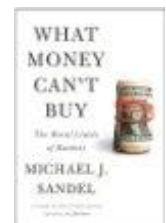


What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets

Sandel, Michael J.

5/25/12

Community. Philosophers help us explore answers to important questions. Harvard professor Michael J. Sandel asks some of those important questions in a new book titled, What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets. Democracy requires that citizens share in common life as we blend in with one another in the course of daily



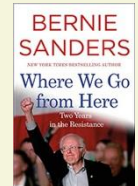
living. How do we want to live together? Do we want a society where everything is for sale? “Are there certain moral and civic goods that markets do not honor and money cannot buy?” (p.203). Any reader interested in these questions should consider reading this fine book.

Movement. In his book titled, Where We Go from Here: Two Years in the Resistance, 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.

Where We Go from Here: Two Years in the Resistance

Sanders, Bernie

2/8/19

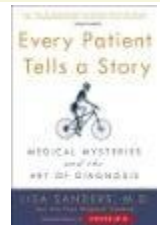


Every Patient Tells a Story: Medical Mysteries and the Art of Diagnosis

Sanders, Lisa

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010



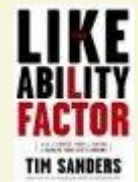
The Likeability Factor: How to Boost Your L-Factor and Achieve Your Life's Dreams

Sanders, Tim

**

July 05

Honey. No surprise in this how-to book that those who are liked usually get what they want. For those not liked, it’s hard to imagine them working on friendship, relevance, empathy and realness to become more likeable.

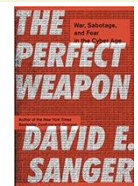


The Perfect Weapon: War, Sabotage, and Fear in the Cyber Age

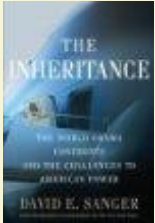
Sanger, David

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.

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|---|------------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| The Inheritance: The World Obama Confronts and the Challenges to American Power | Sanger, David E. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
|---|------------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|

Change. In Jose Saramago's novel, [Death With Interruptions](#), death is a woman who takes a pause from her work thereby leaving the injured and old alive. Through giant descriptive paragraphs, Saramago riffs on what happens when no one dies, and he does a bang up job describing the bureaucratic reaction of the government and the church to this change. Following her break, death resumes but with a new process: the sending of a letter on violet paper. When one intended recipient of a letter doesn't receive it, death becomes a bit flummoxed and her personality and reaction are endearing. Meandering through long paragraphs of ideas can become a bit tedious at times, but the personalization of death is so well worth the trouble that by the end of the novel, I was feeling sorry for poor death.

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|---|----------------|--------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| <u>Death With Interruptions</u> | Saramago, Jose | *** | <u>8/18/09</u> | |  |
| Seeing | Saramago, Jose | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |

The Double

Saramago, Jose

Unread

Shelf of Reproach 2004

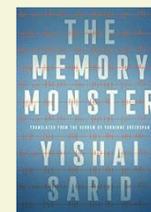


[The Memory Monster](#)

Sarid, Yishai

[12/21/20](#)

Holocaust. In his novel titled, [The Memory Monster](#), Yishai Sarid presents the report of an unnamed narrator to the head of Yad Vashem describing his life as a historian and his immersion into every detail of the Holocaust. We read about what the historian learned about extermination methods and processes at the death camps, and how he presented what he learned to groups visiting the sites of the Holocaust. As we turn the pages, we feel the building presence of hate, and how obsession changes over time. We see the combination of hate and power and the ease with which a path to murder can occur. The power of the past dominates the present for this historian, and we observe how the force of memory can overpower one's will.

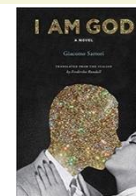


[I Am God](#)

Sartori, Giacomo

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

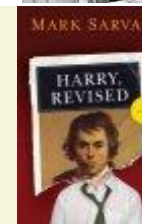


Harry, Revised

Sarvas, Mark

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

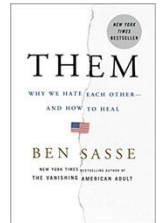


Them: Why We Hate Each Other--and How to Heal

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.

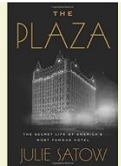


The Plaza: The Secret Life of America's Most Famous Hotel

Satow, Julie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



In Persuasion Nation

Saunders, George

Sept 06

Consumed. Short stories that pack a wallop focus on the excesses of our commercialized and media overwhelming society, and reveal our humanity in ways that are refreshing and hope-filled.

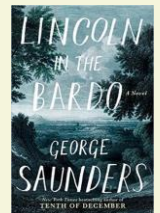


Lincoln in the Bardo

Saunders, George

3/14/17

Virtuoso. Veteran master of the short story genre, George Saunders, has written a debut novel titled, Lincoln in the Bardo. Lincoln is the President, and the bardo is like purgatory, a transitory state after death. Lincoln's eleven-year-old son, Willie, has died and sorrow and grief overwhelm the president in 1862 as he is also realizing that the war between the states is likely to be both long and bloody. With that as the context, Saunders structures a delightfully funny and engaging novel, packed with characters, mostly dead souls, and he uses their voices to draw us into the time and place. Saunders displays great writing virtuosity as each voice adds a perspective and insight into who we are and how



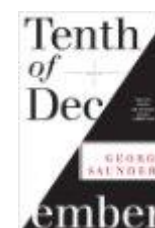
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| | | | | we deal with everything life can throw at us. Every voice offers some way in which a reader can achieve understanding and empathy. I enjoyed this novel so much, I may read it again. Readers who enjoy literary fiction and are willing to go with Saunders' flow that can be confusing at times, are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel. | |
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Tenth of December

Saunders, George

3/7/13

Masterful. Readers who enjoy short stories are those most likely to appreciate the first collection in six years from a real master of this genre, George Saunders. The stories in Tenth of December are short and shorter, and each one packs a wallop. I finished some only to reread, trying to answer the questions: what did he just do and how did he do it. Some readers will find selected stories to be disturbing or dystopic. Part of Saunders' skill is in taking elements of our familiar world, and using extreme characters and unusual situations as ways to reflect the range of human behavior. I loved these stories, and highly recommend this collection.



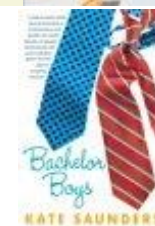
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| The Braindead Megaphone | Saunders, George | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
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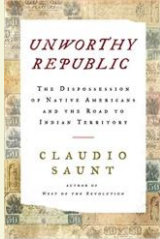

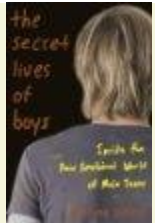


Bachelor Boys

Saunders, Kate

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



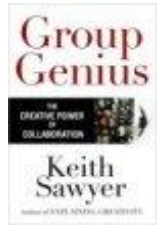
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| <u>Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory</u> | Saunt, Claudio | ***** | <u>5/15/20</u> | Expulsion. Fans of well-written history for general readers will appreciate the book by Claudio Saunt titled, <u>Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory</u> . This University of Georgia teacher delivers a sober presentation of the expulsion of Native Americans from their homes and land. Saunt examines the rationale used to justify the displacement of people and documents the violence and cruelty as the policies were carried out. As contemporary readers, we discover some of the foundations of white supremacy in the United States, and the ways in which greed and incompetence can lead to disastrous results. |  |
| <u>Say Say Say</u> | Savage, Lila | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| The Secret Lives of Boys: Inside the Raw Emotional World of Male Teens | Saval, Malina | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Gomorrah | Saviano, Roberto | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| <u>The Piranhas: The Boy Bosses of Naples</u> | Saviano, Roberto | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

Group Genius

Sawyer, Keith

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

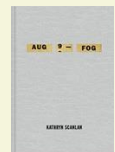


[Aug 9 – Fog](#)

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.

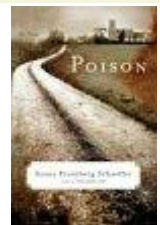


Poison

Schaeffer, Susan
Fromberg

Unread

Shelf of Reproach 2006

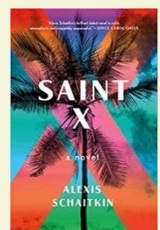


[Saint X](#)

Schaitkin, Alexis

[5/26/20](#)

Repercussions. One key event has repercussions in the many lives presented by Alexis Schaitkin in her debut novel titled, [Saint X](#). At the end of the Thomas family's vacation on a Caribbean island, eighteen-year-old Alison disappears and is found dead, changing forever the lives of her parents and her seven-year-old sister, Claire. Schaitkin carries readers along with a plot and multiple narrators weaving forward and backward in time as we learn what happened from various points of view. Claire is the novel's protagonist, and her life has become



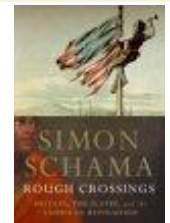
consumed with learning what really happened to Alison and what her big sister was really like. Beneath the plot level, Schaitkin delves into issues of white privilege, racism and class differences. Through the impact of Alison in life and death on a number of minor characters, we see the repercussions of one person's life on many others. The examination of multiple lives takes patience, but close readers will emerge from this novel with a heightened sense of the impact of any single event on multiple lives, for better or for worse, but certainly forever.

Rough Crossings

Schama, Simon

Unread

Shelf of Reproach 2006



The American Future

Schama, Simon

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009. I got as far as page 70, and decided to wait for the future instead of finishing the book.

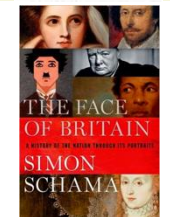


The Face of Britain

Schama, Simon

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



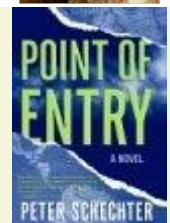
Point of Entry

Schechter, Peter

**

Sept 06

Implausible. Debut novel proposes new terror threat: a plan by Syria to smuggle enriched uranium to the U.S. via Colombian drug mules. Thanks to an emerging love interest between the U.S. President and the President of Columbia, we're safe for another day.

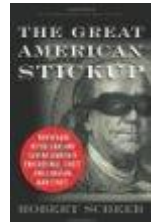


The Great
American
Stickup: How
Reagan
Republicans and
Clinton
Democrats
Enriched Wall
Street While
Mugging Main
Street

Scheer, Robert

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010

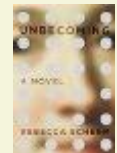


Unbecoming

Scherm, Rebecca

6/26/15

Lies. The debut novel by Rebecca Scherm titled Unbecoming should appeal to those readers who enjoy fiction with deeply developed complex characters. Protagonist and narrator Grace draws readers into her life of thievery and lies which has made her the person she is today. Scherm upends the usual coming of age story by showing a deflection point, a theft, and how that led Grace on a path toward hiding her identity rather than becoming a mature adult. I was delighted with Scherm's clever prose and adroit character development. Those readers interested in finding a new literary voice should consider picking up this novel.

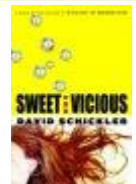


Sweet and
Vicious

Schickler, David

Oct 05

Trying. All the interesting and memorable characters are trying hard to do something that leads to humor, and fine reading entertainment, especially for those looking to escape in a wacky story.

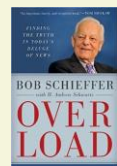


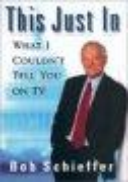


Overload:
Finding the
Truth in Today's
Deluge of News

Schieffer, Bob

12/18/17

Journalism. In his book titled, Overload: Finding the Truth in Today's Deluge of News, Bob Schieffer practices journalism while he opines on the current state of journalism. He conducted about forty interviews with media practitioners and provided context thanks to his decades of experiences in different forms of journalism. The sources of news



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| | | | | have proliferated, and the curating role of media leaders has diminished. Rigorous fact-checked stories and reckless unverified stories are listed side by side, minute by minute, leaving the receiver to sort the true from the fake. Schieffer makes a case for the importance of authentic journalism in our society. | |
| <u>This Just In: What I Couldn't Tell You on TV</u> | Schieffer, Bob | *** | <u>July 03</u> | Conversational. CBS reporter tells engaging stories about his work and life that will leave readers with many good feelings, and lots of good laughs. |  |
| <u>Cleopatra: A Life</u> | Schiff, Stacy | *** | <u>2/18/11</u> | Determined. I picked up Stacy Schiff's <u>Cleopatra: A Life</u> , with half-hearted interest. After all, I've read and seen the Shakespeare play, and Elizabeth Taylor must have nailed the role in the movie, since her image remains vivid in my memory. I quickly became engrossed in this finely written historical account of a powerful woman who became a very capable queen, acting with bold defiance against those who could do her harm. Her ambition was formidable, and she acted in ways that continually increased her power. Schiff acknowledges that much of the historical account is missing, but what she presents seems quite plausible. Readers who like history will enjoy this account which takes a mythic figure and fleshes her out in ways that separate myth from likely reality. |  |
| <u>The Witches: Salem, 1692</u> | Schiff, Stacy | **** | <u>1/5/16</u> | Comprehensive. Readers who enjoy history presented after deep and rich research, and delivered in readable prose, are those most likely to enjoy Stacy Schiff's book titled, <u>The Witches</u> . Schiff examines all the records she could get her hands on to relate to contemporary readers what really happened in Salem in 1692. Many of us think we know about the Salem witch trials, but I doubt few of us bring the perspective that Schiff offers. Any |  |

reader interested in this time period and this event should enjoy this book.

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|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Fin & Lady</u> | Schine, Cathleen | ***** | <u>1/21/14</u> | <p>Guardians. Within a few pages, I was hooked by the charming characters in Cathleen Schine's novel, <u>Fin & Lady</u>. Schine set this novel in the 1960s, and she describes that turbulent time period with wit and through great dialogue and descriptive language. The protagonists are half-siblings and while the older Lady has legal guardianship over eleven-year-old Fin, her panache leads to his strong feelings of responsibility for her. They are both children, and rely heavily on each other. In Dickens, they would be poor orphans. Schine prefers portraits of wealth: they live in a Manhattan apartment with cleaning and cooking provided by Mabel, the maid who comes there every day. They slip off to Capri every summer. While this is not the story of average orphans, their unconventional life resonates for every reader: caring for those we love with diligence. I enjoyed this novel from beginning to the very satisfying end.</p> |  |
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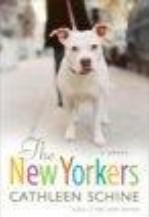
[The Grammarians](#)

Schine, Cathleen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



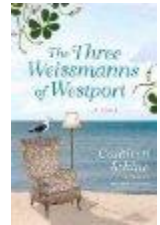
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| The New Yorkers | Schine, Cathleen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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The Three
Weissmanns of
Westport

Schine, Cathleen

12/21/10

Abandonment. A reader looking for an entertaining and well-written novel about love and relationships could take a look at Cathleen Schine's The Three Weissmanns of Westport. Protagonist Betty Weissmann finds herself divorced after fifty years of marriage, and both her daughters have faced setbacks and losses, so the three end up living together. What follows is an exploration of relationships and family, and the discovery of love, as three women move on and life renewed and enriched lives.

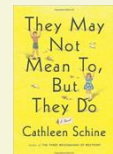


They May Not
Mean To, But
They Do

Schine, Cathleen

7/8/16

Dynamics. Cathleen Schine presents three generations of a family and their unique yet universal interpersonal dynamics in her novel titled, They May Not Mean To, But They Do. You may either laugh or cry, depending on your age and your disposition to all that life can bring. I never expected to laugh so much while reading a novel that begins and ends with urine. The roles of parents and children, caretakers and caregivers, are tossed around, as well as the ways in which we either adapt or hold on when experiencing change. New Yorkers will understand not wanting to leave a rent controlled apartment. This funny and poignant novel offers a glimpse into family life that will resonate for many readers, and will delight even those who see nothing of themselves or their own families in this novel.




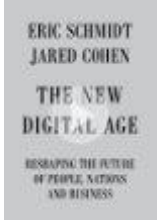
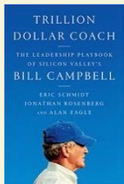
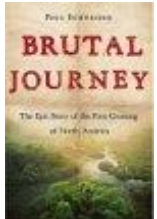
War and the
American
Presidency

Schlesinger, Jr.,
Arthur M.

Nov 04


Surprises. "The study of history teaches us that the future is full of surprises." Brief and cogent exploration of what's consistent and what's different between Iraq and prior American conflicts.



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|---|--|--------|-----------------|--|---|
| Command and Control: Nuclear Weapons, the Damascus Accident, and the Illusion of Safety | Schlosser, Eric | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| The New Digital Age: Reshaping the Future of People, Nations and Business | Schmidt, Eric and Jared Cohen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>Trillion Dollar Coach: The Leadership Playbook of Silicon Valley's Bill Campbell</u> | Schmidt, Eric, Jonathan Rosenberg and Alan Eagle | ***** | <u>10/15/19</u> | Tribute. Three current or former Google executives offer a touching tribute to their late friend, mentor and coach in a book titled, <u>Trillion Dollar Coach: The Leadership Playbook of Silicon Valley's Bill Campbell</u> . 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. |  |
| Brutal Journey | Schneider, Paul | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |

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|--|------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth</u> | Schor, Juliet B. | *** | <u>7/23/10</u> | Sustainability. Changing personal habits requires attentiveness to behavior, and a desire to change from one way of doing things to another. Changing collective behavior becomes even more complicated, as systems are established to support expected behavior. Boston College professor Juliet Schor's new book, <u>Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth</u> , offers readers an opportunity to think about behavior and detecting when enough is enough. To achieve sustainability especially of our natural resources, certain behaviors need to change. Schor presents ways in which we can think differently about how we live. |  |
| Come to Think of It: Notes on the Turn of the Millennium | Schorr, Daniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| <u>Staying Tuned: A Life in Journalism</u> | Schorr, Daniel | *** | <u>Aug 02</u> | 60 years with CBS, CNN and PBS: pushing and shoving anyone and everyone to get stories. |  |
| <u>Jeeves and the King of Clubs</u> | Schott, Ben | **** | <u>12/17/18</u> | Delightful. Ben Schott has written a worthy tribute to P.G. Wodehouse by reprising Jeeves and Bertie Wooster in a new novel titled, <u>Jeeves and the King of Clubs</u> . I realized how delighted I was by this novel when I often forgot that it was Schott not Wodehouse who wrote it. Every aspect of character, plot and language seemed true to Wodehouse, and I totally enjoyed a worthy installment to the Jeeves canon. The diversions are as enjoyable as the direct plotline, consistent with the Wodehouse novels. Fans of Jeeves and Wooster as well as Wodehouse are those readers who are most likely to enjoy this |  |

homage, and who are most likely to take Schott to task in some areas. I was delighted.

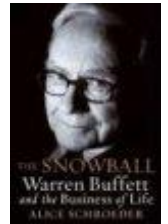
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| <u>Schott's Food and Drink Miscellany</u> | Schott, Ben | ** | <u>Jan 05</u> | Trivia. Hundreds of offbeat, funny, unusual and irrelevant factoids about food and drink through the ages. |  |
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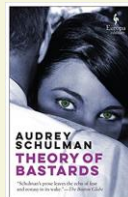
[The Snowball: Warren Buffett and the Business of Life](#)

Schroeder, Alice

[12/10/09](#)

Obsession. Alice Schroeder's comprehensive biography of the sage of Omaha is titled, [The Snowball: Warren Buffett and the Business of Life](#). Rather than hauling around the 976 page hardcover, I purchased this title for my SONY e-Reader, and picked it up and put it down dozens of times over the past year. I found [The Snowball](#) to be best devoured a few snowflakes at a time. Schroeder covers Buffett's personal and business life at a level of detail that bordered on "too much information." From a personal perspective, Buffett comes across as a quirky and needy person whose demands on others came across as unreasonable and excessive. Buffett's obsession with making money comes across as something he focused on so completely that when he needed to pay attention to other areas of life, he seemed lost and confused. Any reader with an interest in Warren Buffett will find the anecdotes and insight on these pages to be a joy to read.



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|---|------------------|-------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Theory of Bastards</u> | Schulman, Audrey | ***** | <u>6/9/18</u> | Impermanence. Audrey Schulman accomplishes so much in her novel titled, <u>Theory of Bastards</u> , that I loved every page. Protagonist Francine Burk (Frankie) is a well-developed, complex character, who resonates differently at the beginning and the end of the novel. Each human and bonobo character comes to life in the novel. Frankie's observations of bonobos lead her to the theory referenced in the title. The community Schulman describes struggles with limited resources and the |  |
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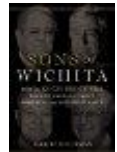
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| | | | | effects of climate change. When technology fails, the impermanence of all that is familiar requires dramatic change. There's a roller coaster of healing, hurting and hope in this novel that will appeal in a special way to those readers who enjoy literary fiction that leads one toward deeper thoughts about life. | |
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Sons of Wichita:
How the Koch
Brothers
Became
America's Most
Powerful and
Private Dynasty

Schulman,
Daniel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.



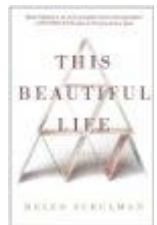
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| <u>Come With Me</u> | Schulman, Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
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[This Beautiful
Life](#)

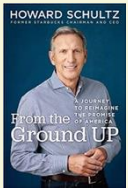
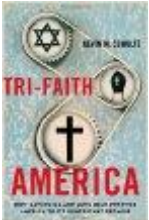
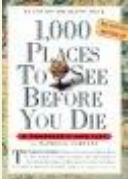
Schulman, Helen

[9/14/11](#)

Vulnerable. Our lives can change in an instant. We are vulnerable to the twists of fate, and to the actions of others that can become tragic for all. Helen Schulman presents a contemporary tragedy in her novel, [This Beautiful Life](#). The Bergamot family has relocated to Manhattan from Ithaca, New York, and they are adapting to their new environment. Fifteen-year old Jake opens an email from a girl at his private school, and in the message the girl appears nude and performs an erotic dance. After Jake forwards this message to a friend, the lives of the Bergamots are changed forever. The image on the book jacket summarizes the plot: there is a house of cards, and being vulnerable to falling apart, we are not surprised when it does. The Bergamots are not the average family, and none of the characters are particularly appealing, but the



story of their vulnerability to tragedy can be the story of everyone.

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|--|------------------------|--------|--|----------------------|---|
| <u>From the Ground Up: A Journey to Reimagine the Promise of America</u> | Schultz, Howard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Tri-Faith America: How Catholics and Jews Held Postwar America to Its Protestant Promise | Schultz, Kevin Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| 1,000 places to see before you die | Schultz, Patricia | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |

Academy. The structure of Julie Schumacher's novel, [Dear Committee Members](#), led me to think that I would lose interest quickly. We learn about the life of protagonist Jason Fitger, a creative writing college professor, through his letters of recommendation for students and staff. I expected inside baseball about life in academia. Instead, thanks to Schumacher's fine writing, I laughed at the prose in Fitger's letters, from the snarky to the caring messages he sends. Schumacher entertained me in three ways with this novel: through humor as noted; through poignant social commentary; and in developing a character who by the end of the novel becomes fully formed through the exposition in the letters of recommendation alone. Readers who

[Dear Committee Members](#)

Schumacher, Julie

[9/26/14](#)



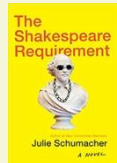
enjoy fine prose along with a good laugh are those most likely to enjoy this unusual novel.

Slapstick. The wit in Julie Schumacher's novel titled, The Shakespeare Requirement, tickled all my funny bones. Who knew that a university could be the ideal location for real slapstick humor? Any reader whose patience in meetings becomes strained will feel connected to parts of this book. The thankless role of a department chair falls to protagonist Jason Fitger, and the eccentric colleagues in the English department come alive on these pages. The buzzwords and antics of the administration and the successful Economics department kept me smiling, and what better name could Schumacher have chosen for the institution: Payne University?

The Shakespeare Requirement

Schumacher, Julie

9/12/18



All Souls

Schutt, Christine

Sep 08

Ensemble. Finely written novel set in a Manhattan prep school holds together a large ensemble of students, teachers and parents within the constraint of 240 pages.



Pure Hollywood: And Other Stories

Schutt, Christine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

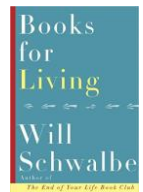


Reflective. I read Will Schwalbe's book titled, Books for Living, because I was curious to explore the reflections of someone about their reading life. I know why I read, and I wondered how much resonance there might be between my reflections about my reading life and Schwalbe's. On many pages of this well-written book, I found the insights, reasons, and perspective well-aligned with my own experience. I was delighted when I found similarities, and pleased when I saw differences.

Books for Living

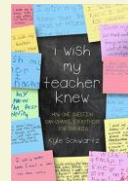
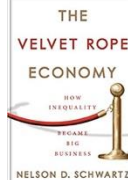


Schwalbe, Will

5/13/17



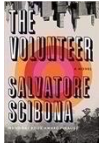
Any reader interested in taking some time away from reading to reflect about reading, can use this book as a guide, and come away from it with a few more books to add to one's reading queue.


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|--|------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| The End of Your Life Book Club | Schwalbe, Will | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less</u> | Schwartz, Barry | *** | <u>Mar 04</u> | Satisficer. With more choices in our lives, why are we less satisfied than we'd like to be? Too many choices has become a new problem to address, and this book presents what's created the paradox, and offers ideas on how to respond. |  |
| <u>Northwest Corner</u> | Schwartz, John Burnham | **** | <u>9/23/11</u> | Taut. John Burnham Schwartz reprises characters from his earlier novel, <i>Reservation Road</i> , and picks up the story twelve years later in his new book, <u>Northwest Corner</u> . Those readers with a bias against sequels may want to suspend that reaction and consider reading this finely written novel. Schwartz excels in three ways: his poetic and descriptive language is taut and often beautiful; the characters are deeply developed and relationships are both troubled and true; and the plot provides more satisfaction than many literary novels in telling a story that readers want to see resolved. Readers need not have read the earlier novel to enjoy this one. |  |
| <u>The Commoner</u> | Schwartz, John Burnham | *** | <u>Oct 08</u> | Interior. Beautifully written novel that takes readers inside Japan's imperial family, through the first commoner who enters this mysterious household through marriage. |  |

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| <u>I Wish My Teacher Knew: How One Question Can Change Everything for Our Kids</u> | Schwartz, Kyle | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>The Velvet Rope Economy: How Inequality Became Big Business</u> | Schwartz, Nelson D. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>What It Takes: Lessons in the Pursuit of Excellence</u> | Schwartzman, Stephen A. | ***** | <u>1/10/20</u> | Discipline. In his book titled, <u>What It Takes: Lessons in the Pursuit of Excellence</u> , Blackstone chairman, CEO and co-founder Stephen Schwartzman shares the lessons he's learned throughout his life. He describes his dreams and explains the discipline he exercised as he made those dream happen. His success in business has been extraordinary and his impact in philanthropy is huge and just beginning. No matter who you are or what you do, there's something Schwartzman has to say in this book that will apply to you and will resonate. |  |
| <u>Last Known Address</u> | Schwegel, Theresa | *** | <u>8/22/09</u> | Pacing. The protagonist of Theresa Schwegel's new novel, <u>Last Known Address</u> , is Chicago police detective Sloane Pearson, who has been reassigned from homicide to sex crimes. Her male co-workers and bosses are unsupportive, her boyfriend Eddie is disengaged, and her dad's heart condition has become worse. Frustrated with dead end leads, Pearson thinks she's on the trail of a serial rapist, but seems thwarted at every turn. She's dogged and while pulled in multiple directions at once, she never quits. The pacing of the novel begins slowly, and intensifies as Pearson's life and work become |  |

more complicated. Fans of crime fiction and female protagonists are likely to enjoy [Last Known Address](#).

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|---|----------------------------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| The Bushes: Portrait of a Dynasty | Schweizer, Peter and Rochelle | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------|---|---|
| The Volunteer | Scibona, Salvatore | ***** | 1/10/20 | <p>Abandoned. After most readers absorb the first dozen pages or so of Salvatore Scibona's novel titled, The Volunteer, we are hooked. After I was clobbered by the reality of a father abandoning his son at an airport, I wanted to know what this was all about. After many more pages, across multiple generations in many different places, I began to get comfortable with the ways a life can go wrong and how we can abandon others and they can abandon us. The prose is finely written, and fans of literary fiction will find much to like in this novel.</p> |  |
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| La Seduction: How the French Play the Game of Life | Sciolino, Elaine | *** | 9/9/11 | <p>Enchanté. Readers who enjoy light storytelling in nonfiction may be amused by Elaine Sciolino's charming book about France titled, La Seduction. Sciolino sees an organizing principle underlying most aspects of French culture: seduction. She moves from personal relationships to politics, to eating and drinking, to intellectual life and every aspect of life, finding in each area ample ammunition to support her premise that understanding seduction is the key to understanding the French. American Francophiles will be particularly amused by this book. It's a quick read, and her prose keeps readers engaged. Just when she comes close to beating the horse to death, she moves to another area of focus.</p> |  |
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The Only Street in Paris: Life on the Rue des Martyrs

Sciolino, Elaine

5/4/16

Community. When I walked along the rue des Martyrs in April 2015, I was unaware that a book would bring me back there a year later. Elaine Sciolino, former bureau chief for *The New York Times* in Paris, has written a lovely book about that street titled, The Only Street in Paris: Life on the Rue des Martyrs. We can fall in love with Paris for so many reasons, and Sciolino is totally enchanted by her life there. Her observations are thoughtful, and the sense of community she conveys, especially in the potluck dinner to which she draws people who live and work on the street, offers hope to each of us who does something every day to build community in the places where we live.



The Seine

Sciolino, Elaine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

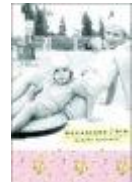


Occasions of Sin: A Memoir

Scofield, Sandra
Jean

Apr 04

Pain. Finely-written, emotionally moving coming of age story, centered on a mother-daughter relationship that will resonate for many. Author's lens transports us to 1950s Texas and transfixes us with her stories.

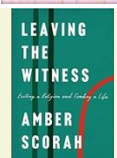


Leaving the Witness: Exiting a Religion and Finding a Life

Scorah, Amber

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Calpurnia

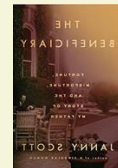

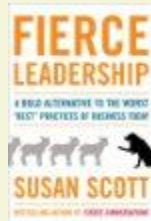
Scott, Anne

**

Oct 03

Imagery. Debut novel of estate agent trying to sell the belongings and creations of an artist, the late owner of Villa Calpurnia, a Main Line Philadelphia 19th century stone home. From many perspectives, we get to learn about the late artist and her art.



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| <u>The Beneficiary: Fortune, Misfortune, and the Story of My Father</u> | Scott, Janny | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>The World Doesn't Require You</u> | Scott, Rion Amilcar | ***** | <u>12/20/19</u> | <p>Creative. The fictional town of Cross River, Maryland links the short stories in the collection by Rion Amilcar Scott titled, <u>The World Doesn't Require You</u>. 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.</p> |  |
| <u>Fierce Leadership: A Bold Alternative to the Worst "Best" Practices of Business Today</u> | Scott, Susan | * | <u>1/2/10</u> | <p>Doubt. Susan Scott's new book is titled, <u>Fierce Leadership: A Bold Alternative to the Worst "Best" Practices of Business Today</u>, and follows her popular <i>Fierce Conversations</i>. I found Scott's writing and approach refreshing and entertaining, but not particularly insightful. Her recommended practices are rooted in candid and authentic behavior and communication. On every page, she spells out with clarity and specificity what leaders should do and how we should act. I kept asking myself, what is her advice based on? Where does all her certainty come from? When will I find a glimmer of doubt in her approach? I finished the book finding lots of specifics that some leaders may find useful. My gnawing doubt on finishing the book is that while Scott has succeeded in creating her unique brand of advice-giving consulting, those leaders who employ her better be prepared for all the ways in which her approach may be</p> |  |

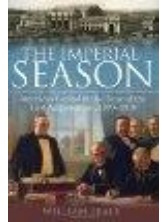
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| | | | | inappropriate for a particular situation. <u>Fierce Leadership</u> is packed with buzzwords, common sense approaches that could have come from the <i>Farmers Almanac</i> , and Scott's own quirky new-age methods that might in equal doses help or hurt an organization and its effectiveness. Any leader interesting in keeping current on what kind of advice is being offered might find some items of interest in <u>Fierce Leadership</u> . Unless your interest in this subject is strong, I recommend taking a pass on this book. | |
| <u>The Older the Fiddle, the Better the Tune</u> | Scott, Willard | * | <u>Aug 03</u> | Yadda. Occasionally pithy, sometimes inspirational, but usually vapid and monotonous comments from old people, some famous, some not. Read it and some away older, not necessarily wiser. |  |
| <u>Sudden Sea: The Great Hurricane of 1938</u> | Scotti, R. A. | *** | <u>Nov 03</u> | Stormy. Not a print version of the <i>Weather Channel</i> , but a captivating and riveting story of places and people who faced an amazing storm that caught New Englanders by surprise. |  |
| The Secret Wisdom of the Earth | Scotton, Christopher | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Maxed Out | Scurlock, James D. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

The Imperial
Season:
America's
Capital in the
Time of the First
Ambassadors,
1893-1918

Seale, William

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.

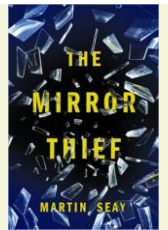


The Mirror
Thief

Seay, Martin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.

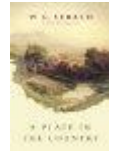


A Place in the
Country

Sebald, W.G.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.



The Almost
Moon

Sebold, Alice

Feb 08

Madness. Novel in which a woman kills her 88-year-old senile mother. An exploration of the mother-daughter relationship, mental illness and irrationality.



The Lovely
Bones

Sebold, Alice

Sep 02

Well-written, haunting first novel narrated by murdered adolescent from a memorable heaven and visits to earth.

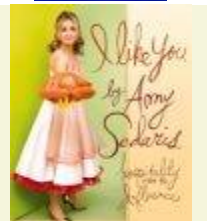


I Like You

Sedaris, Amy

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



[Calypso](#)

Sedaris, David

[7/12/18](#)

Deeper. Fans of David Sedaris will find his wit on full display in a new collection of stories titled, [Calypso](#). While earlier stories have disclosed lots about his life and his family, the new collection does so on an even deeper level. A sense of mortality weaves these stories together, and there won't be laughter when Sedaris talks about his relationship with his sister, Tiffany, at the time of her 2013 suicide. He reflects on his mother's alcoholism in deeper ways as well. But don't see this deepness as a downer. Readers will laugh at these stories because Sedaris' wit is so sharp. Most of us will also think about our own mortality and our family relationships, and that's fine.

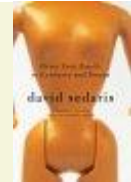


[Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim](#)

Sedaris, David

[July 04](#)

To Wit. 22 well-written, usually hilarious essays of family life, coming of age, relationships, and life's many ups and downs.

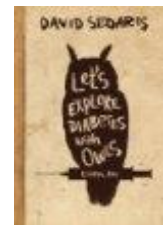


[Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls](#)

Sedaris, David

[12/27/13](#)

Stale. I finished reading the latest collection of essays by David Sedaris and had a strange feeling: I may be growing weary of this talented and funny writer. I laughed often enough during [Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls](#), and I admired his trenchant observations. When I reflected on what I had read, I realized that so much of it had become familiar that it was no longer fresh to me. I'm still likely to read his next essays individually and as collected, but I will be even more alert to the ways in which my expectations of him have grown, but much of his writing has remained the same.



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| <u>The Best of Me</u> | Sedaris, David | ***** | <u>11/24/20</u> | <p>Curated. Whenever I read David Sedaris, I find that I laugh and then I think. In his book titled, <u>The Best of Me</u>, readers get a curated collection of what Sedaris considers his best work from the past three decades. Whether you've read some of these stories and essays before, or if they are new, you're likely to find yourself laughing. While a unique voice, Sedaris also presents reflections that reveal our common humanity and the ways in which we live together, warts and all. Many readers will finish this collection with eyes open a little wider to the world around us, and to the members of our families.</p> |  |
| <u>Theft by Finding</u> | Sedaris, David | **** | <u>7/6/17</u> | <p>Voice. I spent several hours in recent days listening to David Sedaris read excerpts from his diaries as assembled in his new book titled, <u>Theft by Finding</u>. This book is a curated sample of the writer's voluminous diaries from 1977-2002. Had I read the book I would have followed Sedaris' advice, and just sampled around here and there. I chose to listen to the audiobook, because hearing the entries in the voice of David Sedaris made them more interesting and more entertaining. Fans of Sedaris are those readers most likely to enjoy reading or listening to this book.</p> |  |
| <u>When You Are Engulfed in Flames</u> | Sedaris, David | *** | <u>Aug 08</u> | <p>Burns. 24 essays crafted with just the right phrases and setup to lead to laughter and pleasure, no matter what the topic. Given that the author quit smoking, the essays on smoking are especially hot.</p> |  |
| <u>The Comet Seekers</u> | Sedgwick, Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |

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|--|--------------|------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>There Will Never Be Another You</u> | See, Carolyn | ** | <u>Dec 06</u> | <p>Children. Post 9/11 novel presents interlocking relationships showing that even in an age of terror, what endures is the special relationship between parents and children.</p> |  |
| <u>China Dolls</u> | See, Lisa | **** | <u>7/18/14</u> | <p>Friends. Fans of Lisa See are likely to enjoy her latest novel, <u>China Dolls</u>. See presents the complex relationship among three Chinese-American friends in the 1930s and 1940s. Grace, Helen and Ruby come from different backgrounds and are drawn into friendship in San Francisco during the Depression. Their work and their lives become the plot for the novel, which is packed with emotional high and low notes. Readers looking for light melodrama should take a look at this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Dreams of Joy</u> | See, Lisa | **** | <u>6/27/11</u> | <p>Sacrifice. Lisa See takes readers on a roller coaster ride of emotional ups and downs in her new novel, <u>Dreams of Joy</u>, which is a sequel to an earlier work, <i>Shanghai Girls</i>. While Pearl and May were the protagonists of the earlier novel, daughter Joy takes center stage in the sequel. At age 19 in 1957, she impulsively leaves California and heads to China to find her birth father. What follows is a dark story of the hard life in China at that time, and the failed policies of Mao. Pearl also leaves California to find Joy, and her sacrifice of love for her child and Joy's own sacrifices provide much of the emotional tone of this novel. Readers who love a well-told story and vivid description will find a lot to enjoy on these pages.</p> |  |

Shanghai Girls

See, Lisa

5/25/19

Destiny. Lisa See's latest novel, Shanghai Girls, presents a sweeping and intense story of two sisters, Pearl and May, and their turbulent lives from wealth in Shanghai in the 1930s, through wartime atrocities, and to a struggling immigrant life in Los Angeles. The heartbreak and suffering in their experience will envelop many readers, and the intensity of their sibling relationship will resonate for many other readers. The emotional volume is turned high throughout this novel, and the plight of Pearl and May becomes more compelling as time passes. See does a fine job in presenting the theme of destiny with a light touch and a deep impact.

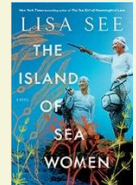


The Island of Sea Women

See, Lisa

4/4/19

Divers. Clear your calendar to spend as many hours as you need to read Lisa See's novel titled, The Island of Sea Women. 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.



The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane

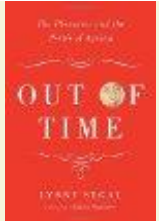
See, Lisa


2/9/18

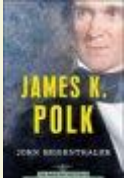
Tradition. I consumed many cups of tea while reading Lisa See's novel titled, The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane. None of those cups was brewed from the Pu Erh cake teas described in this novel, since I've never developed a taste for that tea. Give me an oolong any day, along with a second flush Darjeeling for my bride. See describes the changing lives of people across generations and continents and the ways in which tradition provides continuity for finding one's way in the world. I was

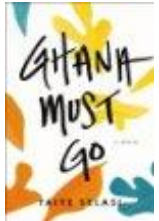


drawn into the story and the lives of these interesting characters, and before long I cared very much about what happens to them. This is a sweeping story with a big heart that will appeal to those readers who appreciate a well-told story with emotional tugs.


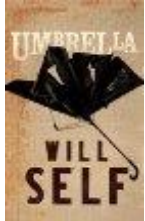
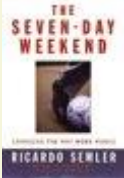
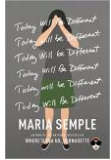

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| Out of Time: The Pleasures and the Perils of Ageing | Segal, Lynne | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
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|----------------------|------------------|-----|--------------|---|---|
| <u>The Dark Room</u> | Seiffert, Rachel | *** | <u>06/01</u> | First novel presents three ordinary Germans and their experience during and after WWII. |  |
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| <u>James K. Polk</u> | Seigenthaler, John | *** | <u>Apr 04</u> | Performance. 11 th President did great things including annexation of Texas, kicking Brits out of Oregon, and instigating a war with Mexico to take California and New Mexico. Read and learn more. |  |
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| <u>Ghana Must Go</u> | Selasi, Taiye | **** | <u>11/26/13</u> | Broken. What I enjoy most about a finely written debut novel is the pleasure in savoring well-written prose from a new voice. Taiye Selasi's debut novel, <u>Ghana Must Go</u> , gave me precisely that pleasure. The word choices always seemed perfect, and I found myself rereading some finely constructed sentences. This is the story of family and the life of Kweku Sai, a broken man whose life soared to the pinnacle of becoming a prominent surgeon in the United States and then crashed to his death in poverty in Ghana. We learn of this man in a meandering way through his former wife and his children. There is unconditional love and grief matched with resentment and sadness. Readers |  |
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who like to experience new fiction voices should consider reading this book.

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|---|-----------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Phone</u> | Self, Will | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Umbrella | Self, Will | Unread | | I read as far as page 8 and found nothing that I could latch onto. Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| The seven-day weekend : changing the way work works | Semler, Ricardo | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Today Will Be Different</u> | Semple, Maria | ***** | <u>2/3/17</u> | Unexpected. Maria Semple's writing often makes me laugh. She has a way of observing contemporary life and presenting it to us with great skill and a gentle skewering of our first world problems. In the novel titled, <u>Today Will Be Different</u> , protagonist Eleanor Flood wants to make some changes in her life. She begins with a plan, but things don't work out as planned. Partway through the novel there's a shift from Eleanor's point of view to a third person narrator and what happens from that point forward was unexpected. Read a sample of Semple's writing. If you smile from a sample, chances are you'll be entertained by the entire novel. |  |
| <u>Where'd You Go, Bernadette</u> | Semple, Maria | *** | <u>10/26/12</u> | Funny. Maria Semple's novel, <u>Where'd You Go Bernadette</u> , kept me laughing from beginning to end. Bernadette is the average Seattle stay-at-home Mom: she won a McArthur genius award; her husband Elgin is a Microsoft executive leading a two hundred person team on a project involving |  |

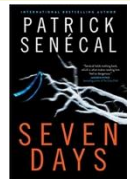
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| | | | | mind control; and fifteen year old only child, Bee, is a prodigy who convinces her parents to reward her good grades with a Christmas vacation to Antarctica. Bee's private school, fellow students and their parents are ripe for parody, and Semple mines that thread with great wit. Anyone familiar with that setting will laugh out loud. Bernadette uses a virtual assistant in India to handle much of the logistics of her life, because her social anxiety or agoraphobia leads her to stay close to home. In the tradition of <i>I Love Lucy</i> , the things that can go wrong do, and misunderstandings have significant consequences. Readers looking to read something both intelligent and funny should consider this novel. | |
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[Seven Days](#)

Senecal, Patrick

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

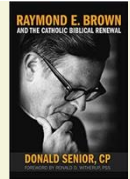


[Raymond E. Brown and the Catholic Biblical Renewal](#)

Senior, Donald

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

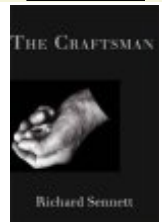


The Craftsman

Sennett, Richard

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

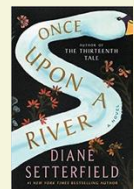


[Once Upon a River](#)

Setterfield, Diane

[3/6/19](#)

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, [Once Upon a River](#), the Thames is present, constant and changing. The



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| | | | <p>action starts dramatically at the Swan, an inn on the 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.</p> | |
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[Standing for Reason: The University in a Dogmatic Age](#)

Sexton, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



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| <p><u>A Kind of Freedom</u></p> | <p>Sexton, Margaret Wilkerson</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>9/12/18</u></p> <p>Suffering. Margaret Wilkerson Sexton's finely written debut novel titled, <u>A Kind of Freedom</u>, is set in New Orleans from World War II until after Hurricane Katrina. Sexton presents the story through three well-developed characters: Evelyn, her daughter, Jackie, and Jackie's son, T.C. Each generation suffers, sometimes in similar ways. Using fewer than three hundred pages, Sexton develops setting, character and story with great skill and insight.</p> |  |
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The Revisioners

Sexton, Margaret
Wilkerson

10/12/20

Heritage. We stand on the shoulders of the ancestors who came before us, many of whom we have never met, and whose stories we don't know. Three strong black women are connected in Margaret Wilkerson Sexton's novel titled, The Revisioners. The first-person voices alternate from 2017 (Ava) to 1924 (Josephine) to 1855 (Josephine as a child) and back again. The characters during all the time periods face danger, react quickly, and plan for a better future. Sexton lets these women talk, and our job as readers is to listen to these mothers and understand heritage and act today based on what we learn from their strength and perseverance.



The Customer Revolution: How to Thrive When Customers Are in Control

Seybold, Patricia
B.

*

07/01

If you believe customers are in charge, read this book. We found too many things to measure and advice that would be confusing to try and follow.



House of Stone: A Memoir of Home, Family, and a Lost Middle East

Shadid, Anthony

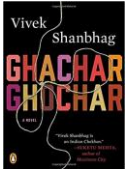

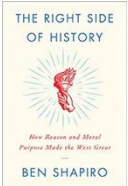
4/11/12

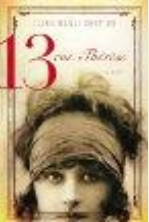
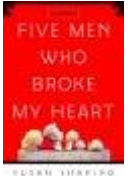
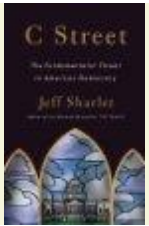


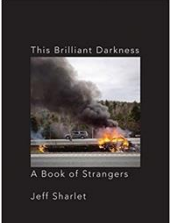
Restoration. Within the span of a few pages of Anthony Shadid's memoir, House of Stone: A Memoir of Home, Family, and a Lost Middle East, I smiled and then teared up. The centerpiece of the book is the story of his restoration of a family home in southern Lebanon. He owns a fraction of this house with a load of cousins, and decided to just go ahead and live in it, since he was the only owner residing in the region even part of the year. Anyone who has tried to restore an old house will smile at these travails. The havoc of war in the region is never far from the scene, and Shadid provides crisp and clear insight into the issues and the effects of decades of strife. What Shadid does so well is describe the people of the town and members of his family in ways that all readers will enjoy. The fact that Shadid died earlier this year led me to tear up






on occasion as I read this book. A major part of his legacy involves his extensive journalism career with *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. Another part of his legacy is the restoration of a stone house, as told in this finely written memoir.

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| <u>10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World</u> | Shafak, Elif | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Hope Never Dies</u> | Shaffer, Andrew | ***** | <u>8/27/18</u> | Investigators. Andrew Shaffer has begun a mystery series with a novel titled, <u>Hope Never Dies</u> . The two investigators are Barack Obama and Joe Biden, finding new things to do now that they have left political office. No reader would mistake this novel for fine writing, but I found the premise funny, the mystery interesting enough, and the new roles for familiar characters a real hoot. Readers looking for quick escapist reading should consider this novel. |  |
| The Caliph's House | Shah, Tahir | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Mediterranean Summer | Shalleck, David and Erol Munuz | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Home Fire</u> | Shamsie, Kamila | ***** | <u>11/24/18</u> | Sophocles. Kamila Shamsie's novel titled, <u>Home Fire</u> , offers readers a contemporary version of Antigone. Siblings are strongly bound together, while tension and conflict pull them in multiple directions. Every character is complex and fully |  |

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| | | | | <p>developed, and Shamsie's prose is finely written. Readers who enjoy literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> <p>Wealth. Vivek Shanbhag's short novel titled, <u>Ghachar Ghochar</u>, will appeal to many readers. Set in India, the focus is on an extended family transformed by wealth. A new bride enters the contented household with a different perspective on the meaning of life and the consequences of wealth in terms of dependent reliance or hard work. Expectations are at the heart of the conflicts in this novel, and the moral questions and issues are handled with delicacy. Readers without a lot of time for pleasure reading may find this novel to be a quick and satisfying break.</p> | |
| <u>Ghachar Ghochar</u> | Shanbhag, Vivek | **** | <u>7/6/17</u> | |  |
| <u>The Control Revolution</u> | Shapiro, Andrew L. | *** | <u>2/00</u> | <p>If you or your organization provide any intermediary roles, this book can help you figure out how to perform those roles in the digital world.</p> |  |
| <u>The Right Side of History: How Reason and Moral Purpose Made the West Great</u> | Shapiro, Ben | **** | <u>5/28/19</u> | <p>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, <u>The Right Side of History: How Reason and Moral Purpose Made the West Great</u>. 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 purpose and finding ways to work together for the common good.</p> |  |

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| 13, rue Thérèse | Shapiro, Elena Mauli | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| <u>Five Men Who Broke My Heart</u> | Shapiro, Susan | ** | <u>Oct 04</u> | Engaging. Self-absorbed memoir of revisiting former partners to explore what went wrong. Disarming candor, little perspective and wisdom. Likely to be appreciated by female readers who enjoy deconstructing relationships. |  |
| C Street: The Fundamentalist Threat to American Democracy | Sharlet, Jeff | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| Sweet Heaven When I Die: Faith, Faithlessness, and the Country In Between | Sharlet, Jeff | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| The Family: The Secret Fundamentalism at the Heart of American Power | Sharlet, Jeff | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| <u>This Brilliant Darkness: A Book of Strangers</u> | Sharlet, Jeff | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

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|---|--------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Family Life</u> | Sharma, Akhil | ***** | <u>5/28/14</u> | <p>Different. I loved reading Akhil Sharma's novel, <u>Family Life</u>. With great skill, Sharma removes all embellishment from his novel about an immigrant family and their encounter with tragedy in their new country. No words are wasted in his presentation of their story. After just over 200 pages, Sharma has said everything that is important about being different and being a family. Readers who love fiction that brings us into unfamiliar lives to find human nature exposed in all its reality and those most likely to enjoy reading this finely written novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The Optimism Bias: A Tour of the Irrationally Positive Brain</u> | Sharot, Tali | *** | <u>3/19/12</u> | <p>Expectations. I had something of a “wow” reaction as I read Tali Sharot's book, <u>The Optimism Bias: A Tour of the Irrationally Positive Brain</u>. Her research has led to conclusions that optimism is a survival mechanism, and at the neural level, our brain tends to frame the past as better than it was and position us to expect a better future. The regions of the brain that do these things are described in a way that's accessible to all readers, and those who like to think about thinking and are interested in how the brain works, are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p> |  |
| The Queen Mother: The Official Biography | Shawcross, William | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Wish I Could Be There | Shawn, Allen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

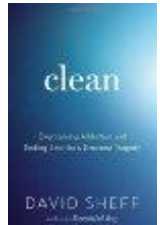
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|---|----------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Bad English: A History of Linguistic Aggravation</u> | Shea, Ammon | **** | <u>10/29/14</u> | Malleable. I was greatly entertained by Ammon Shea's book, <u>Bad English: A History of Linguistic Aggravation</u> , until he skewered me with one of those "misuses" that drives me nuts. Then, of course, I laughed at my umbrage. Shea revels in how malleable English is, and that frequent use can lead to acceptance, no matter what the grammar scolds may desire. I loved his list of 221 words now in common use that were once called out as being in error. Lovers of language who make the occasional "mistake" will love reading this book. Editors should brace for blows when writers use this book as a weapon to support word selection. |  |
| The House That George Built | Sheed, Wilfrid | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Restless Souls</u> | Sheehan, Dan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>I Saw a Man</u> | Sheers, Owen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| Resistance | Sheers, Owen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |

Clean: Overcoming Addiction and Ending America's Greatest Tragedy

Sheff, David

7/26/13

Pragmatic. David Sheff learned what he knows about the treatment of addiction the hard way: through the agony of his son's addiction to heroin and the many failed treatments the family endured. In his book, Clean: Overcoming Addiction and Ending America's Greatest Tragedy, Sheff explores what seems to work and what doesn't based on evidence. He makes clear recommendations on what to do. He indicts those programs that are not based on science and on what actually works. Any reader with an interest in addiction or mental illness will find something interesting and useful in this book.



Human Archipelago

Sheikh, Fazal and Teju Cole

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

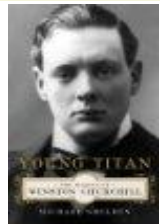


Young Titan: The Making of Winston Churchill

Shelden, Michael

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

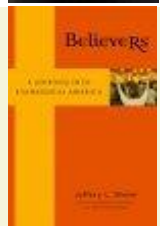


Believers

Sheler, Jeffrey

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



Cheap: The High Cost of Discount Culture

Shell, Ellen Ruppel

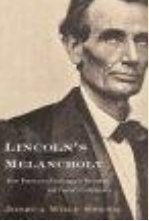

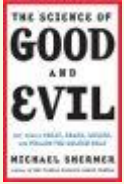
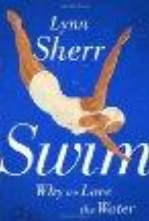

Ennui

9/21/09

I picked up this book and was impressed by the extensive footnotes and bibliography. When I reached page 3, Shell referred to "Michael" Madoff, when she meant Bernie. (Perhaps she had Michael Milken on her mind, but it was the Madoff ponzi scheme to which she was making reference). The error struck me the wrong way, and made me think



that her approach to data and facts might not be as precise as the detailed footnotes led me to believe. So, having lost confidence, I stopped reading.

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|--|--------------------|--------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Lincoln's Melancholy | Shenk, Joshua Wolf | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Two Trains Running | Shepard, Lucius | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| The Science of Good and Evil: Why People Cheat, Gossip, Care, Share and Follow the Golden Rule | Shermer, Michael | ** | Apr 04 | Skepticism. Lively and interesting scientific perspective on why we are moral: it's human nature. |  |
| Swim: Why We Love the Water | Sherr, Lynn | Unread | | I'm just not interested enough in swimming to not get bogged down in history. Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Opening Belle | Sherry, Maureen | **** | 7/22/16 | Ring. Maureen Sherry's novel, Opening Belle , would make a perfect selection for a book club because it should lead to animated conversation. It is also entertaining Summer reading, both funny and poignant. Sherry is a former Bear Stearns managing director, and her protagonist, Isabelle, is a successful Wall Street trader. Belle loves her work, and earns plenty. The workplace is dominated by men, and Sherry sets that context as |  |

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| | | | | much of the setting for her entertaining plot. Belle's handsome husband doesn't earn much, nor does he do much to care for their children or their home. Sherry will ring the chimes of those readers who delight in reading about workplace unfairness, relationship ups and downs and generally the roads taken or not taken as we decide what to do and what not to do. | |
| Why Darwin Matters | Sherwin, Michael | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| Unless | Shields, Carol | ***** | Jun 02 | Poignant novel of a woman's struggle with loss. Extraordinary writing about ordinary life from author dying of breast cancer. |  |
| The Thing About Life Is That One Day You'll Be Dead | Shields, David | *** | May 08 | Captivating. Whether you've been thinking about death or not lately, this far from maudlin book becomes captivating as Shields presents biological facts and personal anecdotes. |  |
| A Study in Revenge | Shields, Kieran | ***** | 5/10/13 | Complicated. Readers who enjoy crime fiction that requires close attention to detail and the unraveling of complexity are those most likely to appreciate Kieran Shields and his latest novel, A Study in Revenge . His debut novel, <i>The Truth of All Things</i> , entertained me, so I was primed to spend time again in Portland Maine in the late 19 th century with the same protagonists. It was time well spent, as I was entertained again, and I had to engage a few of my own brain cells to join in figuring things out. |  |

[The Truth of All Things](#)

Shields, Kieran

[3/7/13](#)

Details. Mystery fans looking for something new and different should consider the debut novel from Kieran Shields titled, [The Truth of All Things](#). Set in Portland, Maine in 1892, Shields presents historical details and tidbits that provide just the right amount of diversion that mystery lovers savor. Three protagonists are well drawn and come to life readily. Archie Lean is a deputy marshall; Perceval Grey is a freelance criminologist; and Helen Prescott is a historian. The interaction among the three provided me with great entertainment, and I found the mystery to be engaging from beginning to end.

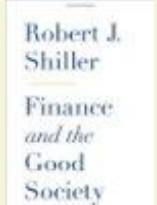


Finance and the Good Society

Shiller, Robert J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



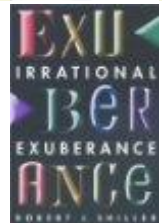
[Irrational Exuberance](#)

Shiller, Robert J.

Unread

[6/00](#)

We've loved the title phrase; we'll see about the book.

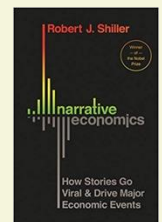






[Narrative Economics: How Stories Go Viral and Drive Major Economic Events](#)


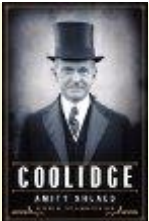
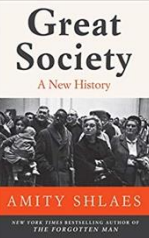

Shiller, Robert J.

[8/25/20](#)

Contagion. The novel coronavirus has gotten many of us to think about the concept of herd immunity. In his book titled, [Narrative Economics: How Stories Go Viral and Drive Major Economic Events](#), Nobel Prize winning economist Robert J. Shiller offers an adjacent theory: that the spread of stories has a powerful role in economic behavior. I know a CEO who will often frame a decision-making conversation in terms of what one would have to believe for the outcome to be probable. The beliefs of the herd can spread, and like lemmings,



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| | | | | we can follow others into economic behavior that builds momentum from beliefs that are not necessarily supported by data. Shiller's writing for general audiences is always clear and cogent. Readers interested in business, finance and economics will find something to think about after reading this book. | |
| <u>The Subprime Solution: How Today's Global Financial Crisis Happened, and What to Do about It</u> | Shiller, Robert J. | *** | <u>Dec 08</u> | Manifesto. A brisk 200 page manifesto of what the author believes should be done in the short and long term to restore confidence and stability to the financial and housing markets. |  |
| The Working Poor: Invisible in America | Shipler, David K. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| SEND: The Essential Guide to e-mail for Office and Home | Shipley, David and Will Schwalbe | * | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Astonish Me</u> | Shipstead, Maggie | ***** | <u>4/24/14</u> | Ballet. There's a terrific ensemble cast of two generations of characters in Maggie Shipstead's novel, <u>Astonish Me</u> . There's a meshing of relationships based mainly in the world of professional ballet. It's also a story of passion alongside the ways in which we act to get on with life when we face our limitations. The gifted and the ordinary are side by side, and are caught up in desire, love and betrayal. The multiple sets of relationships both repeat themes and stand unique. I found myself immersed in the world of these |  |

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| | | | | <p>individuals and was entertained thoroughly by this finely written novel.</p> <p>Classy. Social satire can be tricky to pull off. Maggie Shipstead's debut novel, <u>Seating Arrangements</u>, will delight those readers who appreciate when satire is well done. The multiple generations of WASPy characters that Shipstead creates are recognizable to any reader familiar with the preppy lifestyle of the Northeastern United States. Family members have gathered for a weekend wedding at their island home, and all the dysfunction starts at the beginning and endures to the end of the novel, providing hours of humorous entertainment.</p> | |
| <u>Seating Arrangements</u> | Shipstead, Maggie | *** | <u>8/6/12</u> | |  |
| Coolidge | Shlaes, Amity | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>Great Society: A New History</u> | Shlaes, Amity | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression | Shlaes, Amity | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |

Happy Now?

Shonk, Katherine

7/10/10

Loss. Short story writer Katherine Shonk's first novel is titled Happy Now? and in it she presents a well-developed character, Claire Kessler, in the months following the Valentine's Day suicide of her husband, Jay. Claire's confusion, shock and disorientation become supported by the cast of characters who try to provide her with support as she searches for understanding and some way to live again. While few readers face such dramatic tragedy in our own lives, the way in which Shonk presents family relationships will resonate with most readers, and the fine writing encourages readers to empathize with Claire and with those who are proving her support in her grief.

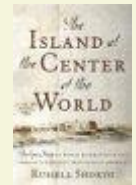


The Island At the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America

Shorto, Russell

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004



Tilt: A Skewed History of the Tower of Pisa

Shrady, Nicholas

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Apr 04

Lean. More than you're likely to want to know about the famous tower in Pisa. Interesting gimmick by publisher that trimmed the book so that it tilts, an attraction that wears off quickly.



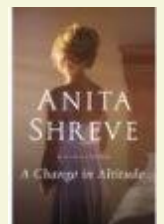
A Change in Altitude

Shreve, Anita


**


4/8/10

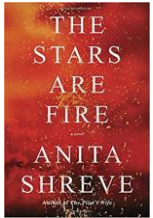
Climbing. The most completely developed character in Anita Shreve's novel, A Change in Altitude, is Kenya, or perhaps Mount Kenya. Set in that country in the 1970s, the protagonist Margaret is an American photographer who has relocated there with her physician husband, Patrick, who is a medical researcher in Nairobi. The tension rises when they decided to climb Mount Kenya with another couple. Events on the climb change the relationship between Margaret and Patrick. I found


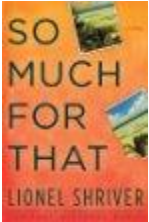




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| | | | | as I read the novel that I had trouble caring about these or other characters, while at the same time I found Kenya very attractive and appealing. Readers who appreciate a deeply developed sense of place may enjoy this novel, while those who prefer well-developed characters might do better to look elsewhere. | |
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|----------------------|---------------|----|----------------|--|---|
| <u>Light on Snow</u> | Shreve, Anita | ** | <u>June 05</u> | Melodramatic. Narrator's coming of age recalled in events that begin with her and her father finding an abandoned baby on the snow in the woods behind their house. Grief and redemption in spades, but weak character development. |  |
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| Rescue | Shreve, Anita | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
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|---------------------------|---------------|------|----------------|--|--|
| <u>The Stars Are Fire</u> | Shreve, Anita | **** | <u>5/23/17</u> | Resilience. Readers who enjoy those novels that can immerse one into a particular place and time alongside an interesting cast of characters with complicated relationships should consider reading Anita Shreve's novel titled, <u>The Stars Are Fire</u> . Set on the coast of Maine in 1947, Shreve focuses on protagonist Grace Holland, a young mother of two with a third on the way. Grace's Husband, Gene, has withdrawn from intimacy in their relationship, to Grace's chagrin. A huge fire destroys the town, and Shreve presents the variety of ways in which the characters are resilient, and provide support for each other. Shreve multiplies the ways in which Grace's resilience is tested, and how Grace finds ways to thrive. |  |
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|--|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Warm Springs: Traces of a Childhood at FDR's Polio Haven | Shreve, Susan Richards | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| So Much For That | Shrive, Lionel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Big Brother | Shriver, Lionel | ***** | 8/25/13 | <p>Size. The two words in the title of Lionel Shriver's novel, Big Brother, reveal something of what's inside. Pandora's brother, Edison, flies in for a visit, and when she arrives at the airport to pick him up, she doesn't recognize him. He has gained hundreds of pounds. In a way that will resonate with members of any dysfunctional family, Pandora says nothing to Edison about his weight. These ingredients of sibling relationships, obesity, and dysfunction are blended well with broader relationships including spousal, parental and offspring. Shriver writes with great skill, blending all these elements into a novel that presents modern American life with clarity and precision. You may not see a copy of this novel at your local Weight Watchers, but when you see it, be sure to buy, read and enjoy it.</p> |  |
| Property: Stories Between Two Novellas | Shriver, Lionel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

[The Mandibles: A Family, 2029-2047](#)

Shriver, Lionel

[2/10/17](#)

Collapse. Readers who are frightened about the future should not read Lionel Shriver's novel titled, [The Mandibles: A Family, 2029-2047](#). She takes a strongly dystopian view of the collapse of society and uses the story of an extended family as the way in which to frighten readers about how the current trajectory of some directions in society could well lead to a collapse in our economy and dramatic transformation of society. The characters are deeply developed, the plot very engaging, and the prose is finely written. So, for those readers who are less than frightened about the future are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel. I enjoyed reading it from beginning to end.

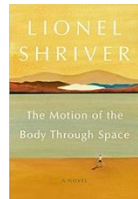


[The Motion of the Body Through Space](#)

Shriver, Lionel

[6/24/20](#)

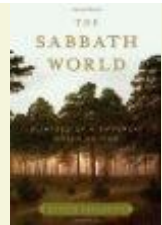
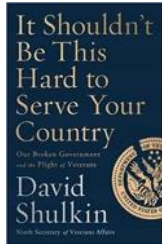

Vulnerability. Lionel Shriver skewers the cult of fitness in her novel titled, [The Motion of the Body Through Space](#), while she places the topics of marriage and aging under her perceptive microscope. Sixty-year-old Serenata has exercised daily for decades and has been procrastinating scheduling knee surgery. Her husband, Remington, has led a sedentary life, but when he finds himself in early involuntary retirement, he decides to run a marathon. When a personal trainer spots hapless Remington, she sees a goldmine for her business. If she can get him to finish MettleMan, a hyper-triathlon, she'll get all the clients she can handle. Shriver captures with precision and grace the vulnerabilities we face as we age, and the peaks and valleys in long term marital relationships. Readers who enjoy finely written prose, whether fitness buffs or couch potatoes, are those most likely to appreciate this novel.



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| <u>I've Been Thinking . . . : Reflections, Prayers, and Meditations for a Meaningful Life</u> | Shriver, Maria | **** | <u>6/2/18</u> | Calming. Most days, I will tap the Breathe app on my Apple Watch and calm down for a minute or five. I found the same effect from reading each short chapter in Maria Shriver's book titled, <u>I've Been Thinking . . . : Reflections, Prayers, and Meditations for a Meaningful Life</u> . As the subtitle discloses, Shriver offers personal reflections on a wide range of subjects, and prayers and meditations on those subjects. Readers find meaning in many places different from Shriver's experiences, but her reflections will stimulate one's own, and lead us toward the next steps to take on our daily journey. |  |
| <u>Ten Things I Wish I'd Known Before I Went Out into the Real World</u> | Shriver, Maria | *** | | We're not so sure Shriver ever went out into the real world, but reading this might be a step above <i>People</i> magazine at the beach. Actually, we enjoyed this book more than we expected, and recommend it. |  |
| <u>A Good Man: Rediscovering My Father, Sargent Shriver</u> | Shriver, Mark | *** | <u>10/26/12</u> | Tribute. Readers looking for their spirits to be uplifted should pick up Mark Shriver's tribute to the life of his father titled, <u>A Good Man: Rediscovering My Father, Sargent Shriver</u> . I smiled and teared up at different parts of this book and finished it feeling terrific. So many dimensions of Sarge Shriver come alive on these pages: his optimism, public service, wise parenting, faith, and hard work. We can become jaded and cynical about the lives of public figures, especially when they seem hypocritical or self-dealing. This book reveals the inside view of a public figure who tried every day to be good and to do good. |  |
| <u>Pilgrimage: My Search for the Real Pope Francis</u> | Shriver, Mark K. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |

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| <u>Absurdistan</u> | Shteyngart, Gary | *** | <u>July 06</u> | <p>Wordplay. Laugh out loud satire full of creative wordplay, well-paced plot, and humorous characters, even corporate ones.</p> |  |
| <u>Lake Success</u> | Shteyngart, Gary | ***** | <u>10/17/18</u> | <p>Watches. A man goes on a journey as Gary Shteyngart's novel titled, <u>Lake Success</u>, begins. Protagonist Barry Cohen isn't an Everyman: he is hedge fund manager with \$2.4 billion in assets under management, which he repeats often for the benefit of many listeners and as an affirmation of his worth as an individual. Barry's journey is to escape his work and his life, as a SEC investigation has him in its crosshairs, and he cannot reconcile himself to the reality than his young son has autism. Barry travels with part of his expensive watch collection, these companions who are reliable and consistent, and exist as emblems that prove Barry's worth to himself and to those in the know. Shteyngart writes with great skill, holding a mirror up to our unequal society. Barry is as detached from the average American as are many hedge fund managers and wealthy individuals. Passengers on his Greyhound bus are just like the regular people who ride those buses every day. Shteyngart puts the two together and the result is comedy, pathos and insight into contemporary American life. On every page, the prose is finely written.</p> |  |
| <u>Little Failure: A Memoir</u> | Shteyngart, Gary | *** | <u>6/11/14</u> | <p>Deprecating. The satire I've enjoyed in reading Gary Shteyngart's novels has turned to self-deprecation in his memoir, <u>Little Failure</u>. I found that after reading a chapter, I didn't want to read the next one. In small doses, Shteyngart's wit comes across as clever and entertaining. I learned that too much of a good thing can become boring. What kept me reading and what pushed me past boredom</p> |  |

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| <u>Super Sad True Love Story</u> | Shteyngart, Gary | *** | 8/25/10 | <p>is Shteyngart's fine writing. He crafts great sentences that kept me turning the pages.</p> <p>Verbal. Gary Shteyngart's new novel, <u>Super Sad True Love Story</u>, presents a near-future world that could be one likely outcome from current trends. Let's hope not, and consider this as fine satire. Using a structure of alternating chapters from two main characters, Shteyngart builds Lenny's contributions as old-fashioned diary entries, and his girlfriend Eunice's entries as e-mail or online records. Life, love and work are both the same and different in the world Shteyngart creates, and as the title conveys, on one level this is a traditional love story. I found the language creative and entertaining, and those readers who enjoy talented writing will find much to appreciate in this book.</p> |  |
| <u>The Universe Within: Discovering the Common History of Rocks, Planets, and People</u> | Shubin, Neil | **** | 4/5/13 | <p>Sweeping. Readers who like readable popular science are those most likely to enjoy Neil Shubin's <u>The Universe Within: Discovering the Common History of Rocks, Planets, and People</u>. Instead of a dense presentation of developments in paleontology, physics, biology and geology, Shubin tells a story that will captivate and engage most general readers. He shows how we are connected to the elements that make up the universe. Shubin talks about his own fieldwork with enthusiasm, but never to excess. Most readers will learn a thing or two from this book, and enjoy the experience.</p> |  |
| Your Inner Fish: a Journey Into the 3.5 Billion-Year History of the Human Body | Shubin, Neil | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2008 | |  |

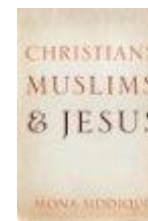
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| The Sabbath World: Glimpses of a Different Order of Time | Shulevitz, Judith | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| <u>It Shouldn't Be This Hard to Serve Your Country: Our Broken Government and the Plight of Veterans</u> | Shulkin, David | ***** | <u>2/14/20</u> | <p>Political. Dr. David Shulkin has first-hand experience of the exercise of political power, and that's what he writes about in his book titled, <u>It Shouldn't Be This Hard to Serve Your Country: Our Broken Government and the Plight of Veterans</u>. After success as a physician and in health administration roles, Shulkin joined the Obama Administration in 2015 as Under Secretary for Health in the Department of Veterans Affairs. His focus was on veterans and he is proud of his accomplishments. President Trump asked Shulkin to stay on in government to become Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Before long, Shulkin experienced the vise of political power squeeze him. A Florida pal of the president's became a regular point of contact, and a group of "politicals" ran a parallel policy operation within the VA with their focus on privatization. The title describes the tone of the book, and veterans will read this and understand the threats they face from the exercise of raw political power at the VA.</p> |  |
| From Hire to Liar | Shulman, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

Christians,
Muslims, and
Jesus

Siddiqui, Mona

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



In the Kingdom
of Ice: The
Grand and
Terrible Polar
Voyage of the
USS Jeannette

Sides, Hampton

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

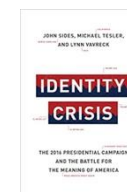


[Identity Crisis:
The 2016
Presidential
Campaign and
the Battle for
the Meaning of
America](#)

Sides, John,
Michael Tesler
and Lynn
Vavreck

[3/26/19](#)

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, [Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America](#), 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.



[Changing the
Rules:
Adventures of a
Wall Street
Maverick](#)

Siebert, Muriel

[Mar 03](#)

Mickie's Moves. Entertaining chronicle of how the first woman to buy a seat on the New York Stock Exchange did it, and how she's since vanquished many of her adversaries.

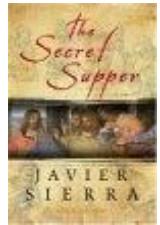


The Secret
Supper

Sierra, Javier

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

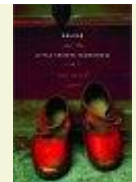


Balzac and the
Little Chinese
Seamstress

Sijie, Dai

Apr 02

An engaging story of two young men exiled to the countryside and the seamstress who changes their lives. Fine imagery and description.



When
Washington
Shut Down Wall
Street : The
Great Financial
Crisis of 1914
and the Origins
of America's
Monetary
Supremacy

Silber, William
L.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

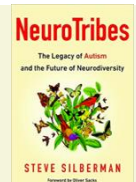


NeuroTribes:
The Legacy of
Autism and the
Future of
Neurodiversity

Silberman, Steve

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



The
Intelligencer

Silbert, Leslie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004

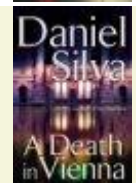


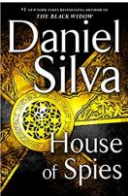
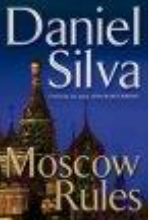
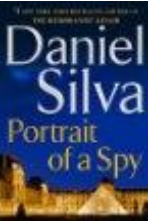
A Death in
Vienna

Silva, Daniel

Apr 04

Thrillology. Vivid characters and fast-moving plot combine to provide good entertainment. Ends a trilogy, but new readers can easily start here.



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| <u>House of Spies</u> | Silva, Daniel | **** | <u>7/20/17</u> | <p>Morocco. Some novelists who reprise characters and create a long series for readers can become stale or repetitive. Not so with Daniel Silva and his series featuring Israeli spy Gabriel Allon. In the seventeenth novel titled, <u>House of Spies</u>, Silva rips stories from current headlines, even anticipating some, and offers fans a fresh and exciting book. Fans will find a large and familiar cast of characters, and new readers will find an entertaining book packed with tense action. Much of the action takes place in a new setting for Silva: Morocco, and he describes the settings there with vivid prose. Instead of petering out in this series, Silva and Allon may be just finding their stride.</p> |  |
| <u>Moscow Rules</u> | Silva, Daniel | *** | <u>Oct 08</u> | <p>Thugs. Israeli spy Gabriel Allon is called away from his honeymoon to deal with Moscow thugs, which he does with typical competence in this fictional thriller.</p> |  |
| <u>Portrait of a Spy</u> | Silva, Daniel | *** | <u>8/19/11</u> | <p>Thwarted. Daniel Silva reprises Israeli superspy and art restorer Gabriel Allon in a new novel titled, <u>Portrait of a Spy</u>. As Allon ages more gracefully than most humans, he alone notices a terrorist in Covent Garden and is about to stop him when Allon is thwarted by British intelligence. As usual, Allon is right, and the bureaucrats remain an obstacle, second only to the evildoers he pursues to deliver vengeance and justice. Readers who like fast paced action and character-driven action novels are likely to enjoy this one. Silva's writing seems effortless, but he packs this novel with more political commentary than many readers will not find entertaining.</p> |  |

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| <u>Prince of Fire</u> | Silva, Daniel | *** | <u>May 05</u> | <p>Fidelity. In this fifth Gabriel Allon novel, the protagonist's loyalty to his wife, his mentor, his country and himself are all challenged as the past returns with vengeance.</p> |  |
| <u>The Black Widow</u> | Silva, Daniel | **** | <u>8/4/16</u> | <p>Saladin. The latest novel by Daniel Silva to feature art restorer and soon-to-be Mossad chief, Gabriel Allon, is titled, <u>The Black Widow</u>. Fans of the series will be delighted by the continued development of this complex protagonist, and will be thrilled that he is still in the field, not behind a desk. ISIS is the enemy Allon pursues in the form of an adversary called Saladin. Allon convinces a Jewish doctor, Leila Hadawi, to infiltrate ISIS, and he and others train her to pull off this feat. Much of the action in this novel takes place in the United States, which adds to the terror and tension that remain taut throughout this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The Defector</u> | Silva, Daniel | *** | <u>8/18/09</u> | <p>Cold. Daniel Silva's ninth Gabriel Allon thriller is titled <u>The Defector</u>. For fans, this book picks up where the previous novel, <i>Moscow Rules</i>, left off. New readers need not have read that book to enjoy this one, since Silva provides more than enough background to allow the current novel to stand on its own. Protagonist Allon is an Israeli spy and murderer and a talented art restorer. The action in this novel pits the evil arms dealer Ivan Kharkov against Allon in a classic battle of good versus evil, or in this case, killer versus really bad killer. The title refers to Grigori Bulganov, a Russian dissident who defected to Great Britain, and whose disappearance brought Allon out of his semi-retirement. Readers looking for an escape novel that doesn't require much thinking are likely to enjoy <u>The Defector</u> for its fast pace. The extent of the murders and violence in each Allon novel has</p> |  |

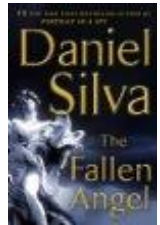
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| | | | <p>built to the point where the pleasure of the novel's thrills for me is damped by all the bloodshed. The coldness within Allon and his ruthlessness make him less than the hero he could be, and may lead me to hesitate before reading another novel presenting him as a hero.</p> | |
| The English Girl | Silva, Daniel | **** | <p><u>8/25/13</u></p> <p>Restoration. After I've finished a difficult or challenging book, I like to pick up a novel that I am sure will entertain me. I've found Daniel Silva's Gabriel Allon series to provide reliable and thrilling reading. In The English Girl, art restorer and Israeli spy Allon, is specifically requested to search for and find a missing English woman. Silva teases out the reasons Allon was chosen, and he constructs a plot that's full of entertaining twists, worthy adversaries for Allon, and enough suspense that led me to read this novel quicker than I expected. Readers who like thrillers with strong protagonists, complicated plots and fast-paced action should consider reading this novel and the other books in this series.</p> |  |
| The English Spy | Silva, Daniel | **** | <p><u>7/24/15</u></p> <p>Revenge. One of the challenges for writers of character-based thrillers is keeping the character consistent while developing that character in new and interesting ways. Daniel Silva's protagonist, Gabriel Allon, the art restorer and Israeli spy, is a complicated and well-developed character. In The English Spy, Silva adds to Allon's personal story as he and Chiara are about to have a child. In his profession, Allon is coming closer to taking over The Office. The plot of this novel takes Allon to the field in many countries as he has the opportunity to exact revenge on a foe, while Chiara's due date draws near. As with all the novels in this series, there's lots of violence, the action moves quickly, and the excitement is always entertaining.</p> |  |

[The Fallen Angel](#)

Silva, Daniel

[10/10/12](#)

Home. Fans of thriller novels will love Daniel Silva's [The Fallen Angel](#), featuring art restorer and Israeli spy Gabriel Allon. Silva masters two elements of this genre: he develops a complex character that readers root for; and he tells a fast-paced story that thoroughly entertains. Whether this is the first or twelfth Allon story you've read, you are likely to enjoy this talented protagonist, and feel satisfied with the plot and action. Allon averts disaster and calamity while using his expert skills. He longs for a quiet life at home, and gets called into the most unquiet kind of experiences one can imagine.

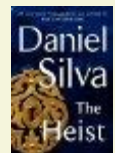


[The Heist](#)

Silva, Daniel

[9/6/14](#)

Aging. The latest Gabriel Allon novel by Daniel Silva titled, [The Heist](#), proceeds at a slower pace than earlier novels in this series. The Israeli superspy and art restorer is getting older, he's about to become the father of twins, and he has agreed to become the next head of the Office. The chance to recover a missing Caravaggio masterpiece leads Allon to take a break from restoring a Veronese in Venice. The break returns him to Corsica and Israel and then to a bank in Austria. For loyal readers of the series, this installment continues to develop the complexity of the character of Gabriel Allon. New readers expecting an exciting thriller might not be as enthused as those of us who have read the whole series.



[The Messenger](#)

Silva, Daniel

[Nov 06](#)

Infidels. Protagonist Gabriel Allon is back fighting terrorists from Jerusalem to Rome to London, along with the headlines: Al-Qaeda attacks, Saudi financing and U.S. covert actions.



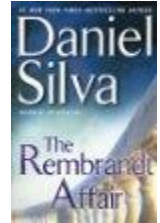
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| <u>The New Girl</u> | Silva, Daniel | ***** | <u>7/26/19</u> | <p>Headlines. The nineteenth Israeli spy novel by Daniel Silva featuring protagonist Gabriel Allon is titled, <u>The New Girl</u>. Fans of the series will love the latest installment, as Silva takes recent news from the Middle East and 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.</p> |  |
| <u>The Order</u> | Silva, Daniel | ***** | <u>8/25/20</u> | <p>Conspiracy. For the twentieth installment of his Gabriel Allon series, Daniel Silva sends the Israeli spy back to a place where Gabriel made close friends in high places in the past, Vatican City. In the novel titled, <u>The Order</u>, Gabriel is asked by the late pope's private secretary to come to Rome to investigate a conspiracy involving the Holy See. A group called the Order of St. Helena with much support from the European right may be engaged in a conspiracy to rig the election of the next pope. Fans of this series are those readers most likely to enjoy this latest installment featuring a complex and interesting protagonist who always seems to choose whatever it takes to do the right thing.</p> |  |
| <u>The Other Woman</u> | Silva, Daniel | ***** | <u>8/3/18</u> | <p>Russia. The eighteenth novel in the series by Daniel Silva featuring Israeli spy Gabriel Allon is titled, <u>The Other Woman</u>. The role of the villain in this novel is played by Russia, as Gabriel is set up for the murder of a Russian intelligence officer. He brushes closer to death than he should in this fast-paced novel, and he uncovers a Russian mole to the embarrassment of some of his allies. Fans of spy fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy reading this novel and this series.</p> |  |

[The Rembrandt Affair](#)

Silva, Daniel

[8/25/10](#)

Secrets. Israeli spy Gabriel Allon returns older and better than ever in Daniel Silva's latest novel, [The Rembrandt Affair](#). Fans of this series will find familiar key characters returning in fully developed form. The plot moves Allon around Europe and to South America, as he takes on a challenge that pierces his heart. The adversaries are formidable, and plot twists kept me engaged throughout the novel. Life in retirement for Allon contains few dull moments. Readers who like action thrillers will be entertained by this novel.

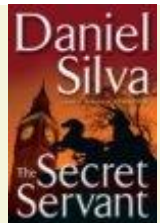


[The Secret Servant](#)

Silva, Daniel

[Sep 07](#)

Intense. Israeli spy and art restorer Gabriel Allon returns for the seventh novel in this series. Non-stop heroic action to foil the bad guys, and sidebar preaching to hammer the messages home leaves no time for art restoration this time around.



In Secret Service

Silver, Mitch

Read and not reviewed.

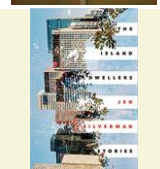


[The Island Dwellers](#)

Silverman, Jen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

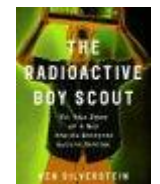




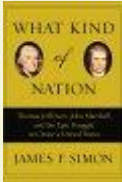

[The Radioactive Boy Scout: The True Story of a Boy and His Backyard Nuclear Reactor](#)

Silverstein, Ken

[Sep 04](#)

Neighborly. A Michigan teenager learned enough from many sources to build a nuclear reactor. Makes one wonder what own kids and neighbors might be doing.



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| Black Hills | Simmons, Dan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| <u>Enough As She Is: How to Help Girls Move Beyond Impossible Standards of Success to Live Healthy, Happy, and Fulfilling Lives</u> | Simmons, Rachel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>What Kind of Nation: Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall and the Epic Struggle to Create a United States</u> | Simon, James F. | ***** | <u>Jun 02</u> | Fascinating and interesting book that transports readers to the crises early in U.S. history, especially Jefferson's push for the supremacy of state's rights, and Marshall's position on strong central government and an independent judiciary. |  |
| <u>Lyrics 1964-2008</u> | Simon, Paul | *** | <u>3/20/09</u> | Poetry. The lyrics of 187 songs written over 44 years by Paul Simon are presented in a new book, aptly titled, <u>Lyrics 1964-2008</u> . As I turned each page, I found myself humming, or singing, rather than reading, the lyrics. After all, the lyrics are only part of the art: the music is the other part. When viewed as words on the page, Simon's poetry becomes clearer. I considered indulging in an album at a time on my ipod, reading along with the lyrics. I learned that while I enjoyed many of Simon's songs during the past four decades, there were many I missed, both in the late seventies and early eighties, then again in the late 90s and |  |

recently. My surprise was that the impact and meaning of songs written in the 1960s and 1970s had even deeper meaning today. Anyone who minimized Simon's talent and skills, will appreciate his prolific output and prodigious talent after absorbing the contents of this book.

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| <u>Pretty Birds</u> | Simon, Scott | *** | <u>Sep 05</u> | Divided. Debut novel tells the complicated story of the siege of Sarajevo in 1992 from the perspective of a 17 year old female sniper. |  |
| <u>Windy City: A Novel of Politics</u> | Simon, Scott | *** | <u>May 08</u> | Affable. A Chicago political love story featuring an alderman who finds himself as acting mayor. Good diversionary and funny entertainment in a serious political year. |  |
| <u>Major Pettigrew's Last Stand</u> | Simonson, Helen | **** | <u>7/10/10</u> | Relations. Helen Simonson's debut novel, <u>Major Pettigrew's Last Stand</u> is the quintessential summer book. A reader need only sit back, relax, and allow the full cast of characters to become real and endearing. Simonson draws out all the tension of multiple relationships, especially those within families involving expectations, assumptions, and cultural norms. Set in an English village, Edgcombe St. Mary, there's also a motif about class that highlights societal ways of inclusion and exclusion. Simonson packs a lot in less than 400 pages, and time flew by as I relaxed and became immersed in a gentle and well-told story. |  |

The Summer Before the War

Simonson, Helen

5/26/16

Vivid. Helen Simonson wrote everything so well in her novel titled, The Summer Before the War. Set in a small Sussex town in 1914, Simonson presents all the familiarity of village life with the separation of class, gender and expected behavior of that time. She draws the setting with vivid language, and develops each character with insight and skill. Readers know the change that all characters are likely to face after war arrives, but are willing to allow Simonson to bring us and the full cast along as events unfold. Readers looking for summer reading that includes fine writing and that takes one to another time and place should consider this novel.

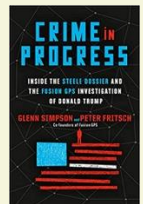





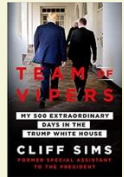
Crime in Progress: Inside the Steele Dossier and the Fusion GPS Investigation of Donald Trump

Simpson, Glenn and Peter Fritsch

4/9/20

Vindicated. For those readers who have the appetite for an inside story about one of the misunderstood and overspun stories of recent years, Fusion GPS founders Glenn Simpson and Peter Fritsch offer a book titled, Crime in Progress: Inside the Steele Dossier and the Fusion GPS Investigation of Donald Trump. These former *Wall Street Journal* reporters started a business in 2010 that conducts investigations, finding data for the use of their clients in business and politics. When a client approached them to investigate Donald Trump's finances, they uncovered a treasure trove of information including lawsuits and shady dealings with Russian oligarchs and gangsters. Readers can sense the weariness that settled on the authors when their little business became the focal point for political machinations. Read the book to unspin what you think you know, and you're likely to conclude, as I did, that their work product represented accurate research and investigations that were later proven to be true. The authors may rightly feel vindicated, but they will never recover



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| | | | | the lost time and expenses involved in defending themselves from partisan attacks. | |
| Cockfosters | Simpson, Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| In-Flight Entertainment: Stories | Simpson, Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Casebook | Simpson, Mona | ***** | 9/6/14 | <p>Snooping. Part of growing up and making sense of the world and our place in it involves observation of others, especially our parents. Miles Adler-Rich, the protagonist of Mona Simpson's novel, Casebook, goes from observation to spying and snooping, especially about his parents. As with many other kids, including his friend, Hector, Miles lives in a family that has experienced divorce. The boys don't quite understand their parents (who does?), and conclude that there must be impenetrable family secrets involved. What Simpson does so well in this novel of contemporary American domestic life is present a love story alongside the process of growing up. Thanks to using Miles as the lens through which we understand these families, Simpson offers a fresh perspective on what can seem overdone by other authors.</p> |  |
| Team of Vipers: My 500 Extraordinary Days in the Trump White House | Sims, Cliff | ***** | 4/4/19 | <p>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</p> |  |

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| | | | 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. | |
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Don Tillman's
Standardized
Meal System:
Recipes and
Tips from the
Star of the Rosie
Novels

Simsion, Graeme

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



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| <u>The Best of Adam Sharp</u> | Simsion, Graeme | ***** | <u>6/27/17</u> Reprise. Many people find themselves reflective around age fifty, and wistful about what might have been had alternative paths been chosen. Graeme Simsion mines that topic in his novel titled, <u>The Best of Adam Sharp</u> . Protagonist Adam Sharp works as a computer consultant and has been in a long-term relationship with Claire, the sale of whose business might entail a move from the UK to the US. Having learned piano from his father, Adam has enjoyed music and piano playing for decades. While working in Australia in his youth, he was playing piano when he met and entered a passionate relationship with an actress, Angelina Brown. Out of the blue, Angelina makes contact, and Adam is drawn into all the possibilities of what might have been and what might still be. As in Simsion's Rosie novels, the tone is sweet and the characters often endearing. Readers looking for light reading entertainment should consider this novel. |  |
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[The Rosie Effect](#) Simsion, Graeme

[2/24/15](#)

Pregnant. Most readers of *The Rosie Project* will love the sequel by Graeme Simsion titled, [The Rosie Effect](#). Don and Rosie are now married and living in New York City. Rosie is pregnant and she and Don are approaching the birth of a child as fans would expect each character to behave. While the sequel reprises the cast of characters, introduces new ones, and remains funny, the overall tone is more serious in this novel, as Don gets into some serious trouble, and he and Rosie experience true difficulty. New readers to the series may want to read these books in the order written. While the sequel is a little less funny than the first novel, I enjoy these characters so much that the new novel was also a pleasure to read.



[The Rosie Project](#)

Simsion, Graeme

[4/7/14](#)

Comedy. Readers looking for an enjoyable romantic comedy need look no further than the debut novel by Graeme Simsion titled, [The Rosie Project](#). Protagonist Don Tillman is a genetics professor who has created an orderly life for himself in response to the position he holds on the autism spectrum. All the parts of his life from work to meals have been calibrated with precision. His social life falls short so he starts what he calls The Wife Project, and develops a questionnaire to sort out potential candidates. After Don meets Rosie, a bartender and doctoral student who is searching for her biological father, Don's life turns upside down. He starts The Father Project to help Rosie obtain and analyze DNA samples from likely candidates. The descriptive language in the novel creates visuals that entertained me, and the development of these interesting characters kept me smiling and laughing throughout.



[The Rosie Result](#)

Simsion, Graeme

[8/15/19](#)

Project. The third installment in the Don Tillman series by Graeme Simsion is titled, [The Rosie Result](#). 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.



[Two Steps Forward](#)

Simsion, Graeme and Anne Buist

[5/22/18](#)

Path. In France, it is called *Le Chemin de St. Jacques*. In Spain, it is called *El Camino de Santiago*. It is the pilgrim path that ends in Spain in Santiago de Compostela. In their novel titled, [Two Steps Forward](#), Graeme Simsion and Anne Buist, present the journey of a woman named Zoe and a man named Martin who meet on this pilgrim path. Zoe left California for this pilgrimage following the sudden death of her husband. Martin left England following a messy divorce, and his engineering background led him to design and field test a cart for pilgrims to use on this journey. What Zoe and Martin find on the journey will bring smiles to most readers.



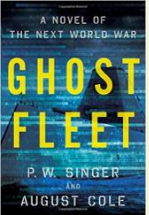
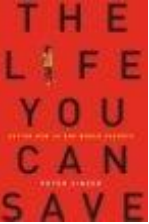
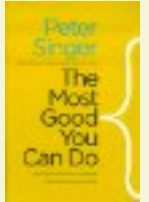
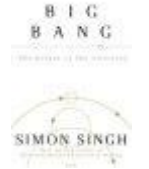
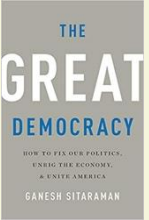
Wired for War:
The Robotics
Revolution and
Conflict in the
21st Century

Singer, P.W.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009



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| <u>Ghost Fleet: A Novel of the Next World War</u> | Singer, P.W. and August Cole | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty | Singer, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009. Pretty good through page 45, but other books became alluring, so I put this aside. |  |
| The Most Good You Can Do: How Effective Altruism Is Changing Ideas About Living Ethically | Singer, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Big Bang: The Origin of the Universe | Singh, Simon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>The Great Democracy: How to Fix Our Politics, Unrig the Economy, and Unite America</u> | Sitaraman, Ganesh | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

American Wife

Sittenfeld, Curtis

12/21/08

Shallow. Within the 576 pages of Curtis Sittenfeld's novel American Wife, an editor might have been able to carve out a fine 250 page book. Instead, readers have to decide how much time to devote to reading a novel that has more gimmick than insight. By basing the protagonist, Alice Lindgren Blackwell, on Laura Bush, but clearly creating a fiction character, readers end up with a shallow character who remains to the end an enigma. By clearly painting other characters with Sittenfeld's image of the Bush extended family and social milieu, readers have to reconcile the fictional wife with the somewhat known Laura Bush and then try to reconcile Alice Blackwell with the real Bush family. On so many levels, none of that worked. I read on valiantly hoping that the characters would become more real and less caricature. I awaited some reconciliation or insight into the reasons for Alice's loyalty to her husband despite her opposition to so many of his beliefs. By the last page, I came away with satisfaction that the book was finished, but with little pleasure at having read it.

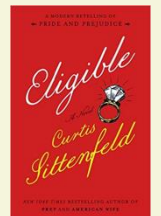


Eligible: A Modern Retelling of Pride and Prejudice

Sittenfeld, Curtis


11/5/16

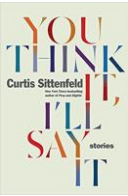
Reality. I had fun reading Curtis Sittenfeld's Jane Austen update titled, Eligible: A Modern Retelling of Pride and Prejudice. The Bennet family live in a big old neglected house in Cincinnati. Liz is a magazine writer living in New York City. Chip Bingley is a Cincinnati physician who had appeared on a bachelor reality television show named *Eligible*, and his claim to fame is that he rejected all potential mates. Mr. Darcy is a neurosurgeon. Sittenfeld loves Austen enough to be true to the core of the original, and is clever enough to make her retelling seem fresh and new. Whether you're an Austen fan or not, if you like a good story that's




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| | | | | well-written, consider spending a few fun hours reading this entertaining novel. | |
| <u>Prep: A Novel</u> | Sittenfeld, Curtis | ** | <u>Apr 05</u> | Class. Scholarship student from Indiana heads East to boarding school. All the adolescent and prep school angst plays out, especially the wealth gap. |  |
| <u>Rodham</u> | Sittenfeld, Curtis | ***** | <u>9/8/20</u> | Clever. It's fun to watch a talented writer take a prominent real person and veer their life path just a bit off the known trajectory. In her novel titled, <u>Rodham</u> , Curtis Sittenfeld imagines what Hillary Rodham's life would have been like had she not married Bill. I read this during this summer's unique political conventions, and it provided an entertaining diversion. I especially enjoyed Sittenfeld's take on how Bill's life might have played out. Whether you love or hate the real Hillary, it's very likely that you'll enjoy the character in Sittenfeld's novel. |  |
| <u>Sisterland</u> | Sittenfeld, Curtis | **** | <u>7/8/13</u> | Earthquake. Twins possess a special bond that "singles" may not understand and appreciate. Curtis Sittenfeld explores that bond in her novel, <u>Sisterland</u> . Violet and Daisy grew up with heightened senses, a gift of being able to foresee future events in general or specific ways. Violet embraced her gift, while Daisy rejected it, even changing her name to Kate to erase part of her past. While the sisters head in different directions, their personal bonds remain strong. Vi predicts an earthquake for the St. Louis area where they live, and Kate senses the exact date. While that provides a gimmicky plot that I found overly quirky, I enjoyed this novel because of the ways in which Sittenfeld developed the complexity of these characters and the ways in which they behaved, both good and bad. I didn't like Sittenfeld's earlier novels as much as this one. There was something |  |

about the ways in which she explored the conflicts of love that I found entertaining and enjoyable. Readers with the patience to overlook some gimmicks are those most likely to enjoy this story of powerful relationships.

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| The Man of My Dreams | Sittenfeld, Curtis | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
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| <u>You Think It, I'll Say It</u> | Sittenfeld, Curtis | **** | <u>6/9/18</u> | <p>Variety. I'm a sucker for fiction that respects the intelligence of readers, and I was a bullseye target audience for Curtis Sittenfeld's short story collection titled, <u>You Think It, I'll Say It</u>. Each of the ten short stories in this collection presents a slice in the life of interesting characters facing typical contemporary issues. There were no clunkers in this group of stories, and each story satisfied me, while I deeply wanted to pursue other slices of these interesting lives. Fans of short stories and finely written literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this book.</p> |  |
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| <u>Moonstone: The Boy Who Never Was</u> | Sjón | *** | <u>5/13/17</u> | <p>Influenza. I admired Sjón's efficiency in drawing readers into an unfamiliar world in his novel titled, <u>Moonstone: The Boy Who Never Was</u>. Using fewer than two hundred pages, Sjón presents the alienation of being a gay man in 1918 in Reykjavik, Iceland. He adds the tension relating to the war and to the influenza epidemic both about to arrive in that city. He then combines the two elements and shows the ways in which the flu creates in the city the same feelings that preoccupy the protagonist: alienation and fear.</p> |  |
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True Paradox:
How
Christianity
Makes Sense of
Our Complex
World

Skeel, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



[This Will Be
Difficult to
Explain: And
Other Stories](#)

Skibsrud,
Johanna

[12/27/13](#)

Pacing. I parceled out the nine stories in the collection from Johanna Skibsrud titled, [This Will Be Difficult to Explain: And Other Stories](#). Over the course of a year, I read each story twice, spacing them out by reading only one in a given month. I found something to like in each story, but had to work harder than I'd like to appreciate her talent. I selected this book because it won the Giller prize. Once again, I found myself being unable to discover what led the judges to select this book. Readers should sample her prose before purchasing this book.



[The Unraveling:
High Hopes and
Missed
Opportunities in
Iraq](#)

Sky, Emma

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.



[Hetty: The
Genius and
Madness of
America's First
Female Tycoon](#)

Slack, Charles

[Mar 05](#)

Quirky. Well-told biography of late 19th and early 20th century financier that corrects many past myths about this amazing and successful woman.



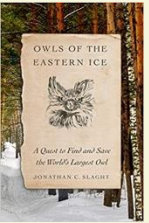
[Into the Raging
Sea: Thirty-
Three Mariners,
One Megastorm,
and the Sinking
of El Faro](#)

Slade, Rachel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Owls of the Eastern Ice: A Quest to Find and Save the World's Largest Owl</u> | Slaght, Jonathan C. | **** | <u>12/17/20</u> | <p>Fieldwork. Good writing about an unfamiliar place makes Jonathan Slaght's book titled, <u>Owls of the Eastern Ice: A Quest to Find and Save the World's Largest Owl</u>, a delight to read. I was a bit hesitant to open this book about a scientist's fieldwork in finding fish owls in Primorye, a province in the far eastern part of Russia. After just a few pages, I was hooked on learning about Slaght's fieldwork searching for a two-foot- tall owl with a six-foot wingspan. Readers can almost feel what Shaght experiences while living in a tent under freezing conditions, crossing rivers packed with melting ice, finding the owls in multiple locations, drinking vodka, and relaxing in a banya. Readers with any interest in scientific fieldwork or conservation will find a lot to enjoy in this finely written book.</p> |  |
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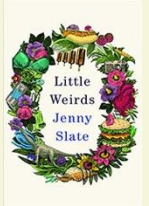
The Explainer

Slate Magazine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004



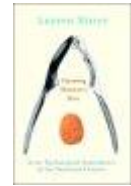
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| <u>Little Weirds</u> | Slate, Jenny | *** | <u>3/6/20</u> | <p>Essays. I had the feeling that I entered directly into Jenny Slate's mind as I read her collection of essays titled after one of them, <u>Little Weirds</u>. As a talented comedian, she made me laugh. As a writer, I admired her phrases and images. As an artist, I appreciated the scope of her vast creativity, and how it plays out in each of these essays. The time I spent inside her mind while reading this novel was quite an adventure and escape. I enjoyed the book while I read it with a clear head, but I have the impression that if one were to read these essays while high, the experience might be enhanced.</p> |  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----|-------------------------------|---|---|

Opening
Skinner's Box:
Great
Psychological
Experiments of
the Twentieth
Century

Slater, Lauren

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004

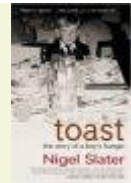


Toast: The Story
of a Boy's
Hunger

Slater, Nigel

Mar 05

Nourishing. Well-written memoir of a food writer's coming of age. Sweet and sour recollection of the foods of his youth and vignettes of people in his life related to those foods.



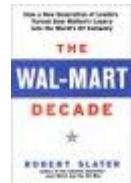
The Wal-Mart
Decade: How a
Generation of
Leaders Turned
Sam Walton's
Legacy Into the
World's # 1
Company

Slater, Robert

**

Oct 03

Rollback. Pleasant story about unassuming and talented executives who built a gigantic and successful business. Some repetition and a few dozen really boring pages.

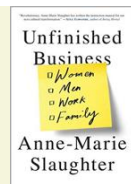


Unfinished
Business:
Women Men
Work Family

Slaughter, Anne-
Marie

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



Blonde Hair
Blue Eyes

Slaughter, Karin

4/21/16

Brief. Time constrained readers who like thrillers may want to consider the novella by Karin Slaughter titled, Blonde Hair Blue Eyes. A journalism student, Julia Carroll, pursues the story of a missing student with characteristics similar to her own, and Slaughter leads Julia and readers into a thrilling case. This story was a setup piece for Slaughter's novel, *Pretty Girls*, which features Julia's two sisters. I was entertained as I read this novella in a single enjoyable sitting.



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|---------------------------------|------------------|------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <u>Cop Town</u> | Slaughter, Karin | **** | <u>7/9/14</u> | <p>Policewomen. Any woman who joined the Atlanta police force in the 1970s would not recall that time fondly as the good old days. Karin Slaughter introduces protagonist Kate Murphy in a crime novel titled, <u>Cop Town</u>. Murphy's husband died in Vietnam, and her affluent upbringing in Buckhead didn't prepare her for the hostile reception she receives from male police officers when she's groped and abused upon her arrival at the police precinct as a rookie cop. Kate ends up with partner Lawson whose brother and uncle are also police officers. The fast-paced action is punctuated by the ways Slaughter elaborates on the misogyny, racism, and homophobia rampant at that time. Fans of crime fiction will like the characters, the plot and tension of this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Criminal</u> | Slaughter, Karin | *** | <u>8/27/12</u> | <p>Nurture. Fans of crime novels will be entertained by the grisly acts and diligent detection in Karin Slaughter's novel, <u>Criminal</u>. Slaughter fans will enjoy the backstory of recurring protagonists Amanda Wagner and Will Trent as the novelist uses what happened in 1974 as an explanation of the present action. The result is two novels for the price of one. Trent's anxiety that the genes inherited from his father might be too powerful of an evil force in his life becomes assuaged by the realization of how much his mentor nurtured him. It takes Slaughter over 400 pages to lay out all the plot threads from the past and present, and at times I found the level of exposition slowed down the novel too much for my taste. Readers who like character-driven crime novels are those most likely to enjoy this one.</p> |  |

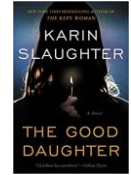
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|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Fallen</u> | Slaughter, Karin | *** | <u>7/9/11</u> | <p>Rescue. The tension in Karin Slaughter's new crime thriller, <u>Fallen</u>, starts quickly and remains taut to the very end. Retired police officer Evelyn Mitchell has been kidnapped, and her GBI investigator daughter, Faith, along with a wide cast of characters are out to rescue her. Faith's GBI partner, Will Trent, also needs rescue, and that subplot remains as tense as the prime action. This was the first Slaughter novel I've opened, and I found it engaging, enjoyable and packed with the action a reader expects in a good crime novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Pretty Girls</u> | Slaughter, Karin | ***** | <u>11/22/16</u> | <p>Psychopath. Some crime novels should come with trigger warnings. The brutality toward women in <u>Pretty Girls</u> by Karin Slaughter may overpower some readers. So why read a novel like this? Slaughter tells a great story that will engage most readers from beginning to end. Her character development is terrific, especially when it comes to the profile of a psychopath. You may be disturbed or shocked or sickened by parts of this book, but chances are you will be held captive to the story until the end.</p> |  |
| <u>Snatched</u> | Slaughter, Karin | *** | <u>7/25/12</u> | <p>Quick. Crime fiction fans looking for something quick and entertaining to read should consider the Kindle Single from Karin Slaughter titled, <u>Snatched</u>. This novella features Will Trent, a Georgia Bureau of Investigation agent who has appeared in full length Slaughter novels. The action in this book takes place at Atlanta's airport and kept me absorbed in the fast-paced action from beginning to end. Readers looking for something short and fun to read are those most likely to enjoy this novella. For Slaughter fans, it's a great appetizer before opening her latest novel.</p> |  |

The Good Daughter

Slaughter, Karin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

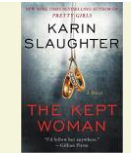


The Kept Woman

Slaughter, Karin

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.



Unseen

Slaughter, Karin

8/25/13

Character. The crime fiction that I like best tends to come from those novels in which the characters are well-developed, and their responses to violence and crime come across as authentic and familiar. Karin Slaughter's Will Trent series features a very complicated protagonist who may not be an everyman, but whose behavior rings true in every grisly or romantic situation. The latest novel, Unseen, has such an abundance of graphic violence, that I found myself choosing to read it only in daylight hours. Slaughter released some of the tension in the novel by alternating time sequences between the current action and the days leading up to it. This device also allows a reader to take a break to reduce one's heart rate. Readers who like character-based crime novels and can tolerate a ton of violence should consider reading this novel and the whole series.



Carnivore Diet

Slavin, Julia

**

Apr 06

Imaginative. Unusual debut novel, set in Washington, D.C., that's alternately funny and serious. A beast called a chagwa terrorizes the community and the reactions unfold human nature's bounty.

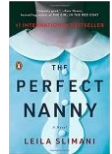


The Perfect Nanny

Slimami, Leila

4/16/18

Creepy. If this line doesn't compel you to read Leila Slimami's novel titled, The Perfect Nanny, nothing will: "to be happy, someone has to die." That's the view of Louise, the nanny in the title. This creepy psychological thriller takes us into the life of Louise, and the families and children whose lives she has entered. It's a novel of race and class and the ways in which we become part of the lives of others, and they become part of our lives, for better and for worse. Louise is a troubled soul, and we know from the beginning of the novel that something terrible has happened. The rest is finely written prose helping us come to grips with tragedy.

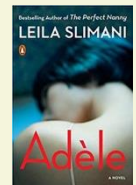


Adèle

Slimani, Leila

2/8/19

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, Adèle, 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 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.

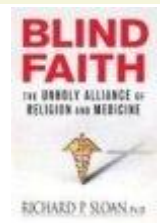


Blind Faith: The Unholy Alliance of Religion and Medicine

Sloan, Richard P.

Sep 07

Systematic. Logical and factual support of the premise that the efforts to link religion and health are not good science, not good medicine and not good religion.



Mr. Penumbra's
24 Hour
Bookstore

Sloan, Robin

1/4/13

Friendship. Debut novels often disappoint me because they can be stuffed with so many elements that a writer has been struggling to express. The restraint and economy in Robin Sloan's Mr. Penumbra's 24 Hour Bookstore stood out for me. Sloan tells a story well, keeping up plot momentum and providing effective character development. At its core, this novel is a story of the power of friendship, and Sloan is clever in the ways he uses protagonist Clay Jannon as a bridge from the print books of the past to the digital future. Readers who like puzzles and who enjoy books that are fun to read are those most likely to enjoy this one.

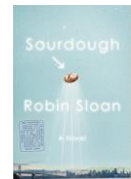


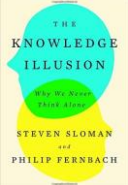
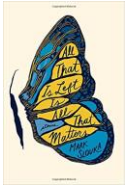
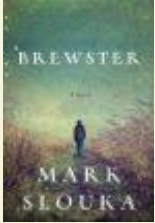

Sourdough

Sloan, Robin

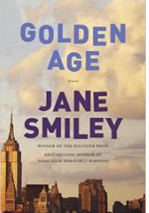

9/18/17

Culture. Lots of readers will love the many things that Robin Sloan does so well in his novel titled, Sourdough. Techies will love protagonist Lois Clary, a software engineer specializing in robotics who is recruited from Detroit to San Francisco. Foodies will love the ways in which Lois becomes enamored by the mysteries of bread baking and what happens after she joins an elite farmers market. Bakers will recognize her relationship with the sourdough starter, the culture that she was given by two brothers who cooked great food and bread out of their apartment in her SF neighborhood. People who have moved from one part of the country to another will love the experience of Lois as she finds her place in a new setting. The Lois club introduces her to other women named Lois which was a great laugh. By assembling all those ingredients together, Sloan makes readers care about Lois, about good bread, and about all that it takes to maintain culture in its many forms. This reader loved the fine prose, creative plot and engaging characters. After reading it, I bought some fresh bread at the farmers market.




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| <u>The Knowledge Illusion: Why We Never Think Alone</u> | Sloman, Steven and Philip Fernbach | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>All That Is Left Is All That Matters</u> | Slouka, Mark | **** | <u>10/5/18</u> | <p>Descriptive. There are fifteen beautifully written short stories in a collection by Mark Slouka titled, <u>All That Is Left Is All That Matters</u>. It seemed to me that it takes Slouka just a few words to describe a character in ways that will lead us to understand and recognize the completeness of the individual. Slouka also uses carefully chosen descriptive language to capture a setting or situation to bring it to life. Any reader who enjoys finely written short stories should consider reading this book.</p> |  |
| <u>Brewster</u> | Slouka, Mark | ***** | <u>3/7/14</u> | <p>Friendship. Readers who like fiction that tugs at your heartstrings are those most likely to enjoy Mark Slouka's finely written novel, <u>Brewster</u>. With the efficiency of tightly written prose, Slouka introduces and develops this story of friendship. The novel's action takes place in 1968 in the small upstate town of Brewster, New York, and is narrated by protagonist Jon Mosher from decades later as he looks back to that year when he was a teenager. In as many ways as this is a novel of friendship and coming of age, it is also a novel of grief, and Slouka pulls all that off in fewer than three hundred pages. Treat yourself to a few well-spent hours reading this well-written novel about a living with love and with loss.</p> |  |
| Demand: Creating What People Love Before They Know They Want It | Slywotzky, Adrian J. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |

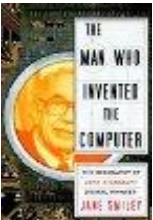
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| <u>Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth</u> | Smarsh, Sarah | ***** | <p>Poverty. Any reader interested in getting perspective about poverty and our national class divide should consider reading Sarah 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> |  |
| The World Is Curved: Hidden Dangers to the Global Economy | Smick, David M. | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| <u>Early Warning</u> | Smiley, Jane | ***** | <p>Balance. The middle book in Jane Smiley's trilogy about the Langdon family is titled, <u>Early Warning</u>. The children are having children, and the paths being chosen represent a wide swath of mid-twentieth century life in America. Smiley's writing maintains such perfect balance between the drama of the individual life and the turbulence of the era. Her characters are complex and finely drawn, and capture aspects of their time and place with precision. Just as in our lives, these characters are full of joy at one moment and suffering at another over the smaller and everyday elements of living. We live in the context of what's going on around us, with big events and small events, and exploring that balance is what I think Smiley achieves with great</p> |  |

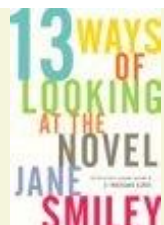
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| | | | | <p>skill in this novel. Readers who enjoy fine writing should like this novel and this trilogy.</p> <p>Finale. Jane Smiley completes her trilogy of the Langdon family over the last century with the novel titled, <u>Golden Age</u>. Time flew by as I returned to the huge cast of characters, and the connected storylines of their lives, their land, and their loves and losses. Wiser critics than I can assess the degree to which this saga constitutes a great American novel. I enjoyed the sweeping scope of this series, Smiley's fine writing, the deeply developed characters and the ways in which the Langdon family story is "our" story. My one minor irritation is that I wish Smiley ended the saga in 2014 or 2015. Instead, she projects the story into the future. Readers who like settling into a big novel and spending lots of time with interesting characters are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this trilogy.</p> | |
| <u>Golden Age</u> | Smiley, Jane | ***** | <u>11/20/15</u> | |  |
| <u>Good Faith</u> | Smiley, Jane | **** | <u>June 03</u> | <p>Real Estate. Smiley immerses readers into the real estate boom of the 1980s and the S&L debacle through a tale of the faith we place in others and where than can lead us.</p> |  |
| <u>Horse Heaven</u> | Smiley, Jane | *** | <u>8/00</u> | <p>Great character development in this well-written novel. Give this one a try.</p> |  |
| <u>Private Life</u> | Smiley, Jane | **** | <u>7/10/10</u> | <p>Marriage. Jane Smiley has once again offered readers great bounty in her new novel titled, <u>Private Life</u>. Smiley riffs on a key question: what does a marriage mean? While set mostly in the early 20th century, when marriage may have seemed different from today, the feelings and action come through as</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>both real and contemporary. Protagonist Margaret Mayfield marries Andrew Early and subordinates herself to him, leaving Missouri for California, and following his lead in building a life together. Margaret's gradual awakening to who Andrew is occurs at a pace that allows the action of the novel to absorb a reader into a life and a relationship that comes alive on these pages.</p> | |
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| <u>Some Luck</u> | Smiley, Jane | ***** | <u>10/29/14</u> | <p>Iowa. The ordinary lives and simple language and dialogue presented by Jane Smiley in her novel, <u>Some Luck</u>, may lead some readers to overlook the elegance of this wonderful novel. In these ordinary lives in Iowa from the 1920s to the 1950s, we discover interesting and complex characters experiencing all the dimensions of life. I found myself caring deeply about what happens to them. I marveled at the great insight Smiley shows about the inner lives of young children. Her beautiful and descriptive language brought the setting to vivid display. This is the first of a trilogy, and I, for one, am thrilled that Smiley is back in Iowa, writing the story of America through an interesting rural family.</p> |  |
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| <u>Ten Days in the Hills</u> | Smiley, Jane | *** | <u>July 07</u> | <p>Flight. Fine and witty writing about a group in Hollywood who flee from the start of the Iraq war in March 2003 after the Academy Awards, and share ten days with each other's self-importance, in two mansions.</p> |  |
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| The Man Who Invented the Computer: The Biography of John Atanasoff, Digital Pioneer | Smiley, Jane | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
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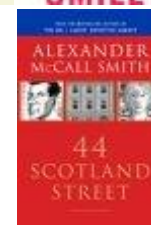
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| Thirteen Ways of Looking at the Novel | Smiley, Jane | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
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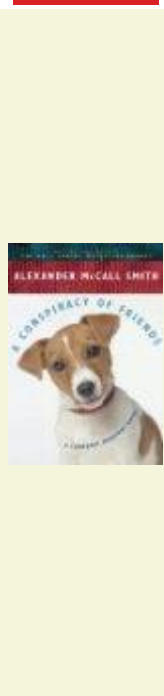
[44 Scotland Street](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

[Nov 05](#)

Serial. Life in Edinburgh with interesting cast of characters. Originally presented in 110 installments in the *Scotsman* which leads to spotty plot and character development.



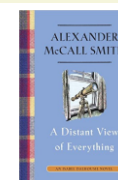
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| <u>A Conspiracy of Friends</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>11/8/12</u> | <p>Complications. The prolific author Alexander McCall Smith titled the third installment of his Cordoroy Mansions series, <u>A Conspiracy of Friends</u>. Readers of the earlier novels will be delighted by the return of a familiar cast of London characters, including the terrier, Freddie de la Hay, whose presence and character is as fully developed as his human companions. Smith presents the growing complications in the lives of these characters, and by the end of the novel, readers will have enjoyed spending time with these interesting people, and will await the next installment. Those readers who are new to the series might start here and wonder why would anyone care about these characters. It's best to start at the beginning and join those readers who love the ways in which Smith develops characters whose lives become interesting to readers and whose struggles and foibles can be similar to our own.</p> |  |
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[A Distant View of Everything](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

[12/19/17](#)

Interpretations. The eleventh installment in the series by Alexander McCall Smith featuring Isabel Dalhousie is titled, [A Distant View of Everything](#). Things are not always, or perhaps often, as they appear to be. It takes perspective and context to



interpret behavior and actions. Isabel refreshes herself and readers about the importance of perspective in this charming and engaging novel. Fans of the series are those readers most likely to enjoy reading the latest installment. New readers can start here or anywhere and be charmed by this interesting protagonist, her friends and extended family.

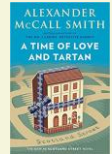
Connections. The twelfth collection of short pieces from *The Scotsman* featuring the neighborhood of 44 Scotland Street in Edinburgh is titled, [A Time of Love and Tartan](#). Instead of my usual method with this series of reading just a few short chapters over the course of several weeks, I read through it all in just two sittings. As with all of Smith's writing, the characters are memorable and interesting. There's kindness and love underlying most episodes, and the right people get their comeuppance, eventually. The plot moves along at the usual deliberative pace in this collection, and fans of the series will love the prospect that Irene may actually be leaving Stuart, Bertie and Ulysses behind to leave for Aberdeen.

Change. The latest bundle of serial installments from *The Scotsman* about the fictional people at 44 Scotland Street in Edinburgh by Alexander McCall Smith is titled, [Bertie Plays the Blues](#). All the familiar relationships in this series are moved slightly forward in this collection of eighty short installments. Six and a half year old Bertie has become so sad at his life under the domination of his mother, Irene, that he offers himself up for adoption on eBay. Angus and Domenica are engaged to be married and have to consider real estate options. Matthew and Elspeth have triplets and are rescued by a nanny who brings their house to order, a house that will change soon. For fans of

[A Time of Love and Tartan](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

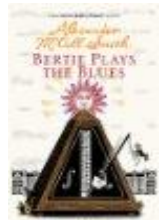
[2/22/18](#)



[Bertie Plays the Blues](#)

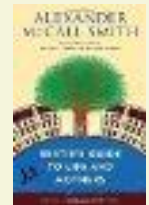
Smith, Alexander McCall

[4/24/14](#)



this series, there's some advance in the relationships, and a joy in the familiarity of the people and the setting. Read an excerpt or two of these short installments to see if this series will be interesting to you. I find that I can read a few installments at a sitting and be quite entertained.

Heart. The baker's dozen cast of characters from Alexander McCall Smith's 44 Scotland Street series are back, led by Bertie Pollock, in a book titled, Bertie's Guide to Life and Mothers. Serialized in *The Scotsman*, these short episodes are assembled into books on a regular basis. The big hearts of so many of the characters run through this collection of installments. There's kindness and love and caring going on amid the routine challenges of life. Those characters who seem to make the lives of others more difficult than is necessary play their roles here, and they can't drag down the progress of those with heart. Any reader who wants to be uplifted by a feel-good novel that showcases the better parts of human nature and helps us laugh at the lesser parts will likely enjoy this book and this series.



Bertie's Guide to Life and Mothers

Smith, Alexander McCall

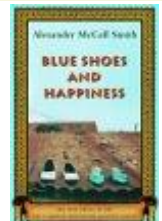
4/11/15

Blue Shoes and Happiness

Smith, Alexander McCall

**

Read, but not reviewed.

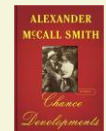


Chance Developments

Smith, Alexander McCall

2/16/17

Photographs. In a departure from his prolific serial fiction, Alexander McCall Smith presents five short stories in a collection titled, Chance Developments. Each story uses a vintage photograph as inspiration and starting point. As in his longer fiction, Smith in this book celebrates love and calls attention to characters who are fundamentally good. My preference remains with



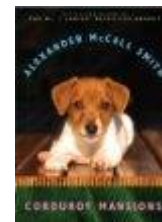
his longer prose, but I found each of these stories interesting and enjoyable. Longer fiction and the serial form allow him to do greater character development than he achieves in these short pieces.

Characters. London is the setting for a new character-driven novel by prolific author Alexander McCall Smith, titled [Corduroy Mansions](#). Fans of Smith's earlier novels set in Scotland and Botswana will enjoy a change in locale and the familiarity of a large cast of interesting characters, both the loveable and the despicable. The relationships in the new novel are often in stress: father and son; mother and son; lovers; and the cover art clues the readers that a dog will also find a way into some relationships. The entertainment from Smith's novels comes from the fun readers have in observing ordinary lives brought to life in the capable hands of a writer who can catch our attention and help us care about what happens to others. Any reader who likes those novels that tell clear stories about recognizable characters will appreciate this and other Smith novels.

[Corduroy Mansions](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

[11/18/10](#)

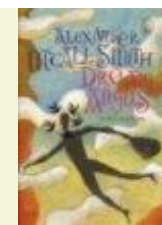


Dream Angus

Smith, Alexander McCall

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



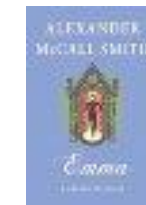
[Emma: A Modern Retelling](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

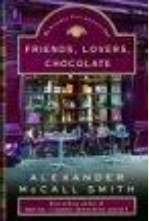
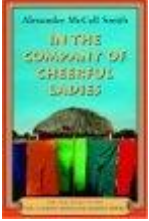

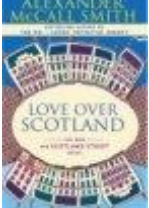
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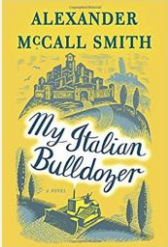
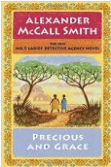
[11/20/15](#)

Fun. I'd like to imagine that prolific novelist Alexander McCall Smith had fun in writing [Emma: A Modern Retelling](#). There were a few times while reading it that I was somewhat amused. By the end, I confirmed what I knew at the beginning: there's far less satisfaction in retelling a classic story in a contemporary setting than there is in reading the classic itself or in reading a new contemporary novel. Chances are that if you like Jane Austen,

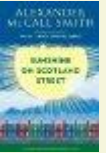



there's a high likelihood that you won't enjoy this retelling of her classic novel. Chances are that if you like Smith's writing and his many serial novels, you will find this diversion less enjoyable than more time with those familiar characters Smith created himself. Readers who are unfamiliar with both Austen and Smith are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

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|--|-------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Friends, Lovers, Chocolate</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | ** | <u>May 06</u> | Miasma. Somewhat foggy second installment featuring philosopher Isabel Dalhousie, with disconnected dialogue and a meandering plot from prolific author who's in no hurry to move things along. |  |
| <u>In the Company of Cheerful Ladies</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>June 05</u> | Choices. Any book in which characters enjoy tea more than three times gets our recommendation. Mma Ramotswe triumphs again and even ordinary tea becomes exceptional. |  |
| La's Orchestra Saves the World | Smith, Alexander McCall | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Love Over Scotland | Smith, Alexander McCall | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |

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| <u>My Italian Bulldozer</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | ***** | <p>Change. Frequent readers of any books by Alexander McCall Smith will find some common elements in his stand alone novel titled, <u>My Italian Bulldozer</u>. There's great optimism, a philosophy rooted in goodness and kindness, and joy in living. Protagonist Paul Stewart is a food writer whose girlfriend dumped him for a relationship with her personal trainer. Bummed by this change, he accepts his editor's advice that he should finish his Tuscany book onsite. After his rental car experience becomes entangled in Italian bureaucracy, he accepts the kindness of a new acquaintance who secures him the last available vehicle to rent: a bulldozer. Paul accepts the change with a spirit of adventure, and the novel continues to riff on the ways in which change transforms us. A dose of Smith's philosophy appears in a reflection on p.229: "Sometimes, you know, good things have to be done – they just have to be done. And most of us – myself included – are too timid to do them. Fortunately, there are brave people who are prepared to take the risk, who do those things, often in such a way that nobody can see them. They say, <i>The world doesn't have to be the way it is, we can change it.</i> That's what they say – and then they do it." As always, I finished a Smith novel feeling wonderful about human nature and all that is good in the world.</p> |  |
| <u>Precious and Grace</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | ***** | <p>Forgiveness. I know that whenever I feel low, I can turn to a novel by Alexander McCall Smith and get my spirits revived, especially from his series featuring Mma Ramotse and Mma Makutsi of the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency in Botswana. The seventeenth novel in that series is titled, <u>Precious and Grace</u>, and the theme in this offering is forgiveness. Fans of the series can brew a pot of tea, bush or otherwise, and sit for a while with</p> |  |

endearing characters who reveal the best about human nature. Few readers will close one of these novels without having smiled on one page or another.

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| <u>Sunshine on Scotland Street</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>7/28/14</u> | <p>Joy. I began and ended reading Alexander McCall Smith's novel, <u>Sunshine on Scotland Street</u>, with a smile on my face. No single recurring character takes center stage in this eighth installment of a popular series set in Edinburgh. In one way or another, life brightens a little for each character. Joy seems to spread among the characters. I even smiled during Bruce's time on stage. Fans of the series should be delighted by this new book. Any reader looking for a novel that directs one's thoughts away from troubles and woe and toward joy should consider reading this book.</p> |  |
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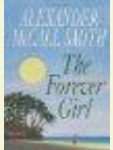
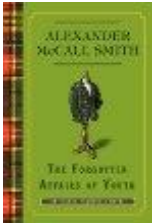
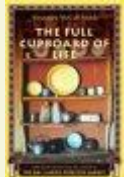
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| <u>Tea Time for the Traditionally Built</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>6/25/09</u> | <p>Children. The tenth novel in the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series by prolific author Alexander McCall Smith is titled, <u>Tea Time for the Traditionally Built</u>. With her gift for listening carefully to others, Precious Ramotswe solves cases this time out by listing to what comes from the mouths of children, who are often the most observant of creatures. Most of the action in this novel centers on the case of a local soccer team whom the owner expects is losing games because of the actions of a traitor. Along the way, Precious faces the demise of her beloved white van, and she grieves over this loss more than expected. A cup of bush tea goes a long way to helping one deal with all the challenges of life. Fans of this series will love the latest installment, and new readers can easily start here and then want to read others. Reading Smith's books is like enjoying a piece of fine candy: sweet and satisfying.</p> |  |
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| <u>The Bertie Project</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>4/5/17</u> | <p>Developments. For those times when I have only a few minutes to read, I can count on Alexander McCall Smith's 44 Scotland Street series to give me exactly what I need: a brief escape. The latest collection of installments in this series that is serialized in <i>The Scotsman</i> is titled, <u>The Bertie Project</u>. Irene is back from the Middle East which means the happy days for Bertie, his brother, Ulysses, and their father, Stuart, have come to an abrupt end. Neighbor Bruce has a new love interest. Matthew and Elspeth face a crisis with the triplets. Big Lou is back along with the usual extended cast of characters, for whom developments proceed at a moderate pace, leaving this reader and others patiently waiting for more installments.</p> |  |
| <u>The Careful Use of Compliments</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>Dec 07</u> | <p>Mother. Prolific author presents another Dalhousie novel in which her child is now three months old and she faces a challenge for leadership of the Review of Applied Ethics. Continued character development and insights.</p> |  |
| <u>The Charming Quirks of Others</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>10/15/10</u> | <p>Schemes. One advantage of reading a new novel from a series is that the characters are well-known and their behavior can be anticipated and enjoyed readily. The seventh Isabel Dalhousie novel from prolific Alexander McCall Smith is titled, <u>The Charming Quirks of Others</u>. This time out, moral philosopher Dalhousie uncovers new insights into human behavior as she sees the schemes that some will pursue to achieve their desired ends. Isabel's fiancée, Jamie, is being pursued by a cellist, Prue, who tells him she has terminal cancer, and in a make-a-wish sense would like to enjoy carnal pleasure from him. While that tempest builds, Isabel accepts an assignment to vet three candidates vying for the position of headmaster at a school, following an anonymous letter about the</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>skeleton in the closet of one of the candidates. Another schemer is behind that, and Smith uses Isabel's richly developed character to uncover the scheme and gain insight. First-time readers and fans will find an engaging story with interesting and very human characters.</p> <p>Politics. The nineteenth installment in the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series by Alexander McCall Smith is a novel titled, The Colors of All the Cattle. 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 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> | |
| The Colors of All the Cattle | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | 2/8/19 | |  |
| The Comforts of a Muddy Saturday | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | 6/25/09 | <p>Truth. The fifth installment in the Sunday Philosophy Club series by prolific author Alexander McCall Smith is titled, The Comforts of a Muddy Saturday. Protagonist and philosopher Isabel Dalhousie now owns the <i>Review of Applied Ethics</i> outright, and continues to edit articles for publication. She dotes on her fifteen-month-old son, Charlie, and worries a bit that her young boyfriend Jamie may find more interest in women closer to his own age. The action in the novel focuses on the search for truth amid both lies and muddling behavior. Isabel applies her skills to getting to the bottom of a matter of the falsification</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>of medical test data. The strength in The Comforts of a Muddy Saturday comes from the completeness of the characters and the ways in which their behavior unveils insights into our human condition.</p> <p>Wolf. Prolific novelist Alexander McCall Smith kicks off a new series with a novel titled, The Department of Sensitive Crimes. 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> | |
| The Department of Sensitive Crimes | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | 7/16/19 | |  |
| The Dog Who Came In From the Cold | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | 10/27/11 | <p>Warm. One reason that I enjoy reading books by Alexander McCall Smith is that I know that when I finish, I will have both a smile and a warm feeling. In The Dog Who Came In From the Cold, Smith brings readers back to Corduroy Mansions and to a familiar dog, Freddie de la Hay. Freddie has caught the attention of MI6, who want to use him to spy on a Russian. The many characters in this novel keep a reader engaged as the simple plot proceeds and resolution takes place. Readers who like tender and warm stories are those most likely to enjoy this and other Smith novels.</p> |  |
| The Double Comfort Safari Club | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | 12/15/11 | <p>Contentment. All the familiar elements of Alexander McCall Smith's No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency novels are present in The Double Comfort Safari Club, along with a larger than usual degree of drama. Fans will appreciate more time spent with Precious Ramotswe and Grace Makutsi and the familiar secondary characters. I usually close each book in the series feeling good, and that was true</p> |  |

with this one. Readers who enjoy character-driven fiction that brings all tension to resolution by the end will enjoy this novel and the others in this series.

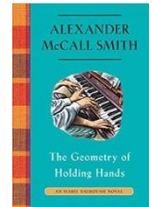
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| <u>The Forever Girl</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>6/11/14</u> | <p>Maturity. Popular serial author Alexander McCall Smith takes a fresh approach in his stand alone novel titled, <u>The Forever Girl</u>. Instead of gradually revealing the lives of a cast of characters in a specific locale, Smith dives deeper into a few characters and places them in different settings around the world. The theme of the novel involves mature love: expressed, conflicted, and unrequited. There's a weightiness and darkness that permeates this novel, another element quite unlike the rest of Smith's fiction. I enjoyed reading this novel, and observing the ways in which the characters mature as they gain experience and rethink prior ideas.</p> |  |
| <u>The Forgotten Affairs of Youth</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>2/17/12</u> | <p>Introspective. One reason I never tire of reading the short novels in the multiple series written by the prolific Alexander McCall Smith is that the characters and their situations always make me feel good. In the latest Isabel Dalhousie novel, <u>The Forgotten Affairs of Youth</u>, the moral philosopher continues to closely question herself about her preconceptions and biases. This philosopher lives a closely examined life! Most of the plot in this novel involves Isabel helping a fellow philosopher discover the identity of her birth parents. The usual cast of Edinburgh characters is present, and Charlie gets a little bit older, while still eating olives. Readers who like feel-good novels are those most likely to enjoy this one.</p> |  |
| <u>The Full Cupboard of Life</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>June 04</u> | <p>Teatime. Fifth in the No. 1 Ladies Detective series set in Botswana, in which an African Miss Marple explores the meaning of lives and relationships, in which a cup of tea is always the start of a solution to problems.</p> |  |

[The Geometry of Holding Hands](#)

Smith, Alexander
McCall

[10/12/20](#)

Complications. Readers who enjoy Alexander McCall Smith's Isabel Dalhousie series will love the 13th installment, a novel titled, [The Geometry of Holding Hands](#). I kept waiting to understand the title, and it came at the very end of the book, so be patient. As always, there are ethical concerns that philosopher Isabel grapples with, and her musician husband, Jamie, offers love and clarity to all the complications that develop in this novel. Smith has the ability to present readers with domestic situations, add conflict and complexity, and leave us very satisfied with human nature by the end of the book.



[The Good Husband of Zebra Drive](#)

Smith, Alexander
McCall

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[Jan 08](#)

Adjustments. In the eighth novel of the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series, the characters adjust to emerging needs and interests of others.

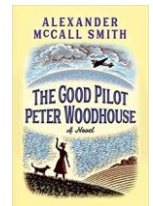


[The Good Pilot Peter Woodhouse](#)

Smith, Alexander
McCall

[7/6/18](#)

Dog. The titled of Alexander McCall Smith's standalone novel, [The Good Pilot Peter Woodhouse](#), refers to a dog who became the mascot for American pilots in England during World War II. Fans of Smith's uplifting fiction will finish reading this novel awash in good feelings. Smith covers love and friendship in ways that can make a reader come away with a renewed hope in the fundamental goodness of most people.

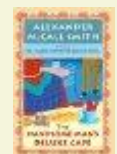


[The Handsome Man's De Luxe Café](#)

Smith, Alexander
McCall

[11/15/14](#)

Help. Many characters in the fifteenth novel of Alexander McCall Smith's No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series need help, and all of them receive it with care and love. Fans of this series will be delighted by the latest installment titled, [The Handsome Man's DeLuxe Café](#). The café in the title is a new project of Mma Makutsi and she needs help for the restaurant to succeed, and offers help to others who need what she can give them. Mr.



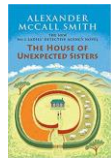
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| | | | | JLB Matekoni doesn't have enough work for both apprentices, so the one let go needs a job. The case that Mma Ramotswe and Mma Makutsi are trying to solve involves a woman in a desperate situation. At a calm pace, Smith moves along the story, punctuated with tea when needed, and before a reader notices, another delightful time in Gaborone has been spent by all. I finish each of these novels feeling good about the world and all those in it who try to help others. | |
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[The House of Unexpected Sisters](#)

Smith, Alexander
McCall

12/18/17

Weaknesses. The full cast of beloved characters are back for the eighteenth installment of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency Series, a novel titled, [The House of Unexpected Sisters](#). We all have weaknesses, and that should lead us to understand and forgive the weaknesses of others that can cause us distress. There's a case in this novel that causes Mma Ramotswe to change her mind, and she makes a discovery that changes her life. Fans of the series will zip through this installment and await the next. Any reader looking for a feel-good reading experience should consider this novel and this series. I always feel better about all people after reading one of Smith's books.



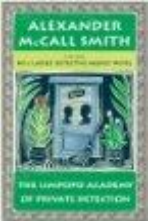
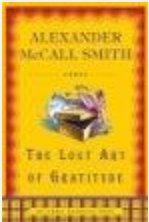
[The Importance of Being Seven](#)

Smith, Alexander
McCall

11/23/12

Habitual. Readers who enjoy light fiction but have trouble finding the time to read a novel should consider Alexander McCall Smith's 44 Scotland Street series. Smith created this series in daily installments for *The Scotsman* and he presents a cast of characters engaged in everyday life in Edinburgh. A reader can enjoy a single installment in a few minutes and come away satisfied. The sixth and latest in the series, [The Importance of Being Seven](#), advances the story for fans who have read the earlier installments. A new reader could start here and still be satisfied. Once in the habit of reading a little bit every day, before one knows it,

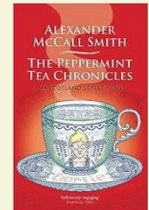


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| | | | | <p>another book is finished. The characters are endearing, the plot is interesting, and human nature is revealed.</p> <p>Deceptions. The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency has a lot of work to do in the thirteenth installment of the series, a novel by Alexander McCall Smith titled, <u>The Limpopo Academy of Private Detection</u>. In addition to a large cast of characters familiar to readers of this series, a surprise character appears in this one: Clovis Andersen, author of the reference book <i>The Principles of Private Detection</i>, which Precious Ramotswe and Grace Makutsi refer to when they need guidance about detective work. What Smith does so well in this series and in his other books is present a version of human nature that we recognize and understand. There is evil being done, but the forces of good always prevail, and we understand the reasons for each character's behavior. Readers looking to read an entertaining novel that proceeds at a relaxed pace with interesting characters should consider this book, series and author.</p> | |
| <u>The Limpopo Academy of Private Detection</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>7/25/12</u> | |  |
| <u>The Lost Art of Gratitude</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>4/25/10</u> | <p>Care. Some prolific authors can tire readers with shallow novels and immature characters. I never seem to tire of reading Alexander McCall Smith. In the sixth novel featuring philosopher Isabel Dalhousie titled, <u>The Lost Art of Gratitude</u>, Smith continues to develop Isabel as a complex character. Her relationship with Jamie continues to deepen, her work as editor of the <i>Review of Applied Ethics</i> provides her with stimulation, and her son, Charlie, is now eighteen months old, and he brings her great joy. Isabel exudes her care for others in this novel, while she maintains a solid center of gravity which keeps her steady against any obstacles. First-time readers can easily start here and be satisfied with a novel that does not rely on its predecessors to be</p> |  |

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| | | | | complete. Any reader who appreciates character-driven novels will likely enjoy this one. | |
| <u>The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>2/7/14</u> | <p>Cheer. I always feel happy when I read one of Alexander McCall Smith's novels. The fourteenth in the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency series is titled, <u>The Minor Adjustment Beauty Salon</u>. Mma Makutsi is pregnant and that adds a lot to the development of the series. Mma Ramotswe finds herself with two cases: a beauty salon owner who seems to have an enemy, and an inheritance that is being claimed by someone who may not be the rightful beneficiary. As readers have come to expect, there's a lot of life's important lessons packed into a few pages. By the end, as always, I closed the novel feeling just a little better about human nature and the goodness that can be found in the lives around us.</p> |  |
| The Miracle at Speedy Motors | Smith, Alexander McCall | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>The Novel Habits of Happiness</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>7/24/15</u> | <p>Goodness. Every time I complete the last page of a novel by Alexander McCall Smith, I notice that I have good feelings about humanity. The latest novel in his series featuring protagonist and philosopher Isabel Dalhousie is titled, <u>The Novel Habits of Happiness</u>. Fans of the series will enjoy the updated relationships among a familiar cast of characters, along with some unexpected twists. Isabel is asked to help a woman who is troubled by things that her young son has been saying. While Isabel hesitates to assist this woman, her kindness and goodness leads her to do what she can to help. That theme of goodness provides the opportunity for Smith to develop these characters and reflect on what brings</p> |  |

us happiness. Any reader who wants to read a novel to feel good should consider reading this one.

Kindness. I admit to being a tea snob, and I can't think of a more vile concoction than peppermint tea. I'm also a fan of Alexander McCall Smith's writing, so I thoroughly enjoyed reading his latest compilation of pieces about the recurring cast of characters from 44 Scotland Street that were serialized in *The Scotsman*. The new book is titled, [The Peppermint Tea Chronicles](#), and kindness abounds providing pleasure to fans of this series. Irene remains absent, to the delight of Stuart and Bertie. Lots of big and little things are happening to every member of the cast of characters, and fans will close the last page with a sigh as we await the next installments. Readers who enjoy fiction that lifts one's spirits can start with this book and become enchanted and ready to read the series.



Intervention. The twelfth novel in the Isabel Dalhousie series by Alexander McCall Smith is titled, [The Quiet Side of Passion](#). Isabel is working too hard: as a philosopher, as a Mom, and for her niece, Cat, for free at the café. With Jamie's encouragement, Isabel gets help from two women: one to help care for the house, and the other to help edit the *Review of Applied Ethics*. Through her son, Charlie, Isabel meets a woman named Patricia and learns things that make Isabel want to intervene to set things right. All the developing relationships are interesting, and there are consequences that must be faced on multiple fronts. All in all, this is a delightful installment in a series that I've liked reading. I always feel better about human behavior after spending time with Isabel.



[The Peppermint Tea Chronicles](#)

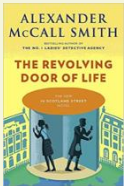
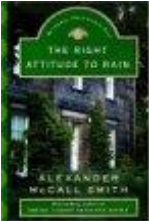
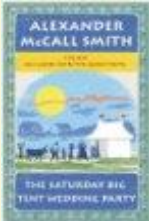
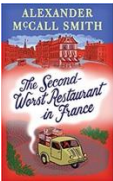
Smith, Alexander McCall

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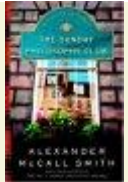
[The Quiet Side of Passion](#)

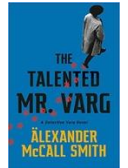
Smith, Alexander McCall

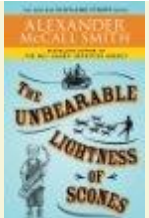
[9/24/18](#)

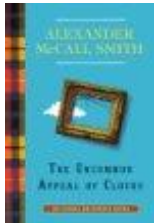
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|--|-------------------------|------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Revolving Door of Life</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>7/1/16</u> | <p>Healing. The tenth installment in Alexander McCall Smith's 44 Scotland Street series is titled, <u>The Revolving Door of Life</u>. Originally published as installments in <i>The Scotsman</i>, the short chapters provide ideal reading for commuters, or for any reader who has the time for short spurts, but can't always read for extended time periods. Fans of the series will enjoy the reunion with old friends, and appreciate the many forms of healing and love that permeate this collection. New readers can start here and find satisfaction from these standalone episodes. Once hooked, most readers will want to read the entire series. I'm already looking forward to the next installment.</p> |  |
| The Right Attitude to Rain | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>12/15/11</u> | <p>Comfort. Reading any of the novels of Alexander McCall Smith's No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency novels is like savoring a huge portion of macaroni and cheese (or your version of comfort food) on a cold night. <u>The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party</u> is the twelfth in the series, and the very familiar characters continue to develop in this installment. Readers who like wholesome characters and novels that are uplifting to the human spirit are those most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p> |  |
| <u>The Second-Worst Restaurant in France</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | **** | <u>4/23/20</u> | <p>Redemption. The second novel in the Paul Stuart series by prolific writer Alexander McCall Smith is titled, <u>The Second-Worst Restaurant in France</u>. Paul joins his cousin, Chloe, at a rented house in the French countryside where he intends to work on writing a cookbook. Once settled into the local community, all thought of writing disappears, as</p> |  |

Paul does all he can to help turnaround a restaurant and a village. As always with Smith, the theme is upbeat. Characters are finding themselves, and there is a leap toward redemption that will make all readers feel good about themselves, their neighbors, and human nature overall.

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| <u>The Sunday Philosophy Club</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | <u>Sep 05</u> | Responsibility. Protagonist Isabel Dalhousie applies her interest in moral philosophy to her life experiences, accompanied by a cast of quirky characters, and the need to solve a murder. |  |
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|--|-------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Talented Mr. Varg</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | ***** | <u>9/19/20</u> | Choices. The second installment of Alexander McCall Smith's Detective Varg series is a novel titled, <u>The Talented Mr. Varg</u> . Smith fans will enjoy the author's dry wit, moderate pacing, and compassion for all characters. Things are never as they appear for the Department of Sensitive Crimes, and Varg chooses to investigate and help in ways that are not often linear. Varg often tends to choose mercy rather than justice. As always with Smith, the way things turn out always seem to be just right. |  |
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| The Unbearable Lightness of Scones | Smith, Alexander McCall | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
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|--|-------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Uncommon Appeal of Clouds</u> | Smith, Alexander McCall | ***** | <u>3/16/13</u> | Uplifting. Whenever I want to read a short novel that is likely to make me feel good about humanity, I turn to Alexander McCall Smith, especially the series featuring the kind and wise Scottish philosopher, Isabel Dalhousie. In the ninth novel of this series, <u>The Uncommon Appeal of Clouds</u> , Isabel turns away from the pressing needs of editing the next issue of <i>The Review of Applied</i> |  |
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Ethics, to help recover a stolen painting that has been promised to the National Gallery. All the familiar characters are back, and fans will enjoy, as I did, the time spent with Isabel as she thinks things through and navigates a complicated path to solving the case.

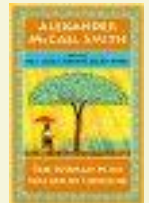
Reconciliation. If the world is getting you down, pick up the novel titled, [The Woman Who Walked in Sunshine](#), by Alexander McCall Smith. After a few dozen pages, your heart rate and blood pressure will both be lower, and a smile may creep across your face. This novel is the sixteenth installment in the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency series set in Botswana and featuring Mma Ramotswe and Mma Makutsi. There's an interesting case, and several forms of reconciliation that occur through the course of these pages. Here's one of my favorite quotes (p.43): "The trouble with the world today, she thought, was that people were not prepared to stand up to bad behavior. They looked away, they pretended they had not seen anything, and hardly anybody bothered to deal with badly behaved children, with the result that they could run wild, could go on the rampage unchecked." After you finish the novel, refreshed, perhaps reconciled, you will be better prepared for whatever bad behavior is happening in your part of the world.

Characters. Alexander McCall Smith continues his delightful Scotland Street series with an enjoyable book titled, [The World According to Bertie](#). The cast of characters familiar to fans returns, and their relationships continue to mature. What Smith does so well is bring a character to life, place the character in everyday situations, and allow the action to help readers come to know and love the character. Bertie is a character who tugs at

[The Woman Who Walked in Sunshine](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

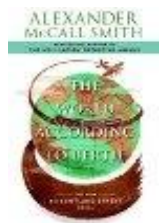
[8/12/16](#)



[The World According to Bertie](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

[2/14/09](#)



your heart. No matter what your relationship has been with your own parents, you will wince at the challenges this 6-year-old faces, especially at the direction of his mother, Irene. Some of the Scotland Street neighbors know each other better than others, and readers will recognize personality types found in every neighborhood. Part of the pleasure in this series entails the insights that Smith allows the characters to uncover in the course of their ordinary lives. If you've not read the earlier books in this series, don't be put off at all. You can start here and be quite satisfied. After reading [The World According to Bertie](#), you may want to go back and read the others.

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, [To the Land of Long Lost Friends](#). 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.



[To the Land of Long Lost Friends](#)

Smith, Alexander McCall

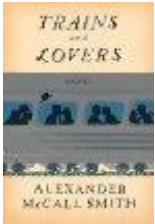
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Trains and Lovers

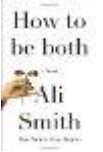
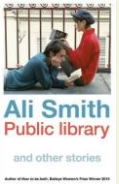

Smith, Alexander McCall

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.



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| Unusual Uses for Olive Oil: A Professor Dr von Igelfeld Entertainment Novel | Smith, Alexander McCall | *** | 2/4/13 <p>Dogmatic. Professor Dr Moritz-Maria von Igelfeld of the Institute of Romance Philology is not one of my favorite characters in the fiction of Alexander McCall Smith. That said, I laughed a lot when I read the latest novel in this series, Unusual Uses for Olive Oil. The clueless professor creates his own predicaments and problems, and most of them will make readers smile or laugh. The professor's dogmatism blinds him to the wider reality in which most of us live. Readers who like quirky humor are those most likely to enjoy this novel. Consider reading a sample before you commit to reading the whole book.</p> |  |
| Artful | Smith, Ali | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Autumn | Smith, Ali | ***** | 4/5/17 <p>Leaving. If I were a novelist embarking on four novels involving the seasons, I would probably start with Spring. Ali Smith plans to write four seasonal novels, and her first novel in the quartet is titled, Autumn. I wonder how much Brexit had to do with her choice of a starting point. Considering all the leaves and leavings taking place in Smith's take on Autumn, I think her choice to start with the season of fruitfulness makes great sense. Daniel and Elizabeth are neighbors with a wide difference in age. Smith offers their unlikely love as a way to draw readers into the fragility of life, the shortness of our seasons, and to reflect about the harvest that might be reaped from our lives. I was filled with wonder as I turned these pages, watching how Smith could deal with a range of emotions with such skill. Readers who enjoy finely written literary</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p> <p>Artists. It's rare for me to finish reading a novel and have this thought: that was really something different. I had that experience when I finished Ali Smith's novel titled, How to be Both. All artists require an audience, and it is through our eyes that the art is experienced. Smith offers readers the choice to select either Georgia or Del Cossa as the starting point, either today, or 500 years ago. These women are separated by time and united by art. We are drawn into their worlds and it is our observations that bring interpretation, understanding and insight. Smith's prose is an art in and of itself. This inventive novel entertained me, and will likely delight those readers who enjoy creative literary writing.</p> | |
| How to be Both | Smith, Ali | ***** | 12/27/14 | |  |
| Public Library and Other Stories | Smith, Ali | ***** | 6/2/17 | <p>Language. Having read other works by Ali Smith, I was prepared for the pleasure of falling under the spell of her wordplay in a collection titled, Public Library and Other Stories. Smith's skill with words can become dazzling, and at the same time make some readers feel unmoored. Words, books and libraries are all on display in this collection, and those readers who love our language are those most likely to enjoy reading this book.</p> |  |
| Spring | Smith, Ali | ***** | 1/24/20 | <p>Growth. The third installment in Ali Smith's quartet on the seasons is titled, Spring. This was the installment that I wanted to read first, but Smith surprised me with choosing Autumn as the opener. Spring is a season of surprises and of sprouting. We come to see the new growth of what we had planted and what arrived by unknown means. Smith shows the evidence of what we have planted in society: detention centers and the demonization of immigrants. Surrender to Smith's take on contemporary life and dream with her on the pages</p> |  |

of this finely written novel. This is us. This is now. I can't wait for the final installment.

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|---|------------|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Accidental</u> | Smith, Ali | ** | <u>May 06</u> | <p>Clever. Talented writer delivers carefully constructed novel with language and structure so clever, precise and pretentious that it can distract readers.</p> |  |
| <u>The First Person and Other Stories</u> | Smith, Ali | *** | <u>2/19/09</u> | <p>Surreal. It takes great skill to balance something surreal with the reality of person and place. Ali Smith does that expertly in her new collection, <u>The First Person and Other Stories</u>. I laughed aloud when I read "The Child," in which a toddler looks one way and acts quite another. Smith's cleverness and sense of the surreal appears in "Fidelio and Bess" when the characters Porgy & Bess begin to spear in Beethoven's Fidelio. In "Writ" a woman is visited by her teenage self. Strange and surreal, but as with each story, used in a way that leads to reality and to an understanding of our humanity. If you're interested in short stories, consider reading the finely crafted ones in <u>The First Person</u>.</p> |  |
| <u>There But For The</u> | Smith, Ali | **** | <u>7/16/12</u> | <p>Wordplay. The virtuoso wordplay in Ali Smith's novel, <u>There But For The</u>, mesmerized me at times. I found myself having to pause, and find the connection from one part to another, if there was one. I'd plow ahead, and delight in her choice of words, and get lost again. Smith presents a story from four viewpoints, and explores the notion of our separation from each other with glee. What plot there is involves a dinner guest leaving the table and locking himself in an upstairs room of the hosts, who are strangers to him. We learn something about him and the other characters from this core action. Readers who love wordplay are those most likely to enjoy this creative, unusual, and finely written novel.</p> |  |

Winter

Smith, Ali

2/2/18

Longing. The second novel in the seasons series by Ali Smith is titled, Winter. Patient readers will meander along with Smith in the bleakness of the season with a cast of characters who are somewhat unmoored and be rewarded with some beautifully crafted prose. My patience was waning until page 215 where Smith describes how Arthur has had enough of Christmas and now longs for winter itself. Here's the single sentence that gave me the prose payoff for my patience: "He wants real winter where words are sheathed in snow, trees emphatic with its white, their bareness shining and enhanced because of it, the ground underfoot snow-covered as if with frozen feathers or shredded cloud but streaked with gold through the trees from low winter sun, and at the end of the barely discernable track, along the dip in the snow that indicates a muffled path between the trees, the view and the woods opening to a light that's itself untrodden, never before blemished, wide like an expanse of snow-sea, above it more snow promised, waiting its time in the blank of the sky." I read the novel in winter and will read this sentence multiple times again after the next snowfall.

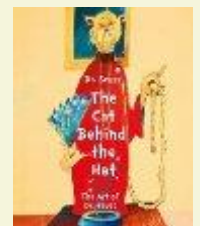



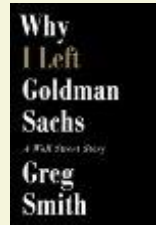
Dr. Seuss: The Cat Behind the Hat

Smith, Caroline M.

11/26/13

Brilliant. There are several great reasons to buy Caroline Smith's Dr. Seuss: The Cat Behind the Hat. First of all, this is a beautiful book. The illustrations are finely printed and are beautiful to see. Second, if the only image you have of Dr. Seuss comes from *The Cat in the Hat*, you are in for a treat. While many of the images from Ted Geisel's children's books were familiar to me, I especially enjoyed seeing the midnight paintings, his ads and the political cartoons he drew. Finally, any reader who likes to learn more about a creative individual will discover in this finely written book a comprehensive perspective on Ted Geisel. Treat



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| <u>Monkey Mind: A Memoir of Anxiety</u> | Smith, Daniel | *** | <u>12/18/12</u> | <p>yourself to this expensive book with a value that far exceeds its cost.</p> <p>Disclosure. People are funny. Most of us enjoy spending time with those people who can laugh at themselves or who are willing to tell self-deprecating stories. Readers can experience that enjoyment from Daniel Smith's book, <u>Monkey Mind: A Memoir of Anxiety</u>. Smith has suffered from profound anxiety, and he describes some of his life experiences with great wit as well as insight. I experience what I suspect to be an average level of anxiety, so what Smith has faced is far outside my personal experience. Memoirs can introduce readers to aspects of human behavior that can be enlightening. Smith's disclosure of the extent of his anxiety may comfort those who are severely anxious. General readers can find insight on these pages into what others face in their daily lives.</p> |  |
| <u>Why I Left Goldman Sachs: A Wall Street Story</u> | Smith, Greg | *** | <u>12/13/12</u> | <p>Junior. Greg Smith expanded the fifteen minutes of fame he earned by resigning from Goldman Sachs in a startling 1500 word <i>New York Times</i> editorial and has written a 250 page memoir titled <u>Why I Left Goldman Sachs: A Wall Street Story</u>. All memoir becomes a matter of perspective, and Smith's junior role at Goldman gave him a perspective that represents one slice of the firm and one set of experiences. Reading this book is like eavesdropping, bringing the reader into places where we might not normally be, to the point where there was entirely too much recollection of chatting at urinals. Yuk. That and other unnecessary contexts pack this book with anecdotes that meant something to Smith, but not to many others. His main point is that his values and the behavior he saw at his company became misaligned. From p. 236, "I knew in my heart there was something deeply wrong in the way people were behaving, in</p> |  |

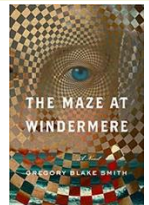
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| | | | the way they didn't care about the repercussions, in the way they saw their clients as their adversaries." Readers who want an inside view of Goldman will get a sliver here. Readers who like a coming-of-age memoir are likely to find this one interesting. Any reader expecting the revelation of secrets won't find them in this book. | |
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[The Maze at Windermere](#)

Smith, Gregory
Blake

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



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|--|----------------|------|--|--|
| <u>Who Stole the American Dream?</u> | Smith, Hedrick | **** | <u>9/20/12</u> Predators. Journalist Hedrick Smith builds a case one piece at a time in his book <u>Who Stole the American Dream?</u> He shows through multiple examples over the past four decades how public policies that favor the rich have decimated the economic strength of average workers and enhanced the power of the wealthy. He shows how the United States has changed from a fairly level society to a plutocracy. This has been a transformation of American society that has important consequences. There are multiple predators that Smith exposes in this book, and he proposes ways in which we can turn this situation around, if we want. Readers interested in public policy should consider this required reading, whether one agrees or disagrees with Smith's views. | |
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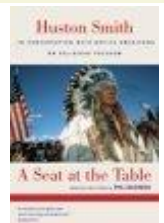


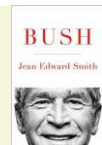

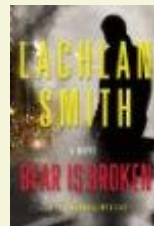
A Seat at the
Table

Smith, Huston

Unread



Shelf of Ennui 2006



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| <u>Bush</u> | Smith, Jean Edward | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>The Liberation of Paris: How Eisenhower, de Gaulle, and von Choltitz Saved the City of Light</u> | Smith, Jean Edward | ***** | <u>11/14/19</u> | <p>Decisions. I love to read a short work by a prominent historian that enlightens me about a single topic. In his book titled, <u>The Liberation of Paris: How Eisenhower, de Gaulle, and von Choltitz Saved the City of Light</u>, 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.</p> |  |
| <u>Bear Is Broken</u> | Smith, Lachlan | *** | <u>3/16/13</u> | <p>Initiation. A debut novel from Lachlan Smith titled <u>Bear Is Broken</u> will appeal to those crime novel readers who prefer a strong protagonist over a clear and focused plot. Leo Maxwell has just passed the bar exam, and when his brother, Teddy, is shot, Leo's initiation into the criminal law practice becomes less gradual than either brother had planned. Smith packs this novel with plenty of action, and I was well entertained. I had the sense that Smith included every plot idea he thought of, while not paying enough attention to how it all fit together. Any reader wanting to sample a first novel with an appealing protagonist should consider reading this one.</p> |  |

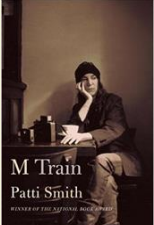
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|--|--------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Art of Vanishing: A Memoir of Wanderlust</u> | Smith, Laura | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>Rivers of Power: How a Natural Force Raised Kingdoms, Destroyed Civilizations, and Shapes Our World</u> | Smith, Laurence C. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>December 6</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | *** | <u>Dec 02</u> | Loyalty. Fine writing revealing human nature from characters seeped in different cultures. Life in Japan prior to the Pearl Harbor attack, mostly through the eyes of the black sheep son of American missionaries. |  |
| <u>Stalin's Ghost</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | *** | <u>Aug 07</u> | Digging. Arkady Renko returns for the sixth time as his investigation into a sighting of Stalin in a Moscow subway leads Renko to Chechnya, war crimes past and present, and buried bodies. |  |
| <u>Tatiana</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | **** | <u>7/18/14</u> | Stalwart. When Martin Cruz Smith introduced the character Arkady Renko to readers in 1981, the policeman clashed with the expectations of his Soviet bosses. In the novel titled, <u>Tatiana</u> , the eighth in this series, Arkady remains at odds with his superiors. Russia changes, while Renko remains true to himself. Skeptical that a case was not a suicide, Renko and his sidekick, Victor Orlov, decide to investigate. Smith writes terrific prose, maintains the development of a complex character who is both cynical and romantic. In each novel in this series, Smith takes the reality of contemporary Russian life and places Renko into the middle of |  |

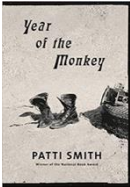
things. This latest novel is among the best in the series, and I highly recommend it to any reader who enjoys crime fiction.


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| <u>The Girl from Venice</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | **** | <u>2/23/17</u> | <p>Cenzo. Readers who enjoy character-driven fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading Martin Cruz Smith's novel titled, <u>The Girl from Venice</u>. Set in Italy at the end of World War II, the novel's protagonist, Innocenzo Vianello, or Cenzo, is a fisherman with a boatload of concerns. Smith uses Cenzo as the way to explore what it was like to be an Italian as the war was ending. The ways in which the war changed his life comprise the bulk of the narrative. There's a love story and enough action to interest most readers, but the real strength of the novel is in the depth of the character, Cenzo, and all the ways in which he becomes a way for us to better understand human nature.</p> |  |
| <u>The Siberian Dilemma</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | **** | <u>12/9/19</u> | <p>Bears. The ninth novel by Martin Cruz Smith to feature Moscow investigator Arkady Renko is titled, <u>The Siberian Dilemma</u>. 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.</p> |  |
| <u>Three Stations</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | **** | <u>9/10/10</u> | <p>Survival. Martin Cruz Smith has reprised his popular Russian detective Arkady Renko in a new novel titled, <u>Three Stations</u>. Set in modern Moscow, Renko is hanging onto his job by a thread, and many fellow Muscovites are struggling to survive corruption and crime while trying to eke out a living. Renko injects himself into a murder case, which is followed by what appears to be serial</p> |  |


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| | | | homicides. Gangsters are trying to pursue a runaway prostitute, whose child was stolen upon her arrival in Moscow. For her and for others, Renko works to get to the bottom of everything, and along the way, he's willing to sacrifice his job and himself, since he seems to have nothing else to lose. Smith has continued to deepen his development of the Renko character with this novel, and his plot pacing and descriptions of Moscow make for quick and enjoyable reading. | |
| <u>Wolves Eat Dogs</u> | Smith, Martin Cruz | *** | <u>Feb 05</u> | <p>Patience. Arkady Renko returns for the fifth installment in this series. Russia and Arkady continue to change, both are struggling, but with patience Arkady figures things out.</p>  |
| <u>Cockpit Confidential: Everything You Need to Know About Air Travel: Questions, Answers, and Reflections</u> | Smith, Patrick | *** | <u>2/7/14</u> | <p>Curiosity. Over the course of a few days, I zipped through airline pilot Patrick Smith's book, <u>Cockpit Confidential: Everything You Need to Know About Air Travel: Questions, Answers, and Reflections</u>. I apologize in advance for saying this book has its ups and downs. For frequent fliers, there may a tidbit or two that seems new or fresh, mostly in the form of some elaboration on things experienced firsthand. For fearful and infrequent fliers, this book is likely to lead one toward greater comfort in flying because of the information conveyed. For me, I liked Smith's point of view and personal reflections, and got a bit bored with some of his explanations. Read a sample before you commit to reading the whole book.</p>  |
| <u>Just Kids</u> | Smith, Patti | *** | <u>1/25/11</u> | <p>Artists. For those readers who are not artists, the memoir <u>Just Kids</u> by Patti Smith is like entering into an alien world. Smith writes with precision and clarity about her life in the 1960s and 1970s when she and Robert Mapplethorpe were friends and lovers and their art was not noticed. The starving artists scenario could have turned out quite</p>  |



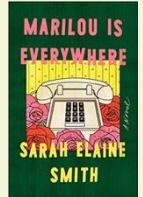

differently, and is from the distance of their successes that we can appreciate the uncertainty of their lives when they were young. Smith's voice in this memoir gently brings readers into her relationship with Robert and the people, places and milestones of their lives. It's easy to understand why this book has been praised and has received major awards.

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| M Train | Smith, Patti | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
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|------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Year of the Monkey | Smith, Patti | ***** | 2/14/20 | <p>Artist. Treat yourself by spending time reading Patti Smith's memoir titled, Year of the Monkey. This multi-dimensional talented artist offers readers her memories, dreams, impressions, and experiences of 2016. We travel with her during this year and thanks to her poetic language, we feel what she felt. Thanks to her photographs, we see a few of the things that her artistic eye captured. Most of all, we get to admire a talented artist use many of her skills to try to reveal herself to us and to help us reveal ourselves to the world.</p> |  |
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| Los Angeles | Smith, Peter Moore | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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| On His Own Terms: A Life of Nelson Rockefeller | Smith, Richard Norton | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
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| Confidence | Smith, Russell | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Grace and Power: The Private World of the Kennedy White House | Smith, Sally Bedell | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>Marilou Is Everywhere</u> | Smith, Sarah Elaine | *** | <u>10/25/19</u> | 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. |  |
| The Ruins | Smith, Scott | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |

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| <u>Wade in the Water</u> | Smith, Tracy K. | **** | <u>7/6/18</u> | <p>Treat. Most weeks, the only poetry I read comes from <i>The New Yorker</i>. I treated myself to the collection of thirty-two poems by Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith titled, <u>Wade in the Water</u>. The range of this collection is wide and Smith explores much about the United States, past and present, in these poems. We find injustice at the core of one poem and compassion in another. In each, there are perfectly chosen words and images. I gave myself over to Smith's art and craft and pondered these poems, reading them aloud to hear the music.</p> |  |
| <u>Changing My Mind: Occasional Essays</u> | Smith, Zadie | Ennui | <u>4/25/10</u> | <p>I skimmed parts of each essay in this collection. The writing seemed fine, but I just wasn't interested enough to read them all.</p> |  |
| <u>Feel Free</u> | Smith, Zadie | ***** | <u>4/16/18</u> | <p>Observant. I've read many of Zadie Smith's essays and reviews in the past, and when I completed her new collection titled, <u>Feel Free</u>, I realized what great range and variety of skills this fine writer exhibits. Her observation skills inform finely crafted sentences when she writes as a critic or reviewer. She is a close reader of the works of others, and her insights are both informed and interesting. Her perspectives on any number of topics brought me pleasure, even when I realized that I had read an essay before.</p> |  |
| <u>Grand Union</u> | Smith, Zadie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

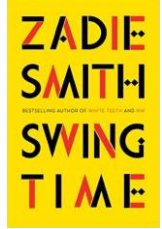
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| <u>Intimations</u> | Smith, Zadie | ***** | <u>8/25/20</u> | <p>Vibrant. It's time to treat your addled covid brain with six fresh and vibrant essays by Zadie Smith in a collection titled, <u>Intimations</u>. Artists of all sorts help us make sense of the world. In these finely written essays, Smith uses all her artistic writing skill to help us think about this unusual time. I felt communal empathy in her words, and kindness about our current predicament in respect to the pandemic, racism and immigration. We've all asked ourselves scores of questions in 2020, and in these essays, Smith reveals the questions she has asked herself and how she is thinking about contemporary life.</p> |  |
| <u>NW</u> | Smith, Zadie | **** | <u>12/13/12</u> | <p>Confusing. Readers with a high tolerance for confusion and with patience to allow ambiguity to last a long time are those most likely to enjoy reading Zadie Smith's <u>NW</u>. I was infuriated and confused for at least the first half of the book. I struggled to try to piece together what Smith presents which required me to allow her to take me where she chose, not where I expected or preferred to go. By the end of the novel, I felt it was an unusual experience, but her writing was worth my time. After I finished, I read part of the beginning of the novel again, and felt far less confused than I did on the first reading. I recommend sampling an excerpt before plunging into this creative and unusual novel.</p> |  |
| <u>On Beauty</u> | Smith, Zadie | ** | <u>Nov 05</u> | <p>Homage. Art admires art as Smith bows to E.M. Forester and <i>Howard's End</i>, but presents annoying rather than deeply developed characters, and dialogue that often rings hollow.</p> |  |

[Swing Time](#)

Smith, Zadie

[1/16/17](#)

Dancing. Zadie Smith riffs on multiple themes throughout her novel titled, [Swing Time](#). I found myself mesmerized by her writing rhythm as she explored friendship, class, race and the divergent paths that lives can take. The whole novel felt to me like a dance, as Smith introduced level after level of insight into the lives of these interesting characters and the worlds in which they live. Readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



[Quarantine](#)

Smolens, John

[9/4/12](#)

Family. Fans of finely written historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy John Smolens' novel, [Quarantine](#). Set in 1796 in Newburyport, Massachusetts, the action revolves around the arrival in port of a ship carrying disease. The wide cast of characters allows readers to see the consequences of this sickness in many forms. Smolens uses the closeness of family connection to explore the range of behavior from profligacy to diligence and love. When I read historical fiction I want to feel like I can see and smell and hear the vibrancy of the place and time. Smolens brings this place, this time and these characters to life in an engaging and entertaining way.

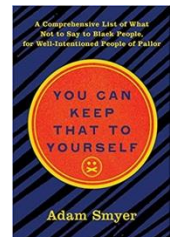





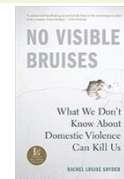
[You Can Keep That to Yourself: A Comprehensive List of What Not to Say to Black People, for Well-Intentioned People of Pallor](#)

Smyer, Adam

[11/17/20](#)

Humor. I laughed a lot as I read Adam Smyer's book titled, [You Can Keep That to Yourself: A Comprehensive List of What Not to Say to Black People, for Well-Intentioned People of Pallor](#). I quickly thought of the gift possibilities for this book to a lot of different people. I can imagine a large number of corporate training sessions in which this book could be used to facilitate conversations about race relations. I am one of the well-intentioned people of pallor for whom this book should find a receptive audience.



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| <u>Paris, He Said</u> | Sneed, Christine | ***** | <u>10/20/16</u> | <p>Compromises. One of the milestones of adulthood involves the acceptance of compromises: the pragmatic reconciliation of ideals and reality. In her novel titled, <u>Paris, He Said</u>, Christine Sneed explores the things a young woman chooses to do for her art, and the ways in which a mentor can exploit a need while fulfilling desire. By alternating narrators, Sneed allows readers to understand different perspectives. Sneed's prose will please many readers, and this novel might lead to interesting conversation among book group participants.</p> |  |
| When Britain Burned the White House: The 1814 Invasion of Washington | Snow, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| <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>No Visible Bruises</u> | Snyder, Rachel Louise | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

[What We've Lost Is Nothing](#)

Snyder, Rachel
Louise

[4/7/14](#)

Inclusion. The setting for Rachel Snyder's debut novel, [What We've Lost Is Nothing](#) is the village on the border of Chicago where I live, Oak Park, Illinois. Renowned as the home of Frank Lloyd Wright at the beginning of the 20th century, and for the architectural legacy of the homes he built in the community, the town is also recognized for its efforts at racial and economic integration and the inclusion of citizens of any persuasion or categorization into every element of village life. Snyder uses that setting as the backdrop for this well-paced and finely written novel about what happens to the people on a block in this community following a burglary. Underneath the stated values of the characters there is fear, loneliness and prejudice. The title refers to the way one character described the aftermath of the burglary. It takes a lot of effort to include everyone to build a strong community. When something happens to disrupt life, it doesn't take much for the spirit of inclusion to break down. Readers who enjoy fiction that describes familiar human behavior and explores contemporary challenges in living together are those most likely to enjoy reading this well-written novel.

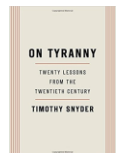


[On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century](#)

Snyder, Timothy

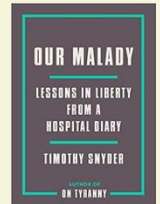
[6/2/17](#)

Primer. Yale history professor Timothy Snyder offers readers a short book titled, [On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century](#), that provides a primer on what the recent century might teach us about what is necessary to be done today. Any engaged citizen with concerns about our current political environment can spend a worthwhile half hour reading the lessons that Snyder offers. Whether you think our current divisive politics is a feature or a bug, there's much to reflect on in this short volume. You may disagree

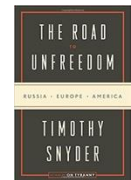


with Snyder, but spending a few minutes thinking about this topic will be time well spent.

Health. I can think of no better time to read a reflection on the fragility of health. Timothy Snyder's short book titled, [Our Malady: Lessons in Liberty from a Hospital Diary](#), describes the illness he experienced in December 2019 (spoiler: not coronavirus), and how important health is in the context of all our civil liberties, a topic about which the author is an expert. This book makes a compelling case for universal health care being a basic human right and how such a system will help mend some places in which our society has torn apart.



Vulnerability. I started reading Timothy Snyder's book titled, [The Road to Unfreedom](#), on Independence Day. As I read about Russia and the rise of authoritarianism, I thought of Ben Franklin and his description of the United States: "a republic, if you can keep it." Snyder surveys many ways in which western institutions are vulnerable, and how growing inequality highlights that vulnerability. Any citizens interested in reading something that will stimulate thinking about trends and our current situation will find a lot to think about after reading this book.



[Our Malady: Lessons in Liberty from a Hospital Diary](#)

Snyder, Timothy

[10/19/20](#)

[The Road to Unfreedom](#)

Snyder, Timothy

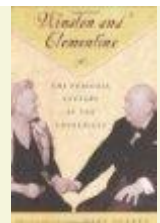
[7/24/18](#)

[Winston and Clementine: The Personal Letters of the Churchills](#)

Soames, Mary

[2/00](#)

Highly recommended. Eavesdrop on their sixty year loving relationship.



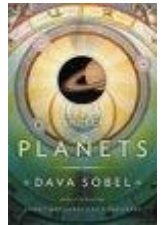
The Planets

Sobel, David

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Jan 06

Lyrical. Author shares her wonder at scientific data and love for the solar system through lyrical writing.

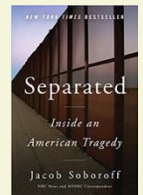


Separated:
Inside an
American
Tragedy

Soboroff, Jacob

9/22/20

Cruelty. Prepare to be outraged and to cry as you read Jacob Soboroff's book titled, Separated: Inside an American Tragedy. No matter how much you think you know, or how well you have followed the separation of children from their parents on our southern border, there will be aspects of this situation that you'll learn by reading this book. We can become distracted by so many things, and the story of the day displaces what happened before it. Over the course of the four hundred pages of this book, you will meet the people who suffered cruelty because of this policy, you'll learn about those who tried to hide what was going on, and the occasional person whose actions made a huge difference. Any reader interested in public policy should consider reading this book.



The Septembers
of Shiraz

Sofer, Dalia

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008



The Faraway
Nearby

Solnit, Rebecca

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity

Solomon, Andrew

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

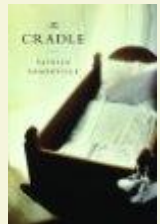


[The Cradle](#)

Somerville, Patrick

[5/25/09](#)

Family. When a couple prepares for the arrival of a first child, there are many new feelings, cravings, and practical details to work through. Patrick Somerville mines some of this material in his debut novel, [The Cradle](#). Marissa wants their child to use the cradle she had as a child, so she sends her husband, Matt, to find it. Matt's challenge is that Marissa has no idea where the cradle is. Matt's journey leads him through four states, and to memories of his own childhood. Along the way, he meets members of Marissa's family and becomes aware of what family means, as well as the barriers, like war and abandonment, that can lead to the dissolution of what we hold dear. Somerville deals with complexity and the messiness of life with deft skill. If you want to take a chance on reading the work of a new writer, [The Cradle](#) will be time well spent.

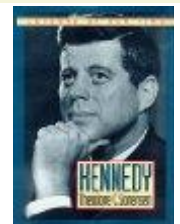


Kennedy

Sorensen, Ted

Unread

Picked this up at a used book sale in the 1980s. Waited for a democratic president to be in office to read it, and never quite got around to it.



[Too Big to Fail: The Inside Story of How Wall Street and Washington Fought to Save](#)


Sorkin, Andrew Ross

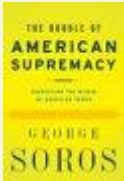
[7/20/10](#)

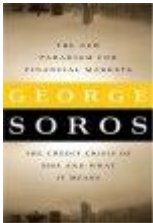
Inside. There's no shortage of books about the current financial crisis. Contrary to my usual brisk reading pace, I found myself slowing down to savor the 600+ pages of Andrew Ross Sorkin's [Too Big to Fail](#). This finely written book reveals the inside story: specific details about people and meetings







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| <u>the Financial System---and Themselves</u> | | | | that bring the players and policies to life. This is the work of a skilled journalist with many sources, and the perspective to pull all the pieces together into a play-by-play narrative that made me feel like I was in the room as he describes what happened. | |
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| <u>The Blizzard</u> | Sorokin, Vladimir | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
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| <u>The Bubble of American Supremacy: Correcting the Misuse of American Power</u> | Soros, George | ** | <u>Oct 04</u> | Bursting. Refutes neocon philosophy that guides Bush administration and proposes alternative approach to world affairs. Unlikely to sway any undecided voters. |  |
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| <u>The New Paradigm for Financial Markets: The Credit Crisis of 2008 and What It Means</u> | Soros, George | *** | <u>12/22/08</u> | <p>Reality. After reading George Soros' book, <u>The New Paradigm for Financial Markets</u>, I can imagine him tracking us down, asking, "Can you hear me now?" Much of this new book revisits and explains again his earlier work, <i>The Alchemy of Finance</i>, and his theory of reflexivity. Under his theory, there is constant interaction between the objective dimension of cognitive analysis, and the subjective component of trying to beat other investors by taking particular actions. In both books he makes the case for imperfect markets, arguing against the prevailing theory of market equilibrium. Soros suggests that we would be well served if we worked toward a better understanding of the human condition. We are sorely mistaken if we think financial markets can be captured and understood solely by mathematics. He notes that the recent cycles of bubbles and bust prove his theory. The 162 pages of this book are well worth reading, and it's</p> |  |
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always interesting to listen to what a billionaire has to say.

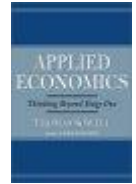
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| A Strange Commonplace | Sorrentino, Gilbert | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>My Beloved World</u> | Sotomayor, Sonia | **** | <u>3/16/13</u> | Candor. Sonia Sotomayor's memoir, <u>My Beloved World</u> , tells the story of her life from birth until she became a judge. In a candid and conversational writing style, Sotomayor tells a story that will resonate with any child of immigrants. That she is a justice on the Supreme Court makes this an inspiring story for any reader. This is a love song to the Bronx and the Puerto Rican community, as well as encouragement to all that obstacles can be overcome through hard work and perseverance. |  |
| The Black Banners: The Inside Story of 9/11 and the War Against al-Qaeda | Soufan, Ali H. | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>Everyone Else Must Fail: The Unvarnished Truth About Oracle and Larry Ellison</u> | Southwick, Karen | ** | <u>Feb 04</u> | Rough. Same stories as <u>Softwar</u> , without as many perspectives. More anti-Ellison throughout, so greater appeal to Oracle-haters Often repetitive and full of unnecessary phrases. |  |
| Falling to Earth | Southwood, Kate | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |

Applied
Economics:
Thinking
Beyond Stage
One

Sowell, Thomas

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004

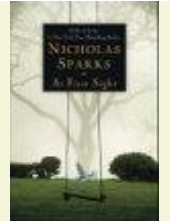


At First Sight

Sparks, Nicholas

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Read, but not reviewed.



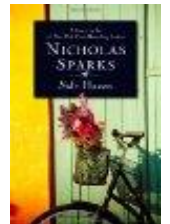
[Safe Haven](#)

Sparks, Nicholas

**

[12/16/11](#)

Contrived. The central characters of Nicholas Sparks' novel, [Safe Haven](#), slowly develop a romantic relationship. Katie has fled to North Carolina to protect herself from an abusive relationship. Alex is a widower, now a single parent. We learn their backstories gradually, at the same pace as their relationship develops. At some point, Sparks departs from a gradual pace, accelerates the action, and resorts to a contrived character to perform a *deus ex machina* role. Readers who like soap opera fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

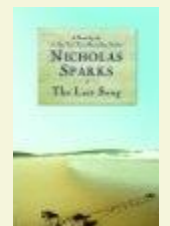



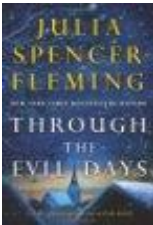
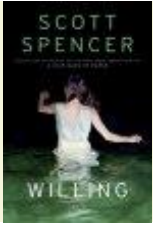
[The Last Song](#)

Sparks, Nicholas


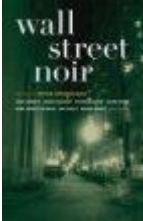
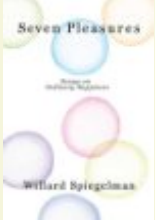
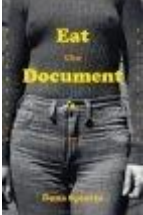
[2/12/10](#)




Unconditional. Nicholas Sparks' latest novel, [The Last Song](#), provides ideal material for any book club. The relationships among the characters lend to tears and laughter. Protagonist Ronnie Miller reluctantly spends the summer in North Carolina with her estranged father, Steve. His love for her is unconditional, and his patience with her is remarkable. Ronnie associates with unsavory companions, then falls in love with a charming rich boy. Over the course of a few months, Ronnie becomes transformed by this special summer. There's a villain and his sidekicks in the story, and that retains tension. At a book club meeting, there will plenty to talk about: parenting, religion, illness,



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| | | | | and caring. Most of all, The Last Song celebrates the power of love, and is a sweet book that all readers except cynics are likely to enjoy. | |
| Three Weeks With My Brother | Sparks, Nicholas | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Life Among the Cannibals: A Political Career, a Tea Party Uprising, and the End of Governing As We Know It | Specter, Arlen | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| Through the Evil Days | Spencer-Fleming, Julia | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| Willing | Spencer, Scott | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| America the Possible: Manifesto for a New Economy | Speth, James Gustave | *** | 9/20/12 | Progressive. Certain readers will pick up a book because of the word “manifesto” on the cover, while others will see the word and run away. Environmental reformer James Gustave Speth broadens his thinking beyond the environment in his book, America the Possible: Manifesto for a New Economy . He describes the crisis he sees in the United States, and proposes concrete reforms that |  |

will make us a stronger democracy. He calls for a transformation in some basic aspects of what he calls America's operating system. In some respects, his case is for a revival of the progressive movement. Speth offers a hopeful vision of what engaged citizens can create when working together. Readers interested in public policy are those most likely to enjoy this book, whether attracted or repelled by the word "manifesto."

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|---|---------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Briefing</u> | Spicer, Sean | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Wall Street Noir</u> | Spiegelman, Peter | *** | <u>Jan 08</u> | Spread. Seventeen writers and their short stories in this collection show that Wall Street has spread far from lower Manhattan. Good writing if you like this genre. |  |
| Seven Pleasures: Essays on Ordinary Happiness | Spiegelman, Willard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| Eat the Document | Spiotta, Dana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

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|---|---------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Innocents and Others</u> | Spiotta, Dana | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>Stone Arabia</u> | Spiotta, Dana | ***** | <u>4/27/12</u> | <p>Siblings. Literary novels can concentrate on the lives of characters in ways that lead readers to deep insights into our human condition. Dana Spiotta's novel, <u>Stone Arabia</u>, performs that feat with skill and efficiency over the course of about 250 pages. The protagonists are siblings, Denise and Nik, and while this sibling relationship provides context, what Spiotta explores are the ways in which awareness can lead to isolation, especially when it comes to our knowledge of world events. Anyone who has experienced difficult and challenging relationships, particularly with close family members, will find Spiotta's sensitive treatment of these relationships to be sensitive and profound. Readers who enjoy fine writing should pick up this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Dearie: The Remarkable Life of Julia Child</u> | Spitz, Bob | ***** | <u>1/4/13</u> | <p>Depth. Whatever you think you know about Julia Child, the chances are excellent that you'll learn something new if you read Bob Spitz' fine biography titled, <u>Dearie: The Remarkable Life of Julia Child</u>. When I picked up this book, I expected to skim a few pages and get bored quickly. Instead, I became intrigued by the depth and complexity that Spitz reveals about Julia Child. Spitz allows readers to become part of the highs and lows of her life: deeply felt loving relationships alongside strong disappointments and great losses. Child's hard work and optimism provide a great model for anyone who wants to live life to the fullest. When you put the book down, drink a toast to Julia, and</p> |  |

eat something yummy, especially with those people you hold dear.

Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price

Spotts, Greg

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

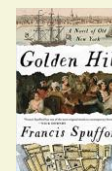


Golden Hill

Spufford, Francis

8/12/17

Fortune. Fans of lively and exciting historical fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy Francis Spufford's debut novel titled, Golden Hill. Set in New York City in 1746, the action begins when a stranger gets off the boat from England. Protagonist Richard Smith presents a note to a merchant that requires paying a fortune, 1,000 pounds, to Smith. The merchant suspects a con, delays payment, and Smith finds himself well-known in the city almost overnight. Spufford keeps readers guessing about Smith's legitimacy and the finely written descriptive prose makes NYC of the mid-eighteenth century come alive.



True Stories

Spufford, Francis

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.



A Clue to the Exit

St. Aubyn, Edward

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



At Last

St. Aubyn,
Edward

3/2/12

Safety. The action in Edward St. Aubyn's finely written novel, At Last, takes place on the day of the protagonist's mother's funeral. Patrick Melrose feels relief and a sense of safety now that both his parents are deceased. His father abused him and his mother knew. St. Aubyn's prose is constructed with great care and precision, full of wit and psychological insight. This novel is part of a series he's written about the wealthy Melrose family and his insight into the life of the privileged will be appealing to many readers. Fans of finely written literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

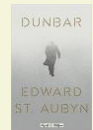


Dunbar

St. Aubyn,
Edward

3/9/18

Lear. The Hogarth Shakespeare series selected Edward St. Aubyn to offer readers a contemporary take on King Lear, which he does with great success in a novel titled, Dunbar. All the rage and family dynamics of the play are on display and power and money are given a modern and realistic focus, with the Lear figure, Dunbar, being the wealthy head of a global media conglomerate on the verge of being pushed out of his leadership role by the avarice of two of his daughters. I was well entertained by this novel and I will now reread the Shakespeare play as a treat.



Lost for Words


St. Aubyn,
Edward

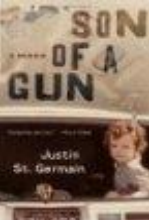
10/18/14

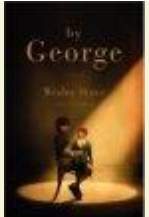
Incomparable. I expected that I would be bored by Edward St. Aubyn's witty novel titled, Lost for Words. I expected that a satiric novel about a book award would be too much inside baseball for me to endure. Instead, St. Aubyn's finely written prose hooked me at once, and his development of interesting characters roped me in for a pleasant reading experience. When I finished the novel, I realized that St. Aubyn provided an important message. We create literary prizes that do the impossible: they compare works of art that are truly incomparable. Those involved in judgments often

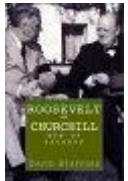


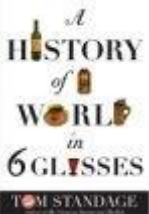
have conflicting agendas. Fans of good writing are those most likely to enjoy this witty novel.

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| On the Edge | St. Aubyn, Edward | **** | 12/27/14 | Tantric. Good satire requires of readers both subject knowledge and an open mind. For readers who have experienced any aspect of the New Age movement, that subject knowledge should prepare one for the great wit of Edward St. Aubyn in his novel titled, On the Edge . The Esalen environment that St. Aubyn skewers in this novel delighted me, perhaps as close as I'll ever come to a tantric experience. |  |
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| Son of a Gun: A Memoir | St. Germain, Justin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
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| by George | Stace, Wesley | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
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| Roosevelt and Churchill: Men of Secrets | Stafford, David | *** | 05/01 | Read about the secrets they shared with each other and the knowledge they withheld. Read longer review. |  |
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| A History of the World in Six Glasses | Standage, Tom | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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Bronzeville:
Black Chicago in
Pictures, 1941-
1943

Stange, Maven

Aug 03

Compelling. Rarely seen photos document the impact of rural migration to Chicago, and the creation of “the black capital of America” on the South Side.

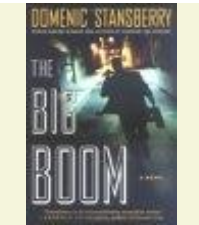


The Big Boom

Stansberry,
Domenic

Dec 06

Family. Author reprises private eye Dante Mancuso, who returns home to San Francisco following his father’s death, and investigates a murder, learning much about himself and the importance of family.

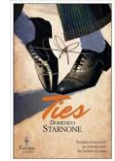


Ties

Starnone,
Domenico

8/24/17

Betrayal. If you think there’s nothing new to read in a novel about marriage and family, you should read Domenico Starnone’s novel titled, Ties. Translated by Jhumpa Lahiri, this novel draws readers into the long marriage of Vanda and Aldo, at two critical times. Twelve years after their 1962 marriage, following the birth of two children, Aldo has an affair with Lidia and leaves Vanda for eight years. Starnone opens the novel with Vanda’s reaction to this betrayal. A large middle section picks up decades later following their reconciliation, and the end of the novel features the couple’s middle-aged children and the impact of the long-ago separation on their lives. I can’t comment on the prose in the original Italian, but Lahiri’s English translation was finely written and I enjoyed every page of this novel.



Trick

Starnone,
Domenico

5/3/18

Reborn. Close readers of Domenico Starnone’s novel titled, Trick, can explore many different levels of meaning, and find pleasure of one sort or another on every page, thanks to Jhumpa Lahiri’s finely written translation from the Italian. Most of us become set in our ways and it takes some change of location, attitude or relationship to lead us away from one set of behaviors and toward another. Protagonist Daniele Mallarico is an artist and grandfather who has been persuaded by his



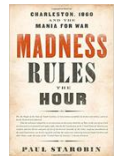
daughter to return to his childhood home in Naples to care for his four-year-old grandson, Mario, for a few days. Mallarico brings a work assignment with him: illustrations for a new edition of a book. Work is the center of Mallarico's life and he is struggling with this new assignment. The return to his childhood home is jarring, as is his struggle in caring for Mario after the boy's parents leave the home. The roles of grandparent and grandchild shift, and in a pivotal scene, the grandfather experiences a violent sort of baptism and becomes born anew, thanks in part to Mario's competence. With newly opened eyes, the grandfather sees his art in a new light, and sees Mario's skill in drawing as the boy imitates his grandfather. Meanwhile, the time away from the home leads Mario's parents to a rebirth of their own, having broken out of their habitual and broken relationship and into a newly found respect and love for each other.

Contagion. Support for secession grew rapidly in Charleston in 1860. Paul Starobin tells a compelling story of that time in his book titled, Madness Rules the Hour. Starobin presents the views of a wide range of characters, and describes the events of that year in ways that will appeal to most general readers with an interest in history and politics. Following Lincoln's election as president, the voices in Charleston to establish an independent republic spread quickly among citizens. Voices of moderation and reason were drowned out by the radicals. While I found this book an entertaining escape from contemporary life, the spread of radical ideas has implications for modern life that are chilling.

Madness Rules the Hour

Starobin, Paul

10/18/17

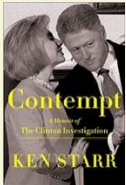


Contempt: A
Memoir of the
Clinton
Investigation

Starr, Ken

10/12/18

Role. Don't leap too fast to your tribal corner before considering whether or not to read Ken Starr's book titled, Contempt: A Memoir of the Clinton Investigation. I almost decided not to read the book because twenty years have passed since Starr performed his role as special prosecutor, and I didn't think I'd be reading anything here other than a self-serving perspective. When I realized that of all the views on that time, I knew the least about Starr's, so I read this book and I'm glad I did. While sanctimonious at times, and certainly more positive about his behavior than others might be, the book lays out a well-written and cogent story of the Clinton investigation. The title discloses in just one word Starr's judgment about both Bill and Hillary Clinton's relationship with the law. Starr describes his own respect for the law and makes the case that he carried out his role in this affair with integrity. We already know who lied, but Starr describes examples of the depth of evasion and contempt on the part of both Clintons. The divisions from two decades ago pale in comparison to today's polarization and reading Starr's perspective on his role at that time helped my thinking about contemporary issues and what may be ahead. Readers engaged in public affairs should spend time reading this book and thinking about it.



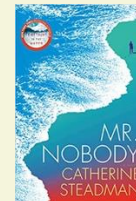

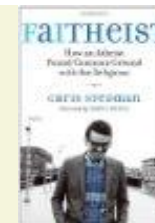
Nine

Stasiuk, Andrej

*

Read, but not reviewed.



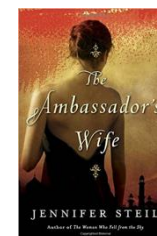
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| <u>Mr. Nobody</u> | Steadman, Catherine | ***** | <u>6/2/20</u> | <p>Memory. Catherine Steadman teases out the plot of her novel titled, <u>Mr. Nobody</u>. A man is found on a beach in Norfolk and neither he nor anyone else remembers who he is. Neuropsychiatrist Emma Lewis has been asked to examine the man, since his condition seems to line up perfectly with her expertise. Despite her professional interest in the case, Emma is reluctant to return to Norfolk because something happened there years ago that caused her and her family to leave and change their identities. Steadman leaves readers waiting a long time to find out about Emma's past, and to reveal what's up with the man found on the beach. Readers who enjoy psychological suspense novels are those most likely to appreciate this book.</p> |  |
| <u>Something in the Water</u> | Steadman, Catherine | ***** | <u>8/27/18</u> | <p>Amoral. I thoroughly enjoyed the hours I spent with the despicable protagonists of Catherine Steadman's debut novel titled, <u>Something in the Water</u>. Erin and Mark deserve each other, given the secrets they keep from each other, and their separate and equal amoral behavior. After Mark loses his investment banking job shortly before their wedding, they constrain their spending: the minimum but large cost of their wedding reception; and a shorter-than-planned honeymoon in Bora Bora. While on that trip, they find something in the water that brings out the worst in both of them. Steadman moves the plot at a thrilling pace, and captures the venality, selfishness and amorality of these characters.</p> |  |
| Faitheist | Stedman, Chris | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |

The
Ambassador's
Wife

Steil, Jennifer

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.

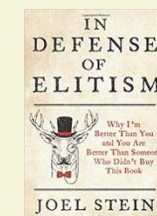


In Defense of
Elitism: Why
I'm Better Than
You and You're
Better Than
Someone Who
Didn't Buy This
Book

Stein, Joel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



Man Made: A
Stupid Quest for
Masculinity

Stein, Joel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

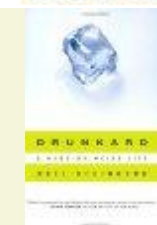


Drunkard: A
Hard-Drinking
Life

Steinberg, Neil

Oct 08

Candor. Newspaper columnist's finely written memoir about his struggles with drinking and recovery written in ways that draw readers into the life of an ordinary guy facing daily challenges.



You Were Never
in Chicago

Steinberg, Neil

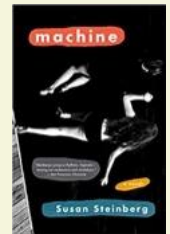
7/26/13

Affection. The affection and love that *Chicago Sun Times* columnist Neil Steinberg has for his adopted city spark from every page of his book, You Were Never in Chicago. With Steinberg as an enthusiastic guide, readers travel around both familiar and unfamiliar parts of Chicago. Steinberg's fine writing and his clarity in description of people and places make the city come to life for those who live here, those who have never been, and those who have experienced a small slice of this interesting place.



Having lived on the edge of the city for a similar three decades as Steinberg, I enjoyed the many ways in which he celebrated places I love, and introduced me to people and places I've never been.

Summer. Susan Steinberg's debut novel titled, Machine, sends readers to the shore in summer to spend time with a group of teenagers. It may take some readers a while to settle into Steinberg's grammar and language as she structures this novel in creative ways. The sentences shift structure when the mood changes, alerting readers to tension and progress. Some of her meter is poetic and that adds to the pace of reading, accelerating or slowing down in ways that fit the narrative. I enjoyed every semicolon. Beneath the beautiful language, we see a reflection of teenage life in summer: the average locals and the privileged wealthy transients. The culpability of the individual and the community for events and situations alternate in ways that lead a reader to reflect after we've finished reading, beyond Steinberg's pacing to our own.



Machine

Steinberg, Susan

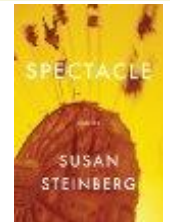
9/19/20

Spectacle:
Stories

Steinberg, Susan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

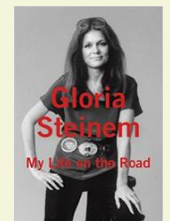


My Life on the Road

Steinem, Gloria

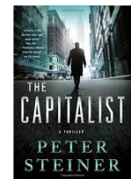
4/13/16

Warmth. There are certain famous people who become so associated with their work that the warmth of an individual's personality can become lost in the issues identified with that person. Any reader of Gloria Steinem's humble memoir titled, My Life on the Road, will sense the warmth of Ms. Steinem on every page. The arc of her story involves her many travels from youth through the present, and a late discovery about the importance of home for her. Travel changes us, and Steinem writes with



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| | | | | candor about the many ways in which travel changed her. The connection for me was vivid: I traveled to an unfamiliar church on Father's Day 1972 to listen to Ms. Steinem deliver the sermon. I was moved enough to send a note to a new friend about that experience. That friend became my bride not long thereafter, and to whatever extent Steinem's influence helped that happen, I am forever grateful. Readers with any interest in Steinem will find something to enjoy in this book. | |
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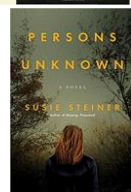
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| <u>The Capitalist</u> | Steiner, Peter | ***** | <u>9/2/16</u> | <p>Con. The first novel I've read by Peter Steiner featuring former CIA operative Louis Morgon is the fifth in that series and is titled, <u>The Capitalist</u>. Morgon's adversary in this novel is St. John Larrimer, a money manager who defrauded customers and fled with billions of dollars. Morgon lost money to Larrimer, but that didn't set him on a path to con the con artist to bring him to justice. Morgon's lover, Pauline, is distraught because her brother Jean-Baptiste was a victim of the scam. This novel is mostly crime thriller, but also an exploration of remorse and redemption, and ultimately satisfaction. Readers who like slow pacing in crime novels will enjoy this book.</p> |
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| <u>Missing, Presumed</u> | Steiner, Susie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. | |
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| <u>Persons Unknown</u> | Steiner, Susie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. | |
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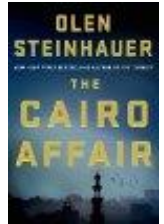


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|--|------------------|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>A People Adrift: The Crisis of the Roman Catholic Church in America</u> | Steinfels, Peter | *** | <u>Dec 03</u> | <p>Turbulence. A readable and insightful exploration of recent decades of change for the Catholic Church, the impact of the sexual abuse scandals, and what's likely to happen next.</p> |  |
| <u>All the Old Knives</u> | Steinhauer, Olen | **** | <u>4/24/15</u> | <p>Spies. Two complex characters in Olen Steinhauer's novel titled, <u>All the Old Knives</u>, are haunted by a past event. The event involved terrorism at the Vienna airport in which over a hundred people died. The characters are spies and new allegations of a CIA mole lead Henry Pelham to interview people in the know. Celia Favreau left the CIA and when Henry, her former lover, interviews her, she is ready. Steinhauer develops these characters with great care, presents the plot with just the right pacing, and leaves readers with an ending that perfectly fits all that has gone before. Fans of spy fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>An American Spy</u> | Steinhauer, Olen | **** | <u>4/19/12</u> | <p>Complexity. Readers who like complex spy novels and characters that are multi-dimensional are those most likely to enjoy the fine writing in Olen Steinhauer's latest novel, <u>An American Spy</u>. This is his third novel to feature Milo Weaver, and readers who have not read the earlier books may find Milo to be developed somewhat incompletely in this novel. The Chinese characters in this novel are developed very well, and the complex plot requires readers to pay close attention as a large cast of characters move around the world carrying out their actions. Don't read this novel while distracted at the beach, since you're likely to become lost on who's who and what's what. Find a time and place when you can pay attention and enjoy the complexity.</p> |  |

[The Cairo Affair](#) Steinhauer, Olen

[10/18/14](#)

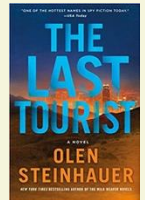
Information. Olen Steinhauer draws from recent world events to assemble a great spy novel titled, [The Cairo Affair](#). He riffs on the theme of information, how to get it and how to separate perceptions from reality. Steinhauer weaves together the work and relationships of interlocked characters using marriage and infidelity as a backdrop for the plot. Readers need to pay close attention to identify the sources of betrayal. Those who savor complexity will find plenty in this novel.



[The Last Tourist](#) Steinhauer, Olen

[11/9/20](#)

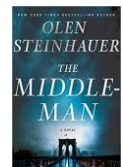
Revived. Olen Steinhauer introduced readers to protagonist Milo Weaver and a CIA assassination squad called The Department of Tourism in a trilogy that ended in 2012. In a novel titled, [The Last Tourist](#), Steinhauer has more to say about the tourists. Information is the lifeblood of spy craft. Milo Weaver has been running an enterprise called The Library which his father started within the United Nations. The Library provides client countries with sensitive information. Corporations are the real repositories of power in contemporary life, and Weaver finds himself challenged by a worthy corporate adversary. The action moves quickly in the novel, and by the time we arrive in Davos, all the pieces are coming together. Readers who enjoy thrillers are likely to enjoy this novel, whether familiar with the earlier ones or not.



[The Middleman](#) Steinhauer, Olen

[9/12/18](#)

Disaffected. Fans of thrillers and plot turns are those readers most likely to enjoy Olen Steinhauer's novel titled, [The Middleman](#). A pied piper to the disaffected, Martin Bishop, taps into what those people want, and he bands them together into a movement called the Massive Brigade. The FBI, especially agent Rachel Proulx, is on the case, and Steinhauer uses her to dig deeply no matter where the trail leads.



[The Nearest Exit](#)

Steinhauer, Olen

[6/14/10](#)

Children. Last year, I enjoyed Olen Steinhauer's novel, [The Tourist](#), introducing protagonist Milo Weaver, so when the second, [The Nearest Exit](#), was published, I had high expectations. I'm pleased to say those expectations were met. Steinhauer presents a deeply developed character with a strong moral compass, facing impossible choices. Steinhauer weaves webs within webs of deception, and explores how the love of children can lead to all kinds of behavior, including revenge. Any fan of spy novels or thrillers will appreciate the plot here, and any fiction fan will enjoy the fine writing and character development.

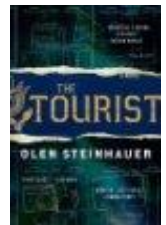


[The Tourist](#)

Steinhauer, Olen

[5/27/09](#)

Secrets. A number of elements combine to make Olen Steinhauer's novel, [The Tourist](#), one of the best I've read in some time. Steinhauer's characters, especially protagonist Milo Weaver, are complex and nuanced. The plot moves at a pace that allows the complexity to develop, without the heart-stopping action typical of some spy and thriller novels. Dialogue always sounds right. A tourist is a buzzword that refers to those CIA field agents who operate without a home base or a name. Milo retired from that life and now holds down a desk job at a CIA office in New York. Events demand that Milo re-enter that life, from which retirement was never really possible. Milo finds himself and his reputation damaged, and is hard pressed to recover from alienation. Lies and secrets are everywhere, and Milo tries to protect himself and others in a struggle for life. Whether you like spy novels or not, the fine writing in [The Tourist](#) is likely to appeal to most readers.



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| <u>Milk</u> | Steinke, Darcey | ** | <u>Oct 05</u> | <p>Dreamy. Poetic weaving together of the stories of three characters, each of whom is searching for nourishment through the ways they try to integrate sexuality and spirituality.</p> |  |
| <u>The Richest Man Who Ever Lived: The Life and Times of Jacob Fugger</u> | Steinmetz, Greg | **** | <u>2/5/16</u> | <p>Leverage. Any reader interested in either history or finance will learn something new after reading Greg Steinmetz' book titled, <u>The Richest Man Who Ever Lived: The Life and Times of Jacob Fugger</u>. Steinmetz applies the talents of a journalist to a complicated story with lots of characters, world-changing events and a subject that many readers may have never heard of. In the 16th century, Jacob Fugger was the banker to kings and empires, and accumulated through leverage personal wealth that amounted to about 2% of European GDP, making him the richest man who ever lived. Steinmetz describes how Fugger did it in this finely written and interesting book.</p> |  |
| <u>Dinner with Churchill: Policy-Making at the Dinner Table</u> | Stelzer, Cita | **** | <u>10/8/13</u> | <p>Yummy. A reader can choose among hundreds of books by and about Winston Churchill to learn about his life and times. Within the past year, several major tomes have been released. Hidden in this vast array of choices is a delightful and enjoyable book by Cita Stelzer titled, <u>Dinner with Churchill: Policy-Making at the Dinner Table</u>. No matter how much or how little a reader knows about Churchill, chances are one has the impression that this man liked to eat and drink. Stelzer explores that theme and debunks many of the myths about Churchill's excesses. I came away from the book with the perspective that his drinking was moderate while frequent. His dining was with a bias toward plain food and focused conversation: a meal with him was an opportunity to move an agenda forward. During his world travels, he ate on tummy time, not based on the</p> |  |

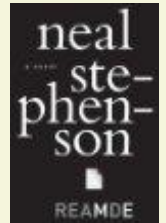
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| | | | | local time. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and recommend it highly, especially to any reader interested in Churchill or his era. | |
| <u>Thirty-Seven</u> | Stenson, Peter | *** | <u>5/3/18</u> | <p>Survivor. Readers looking for a compact novel with a heavy dose of unusual behavior should consider reading Peter Stenson's novel titled, <u>Thirty-Seven</u>. Protagonist Mason Hues is Thirty-Seven, the appellation he received when he joined a cult and was assigned the next membership number. The Survivors believe that making themselves very sick leads to honesty and that honesty will lead to change. Stenson presents Mason to us as the last survivor of the cult, but after Mason's boss, Talley, learns of his backstory, they reignite the journey from sickness toward honesty and change.</p> |  |
| All Too Human: A Political Education | Stephanopoulos, George | | <u>4/99</u> | Pick it up for light reading and imagine that George was on your staff. |  |
| <u>Anathem</u> | Stephenson, Neal | *** | <u>1/6/09</u> | <p>Philosophy. Neal Stephenson asks a lot from readers of his latest thousand-page novel, <u>Anathem</u>. He asks that we adapt to his made-up terminology quickly, and stay with him as he expands our new vocabulary quickly. I expect many readers will tire of this quickly, and become frustrated. The glossary helps. Using that terminology, he creates an Earth-like world he calls Arbore, and proceeds to inhabit that world with groups of people that we must come to know and understand. On top of that, he presents science in ways that will engage some readers, and alienate others. Beyond all that, he has his characters engage in philosophical exercises that keep even the most engaged readers alert in trying to remain focused. The reward for readers</p> |  |

who take on this challenge is immersion into a world that stimulates thinking about our human condition and the decisions we make to resolve our frustrations. The vast size of the book allows Stephenson plenty of space in which he can develop characters, which he does well here, and to explore ideas, which he also does with great skill. My understanding evolved as I continued to read, and I came away from [Anathem](#) with the pleasure of having conquered a complicated novel and with respect for the author who pulled all the threads together with great skill. Had Stephenson been able to achieve this using three or four hundred fewer pages, I would have added another star or two to my rating.

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| Atmosphæra Incognita | Stephenson, Neal | ***** | 8/15/19 | <p>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.</p> |  |
| Fall; or, Dodge in Hell | Stephenson, Neal | ***** | 6/18/19 | <p>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</p> |  |

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.

Expansive. Readers who like big, sweeping novels with empathetic characters are those most likely to enjoy Neal Stephenson's latest novel, [Reamde](#). Over the course of a thousand thrilling pages, Stephenson introduces hackers, gamers, mobsters, a big extended family, MI6, and terrorists. The heroes and villains are drawn with sharp contrasts, and the virtual world provides a second dimension in which the action can proceed, although the global stage in the real world covers a lot of territory which Stephenson handles with aplomb. I found myself rooting for the heroes and turned pages quickly wanting to see how everything turned out.



Remnant. There are so many reasons not to read Neal Stephenson's novel, [Sevенеves](#). After all, who has time to read a novel that comes in at almost nine hundred pages? And did you know it could be categorized as science fiction? Isn't that genre for adolescents and weirdos? And why bother with yet another novel that destroys the world as we know it? Forget all those reasons and others you may have, and give this finely written book some attention. Stephenson uses these 900 pages well to explore the essence of our humanity. He presents the relationship between politics and science with clarity. He sets up a catastrophe that threatens human survival, lets it happen, allows a remnant to survive, and then projects how that remnant builds a new society. Stephenson explores big ideas, and it takes a big book to do that well. I hesitate to say that I enjoyed this novel so much I wish it were even longer.



[Reamde](#)

Stephenson,
Neal

[1/18/12](#)

[Sevенеves](#)

Stephenson,
Neal

[7/9/15](#)

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| <u>The Rise and Fall of D.O.D.O.</u> | Stephenson, Neal and Nicole Galland | ***** | 8/3/17 | Indulgence. I find that Summer is the perfect time to indulge in a doorstopper-sized novel. Just in time for a July vacation, I hefted a whopper of a novel by Neal Stephenson and Nicole Galland titled, <u>The Rise and Fall of D.O.D.O.</u> . For readers with the luxury of time to delve into a huge novel, this one contains real treasure. There's magic, time travel, witches, and a great government agency, the Department of Diachronic Operations (D.O.D.O.), with a very interesting mission. I feasted through the multiple characters and narrators, the complexity of the science, and the warmth of the human relationships among interesting characters. My relaxing vacation was enhanced by reading this indulgent novel. |  |
| 500 Things To Eat Before It's Too Late: and the Very Best Places To Eat Them | Stern, Jane and Michael Stern | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Republican Like Me: How I Left the Liberal Bubble and Learned to Love the Right</u> | Stern, Ken | **** | 2/2/18 | Openness. Many of us have strong confirmation bias, whether right or left, conservative or liberal, reinforced by our friends and neighbors thanks to how we've sorted ourselves. Former NPR CEO Ken Stern spent a year outside his liberal and Democratic comfort zone and spent time listening to those outside his bubble. He describes the experience in his book titled, <u>Republican Like Me: How I Left the Liberal Bubble and Learned to Love the Right</u> . As a result of his openness to different points of view, he came away from this experience with some of his positions changed, and with a greater appreciation of views different from his own. We can all benefit from this example as we can try to overcome what seem to be intractable divisions. |  |

With Charity for All: Why Charities Are Failing and a Better Way to Give

Stern, Ken

3/25/13

Cogent. There are a few cogent points buried in the 270 pages of Ken Stern's book, With Charity for All: While Charities Are Failing and a Better Way to Give. It's too easy to start a charity. Once started, a charity keeps going even when it fails. Outcomes are inadequately measured, and there is usually a lack of focus and accountability. Government support of nonprofit entities is huge, and very dysfunctional when it comes to achieving desired results. Surrounding those key points and a few others, the book presents some interesting and many boring case descriptions. Stern is a former NPR executive, and he understands nonprofits from that perspective, but he brings no particular expertise to this complicated topic. After I finished the book, I went online and made a contribution to a charity I've supported for years, confident that the money will be well spent, even if inadequately measured.



Always Watching

Stevens, Chevy

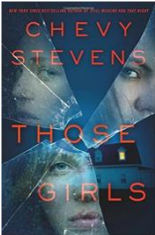
8/6/13


Cult. The protagonist of Chevy Stevens' novel, Always Watching, is the quintessential wounded healer: a psychiatrist with unresolved issues of her own. Dr. Nadine Lavoie begins to treat a patient who came under the influence of the same cult leader who hurt Nadine. The novel's plot moves rapidly through Nadine's desire to help Nadine and ensure justice is done. Stevens crossed the line into melodrama too much for my taste. While I enjoyed the fast-paced action, my willing suspension of disbelief was strained by Nadine's lack of professional boundaries and the plot action that bordered on the absurd. The characters were incompletely developed, and by midway through the novel, I found myself not caring much about what happened to any of them. Read a sample before you get involved in this novel and the cult.

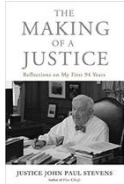


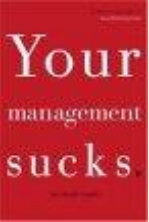

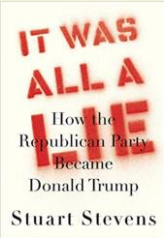
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| Never Knowing | Stevens, Chevy | Unread | | I sat down one evening and opened this book to begin reading for an hour or so. For the first time in memory, I stopped reading on page 1. I concluded that I had no interest at all in reading a novel about the search for one's birth mother. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| Never Let You Go | Stevens, Chevy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Still Missing | Stevens, Chevy | *** | 8/7/10 | Dramatic. Chevy Stevens' debut novel, Still Missing , is structured in chapters that reflect sessions that the protagonist, Annie O'Sullivan, has with her psychiatrist. At age 32, Annie was a realtor, and is abducted from an open house and taken to a remote cabin on Vancouver Island. The trauma she experienced becomes the dramatic action of the novel, and the pace remained fast from beginning to end. The deeper story of family and mothering verged on the melodramatic, but Stevens steered back from that edge every time she came close. Readers who like exciting stories and are willing to give new writers a look, will find this novel both interesting and entertaining. |  |
| That Night | Stevens, Chevy | **** | 8/21/14 | Bullies. Chevy Stevens tested my patience to its limits as I read her novel titled, That Night . Protagonist Toni Murphy was convicted along with her boyfriend of killing her sister. Stevens provides lengthy exposition through presenting the current time, Toni's release from prison two decades after the crime, and exposition of what happened in Toni's life during high school. There's a recurring theme of bullying in the novel, which Stevens presents with vivid detail. By the time Toni begins her investigation into what really happened on the |  |

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| | | | | <p>night her sister was killed, I was interested in all the characters, and couldn't wait until the mystery was solved. Patient readers will be rewarded by this story, thanks to Stevens' understanding of the lives she presents and how well that comes across in her writing.</p> | |
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| <p><u>Those Girls</u></p> | <p>Stevens, Chevy</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>10/20/16</u></p> | <p>Abuse. The title of Chevy Stevens' novel, <u>Those Girls</u>, refers to three sisters, Jess, Courtney and Dani Campbell. The taut emotional story begins on their ranch in Western Canada where they try to stay out of the way of their abusive father. After one bad fight, they run away together and find themselves in even greater jeopardy. Stevens keeps the tension constant in this novel, and readers who enjoy thrillers are likely to be entertained by this one.</p> |  |
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| <p><u>Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution</u></p> | <p>Stevens, John Paul</p> | <p>****</p> | <p><u>7/18/14</u></p> | <p>Experience. I expect that it will be a cold day in hell before we see the implementation of what retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens proposes in his book, <u>Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution</u>. Written for a general audience, Justice Stevens articulates in plain language why he thinks these changes are needed. While he made his case successfully to me, on most of these issues his opinion was in the minority while he served on the Court. This restatement of his dissent to a wider audience might broaden understanding of the issues, but the political climate and the process for amending the constitution make his proposals highly unlikely to become law.</p> |  |
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| <p><u>The Making of a Justice: Reflections on My First 94 Years</u></p> | <p>Stevens, John Paul</p> | <p>Unread</p> | | <p>Shelf of Ennui 2020.</p> |  |
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| <u>Your Management Sucks</u> | Stevens, Mark | ** | <u>Sept 06</u> | Punchy. Long on attitude and stories, short on fact-based advice. Pick up a copy to carry around to get attention, buy a copy for your boss to prove your independence, but don't expect useful answers here. |  |
| <u>Your Marketing Sucks</u> | Stevens, Mark | ** | <u>Mar 04</u> | Extreme. Author demands each marketing dollar be spent to bring in money, something few companies do well, or even at all. Good examples from passionate author who will irritate many marketing executives and please many general managers. |  |
| <u>It Was All a Lie: How the Republican Party Became Donald Trump</u> | Stevens, Stuart | **** | <u>12/21/20</u> | Decades. Longtime Republican operative Stuart Stevens reflects on the past five decades of political life and draws conclusions that disclose his complicity in what has become a long con. In a book titled, <u>It Was All a Lie: How the Republican Party Became Donald Trump</u> , Stevens describes his participation in and observation of the modern Republic Party and candidly assesses the lies that have displaced the principles on which his party was based. Anyone interested in politics should consider reading this book. Rather than stories or invective, this book presents analysis. Some Republicans may bristle at Stevens' assessment or brand it as fake, and some Democrats may be inclined toward agreement and glee, but any citizen can examine the past few decades and observe much of what Stevens presents in this book, whether we want to face those facts or not. Hearing from an active participant with such candor makes this book different. |  |
| <u>The Innocent Have Nothing to Fear</u> | Stevens, Stuart | **** | <u>11/27/16</u> | Campaign. Whether your candidate won or lost the 2016 presidential election doesn't matter one way or the other when you read Stuart Stevens' satirical novel titled, <u>The Innocent Have Nothing to Fear</u> . For some readers, politics may be the last |  |

topic for a book to consider picking up, especially fiction. Brave readers with an appetite for political humor are those readers most likely to enjoy reading this novel. I loved the dialogue, the colorful characters and the lengths to which those characters would go to win a political campaign.

Broken. Any reader with skepticism about how broken the criminal justice system really is should read Bryan Stevenson's well-written book about his decades working at the Equal Justice Initiative titled, Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption. Stevenson presents cases of the wrongly convicted, and the efforts to obtain justice. At the center of the book is the story of Walter McMillian, convicted as a young man of a murder he didn't commit. There's both sadness and hope on these pages, and I finished the book feeling good that lawyers like Stevenson are working hard for justice.

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.

Spunky. The last thing I needed in my reading life was to fall in love with another detective protagonist. I loved protagonist Constance Kopp in Amy Stewart's second novel in the Kopp Sisters series titled, Lady Cop Makes Trouble. The novel is

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption

Stevenson, Bryan

12/15/14



Kopp Sisters on the March

Stewart, Amy

10/25/19


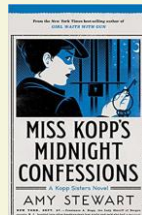


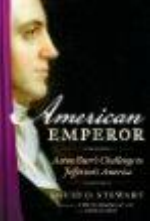
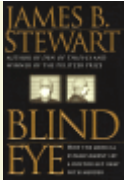
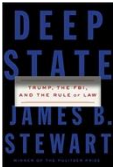
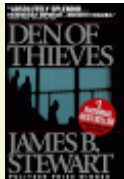
Lady Cop Makes Trouble


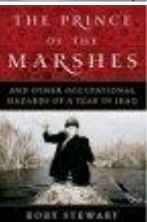
Stewart, Amy

11/18/16



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| | | | | <p>set in New Jersey and New York City in 1915, and you may guess from the title that Constance is the lady cop who makes trouble. Characters, plot, setting and dialogue all combine to provide readers who like crime fiction with good entertainment. I may have to keep reading this series now that I've fallen in love with Constance Kopp.</p> | |
| <u>Miss Kopp Just Won't Quit</u> | Stewart, Amy | **** | 10/17/18 | <p>Election. The fourth novel in the series by Amy Stewart featuring deputy sheriff Constance Kopp is titled, <u>Miss Kopp Just Won't Quit</u>. Her boss, Sheriff Heath is running for Congress in the election of 1916. After he loses, Constance's world turns inside out. You can guess from the title what she does when Heath's successor says he doesn't need a female deputy. She also doesn't quit in her pursuit of justice for the women under her supervision. Stewart's series has focused on the lives of women in this time period, and the latest book continues to keep this reader very interested in the series. Fans of crime fiction and historical fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p> |  |
| <u>Miss Kopp's Midnight Confessions</u> | Stewart, Amy | **** | 9/26/17 | <p>Politics. The third novel in the Kopp Sisters series by Amy Stewart is titled, <u>Miss Kopp's Midnight Confessions</u>. Deputy Sheriff Constance Kopp has gotten a gold badge to signify her role, and she continues to listen to the concerns of the women under her custodial care. Many women have been sent to jail without good cause, and Constance fights for them in a variety of ways in this novel. Political machinations are afoot, and the Sheriff can't run for another term. Stewart explores a variety of views about the behavior of young women, and sisters Constance and Norma face the need to update their views when their sister Fleurette joins a Vaudeville troupe. Stewart bases this series on the lives of real people, and she</p> |  |

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| <u>American Emperor: Aaron Burr's Challenge to Jefferson's America</u> | Stewart, David O. | *** | <u>1/5/12</u> | captures with great skill their experience and life in New Jersey in the early 20 th century. Schemer. Had two or three events turned out differently in the early 19 th century, the United States would be a different place today. Attorney David O. Stewart brings a lawyer's discipline and a litigator's story telling together in a fascinating new book titled, <u>American Emperor: Aaron Burr's Challenge to Jefferson's America</u> . Burr is one of the most engaging characters in American history, and Stewart presents Burr's vision of new society made up of the disgruntled communities around the Gulf of Mexico and the wide open Western part of the United States. Burr's schemes are presented as treasonous and appealing to the secessionist leanings in many parts of the fragile new republic. Burr tried to capitalize on those sentiments and he came very close to achieving his vision. Fans of American history are those readers most likely to enjoy this finely written account. |  |
| <u>Blind Eye</u> | Stewart, James B. | *** | <u>3/00</u> | The most frightening book we've read in years. Stewart describes how an unstable doctor got away with multiple murders around the world. |  |
| <u>Deep State: Trump, the FBI, and the Rule of Law</u> | Stewart, James B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Den of Thieves</u> | Stewart, James B. | *** | <u>3/00</u> | Made sense of the S&L crisis. Enjoyed a long time ago. |  |

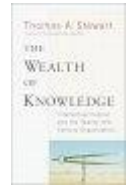
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| <u>DisneyWar</u> | Stewart, James B. | **** | <u>Apr 05</u> | Dishonesty. Disturbing story of dysfunctional company and dishonest CEO who was rewarded highly despite colossal and costly mistakes. |  |
| <u>Heart of a Soldier: A Story of Love, Heroism and September 11th</u> | Stewart, James B. | **** | <u>Nov 02</u> | He Gave His Life. Each person who died on 9/11 had a personal story. Stewart presents a biography of one man, Rick Rescorla, who died in the WTC. Finely written. If there's only one 9/11 book you'll read, make it this one. |  |
| Tangled Webs: How False Statements are Undermining America: From Martha Stewart to Bernie Madoff | Stewart, James B. | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>America (The Book): A Citizens Guide to Democracy</u> | Stewart, Jon | *** | <u>May 05</u> | Playful. Mock civics textbook leaves few people, ideas and events unmolested. <i>The Daily Show</i> brand of humor includes hilarious discussion questions and classroom activities. |  |
| <u>The Power Worshippers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism</u> | Stewart, Katherine | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>The Prince of the Marshes</u> | Stewart, Rory | *** | <u>Nov 06</u> | Chaos. 30-year-old British diplomat tells the story of his service for the coalition in trying to manage an area in Southern Iraq for almost a year, beginning in late 2003, amid ongoing chaos and strained relationships. |  |

The Wealth of Knowledge: Intellectual Capital and the Twenty-First Century Organization

Stewart, Thomas A.

Apr 02

Stewart's clear and entertaining writing style makes this readable. An interesting exploration of what intellectual capital means to today's companies.

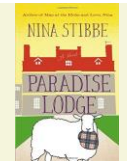


Paradise Lodge

Stibbe, Nina

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.

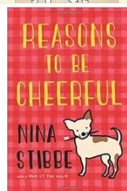


Reasons to be Cheerful

Stibbe, Nina

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



Freefall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy

Stiglitz, Joseph E.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011

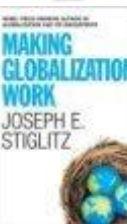


Making Globalization Work

Stiglitz, Joseph E.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

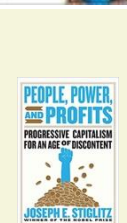


People, Power, and Profits: Progressive Capitalism for an Age of Discontent

Stiglitz, Joseph E.

7/23/20

Progressive. If you think everything is peachy these days, don't bother reading Nobel prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz' book titled, People, Power, and Profits: Progressive Capitalism for an Age of Discontent. Assuming that most readers will see a smidgen or two of trouble ahead for the world, those who pick up this book will find a cogent prescription which Stiglitz calls



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| | | | | “progressive capitalism.” Those readers interested in public policy will find in this book a clear description of trends and a way to enjoy the benefits from markets while building a system of effective controls and balances. There’s no waffling ambiguity in this book. All readers can understand exactly what Stiglitz thinks we should do next. | |
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The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict

Stiglitz, Joseph E. and Linda J. Bilmes

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

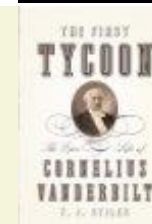


The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt

Stiles, T.J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011



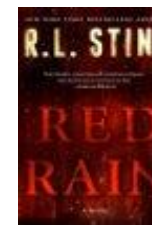
[Red Rain](#)

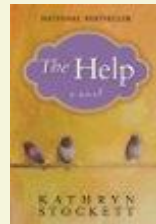
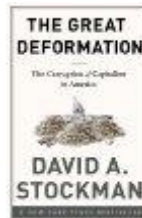
Stine, R.L.

**

[4/12/13](#)

Horror. I found myself deferring reading the first adult novel from R.L. Stine titled, [Red Rain](#). I tried not to think about Goosebumps before starting to read this novel, and finally admitted that I should just go ahead. Stine presents a very creepy horror story in this book with more than ample description of grisly outcomes. For fans of that genre, the yuck factor hits the target. Where Stine falls short is in character development and empathy. The master of this style, Stephen King, would have presented characters with whom readers would identify and for whom we would care. Instead, I found myself not caring much about what happened to these characters, and the horror was somewhat diminished because it was not inflicted on innocent and ordinary people. Read a sample before you commit to reading this novel.



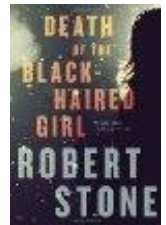
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|---|----------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Help</u> | Stockett, Kathryn | **** | <u>3/5/10</u> | Moving. There's a reason why Kathryn Stockett's debut novel, <u>The Help</u> , is so popular: it's an uplifting and moving story, packed with well-developed characters, and a plot that will engage most readers. Set in Mississippi in the early 1960s, <u>The Help</u> presents the polarized world of black maids and their employers. I found myself immersed in the lives of this cast of characters, rooting for some and booing others, as I turned pages as fast as I could to see how everything turns out. If there's one debut novel you read this year, make it <u>The Help</u> . |  |
| The Great Deformation: The Corruption of Capitalism in America | Stockman, David A. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>Kydd</u> | Stockwin, Julian | *** | <u>09/01</u> | British 18 th and 19 th century naval fiction returns with this first book in a series. |  |
| Where the Wild Things Were: Life, Death, and Ecological Wreckage in a Land of Vanishing Predators | Stolzenburg, William | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| <u>Bay of Souls</u> | Stone, Robert | ** | <u>May 03</u> | Doo Voo. Superb writing wasted on weak characters. Rural Minnesota professor's affair with stereotyped seductress from Caribbean island leads him into spirit world to neither find nor lose his soul, but change his life. |  |

Death of the Black-Haired Girl

Stone, Robert

2/20/14

Inured. The presence of evil may be so pervasive that most of us are inured to the many manifestations of it, and we may proceed regularly with choices that lead away from the good and toward evil. Robert Stone explores the choices of many characters in his novel, Death of the Black-Haired Girl. Maud is the student referred to in the book title, and her written pro-abortion views call attention to her by those who disagree. She is having an affair with a professor, Steve Brookman, who chooses to be unfaithful to his wife. Maud's father, Eddie Stark, dying of emphysema and grieving her death, approaches the Catholic church where his wife's remains are entombed, with a request to bury Maud alongside her mother, and he is met with rejection rather than solace. A former nun, now a campus counselor, provides a moral compass, but she has also become accustomed to the presence of evil all around her. Stone offers those readers who enjoy fine literary prose a thought-provoking novel. Most readers will like neither the characters nor their behavior, but they reflect individuals who live in our communities and dull our sense of right and wrong.



Prime Green

Stone, Robert

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

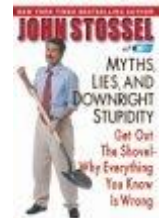


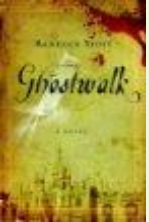



Myths, Lies, and Downright Stupidity

Stossel, John

Oct 06

Entertaining. Often entertaining (less when one disagrees) riffs on common points of view, short on facts, long on polarization. A version of author's 20/20 segment for non-viewers.



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|---|------------------|--------|----------------|---|---|
| Ghostwalk | Stott, Rebecca | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Kenneth Clark: Life, Art and Civilisation</u> | Stourton, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| The Sociopath Next Door: The Ruthless Versus the Rest of Us | Stout, Martha | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Kitchens of the Great Midwest</u> | Stradal, J. Ryan | **** | <u>2/25/16</u> | <p>Viewpoints. A child can never have too many people in her life who love her. I kept thinking about that reality as I read J. Ryan Stradal's debut novel titled, <u>Kitchens of the Great Midwest</u>. Stradal structures the novel as stories narrated by eight characters, all centered around protagonist Eva Thorvald. From childhood, Eva developed a discriminating palate, and that leads her in many different directions. I laughed at the humor in some sections, and felt pain in empathy for the struggles of some characters. Throughout, the vibrant writing kept me interested and entertained.</p> |  |
| <u>The Lager Queen of Minnesota</u> | Stradal, J. Ryan | ***** | <u>9/3/19</u> | <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</p> |  |

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| | | | 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. | |
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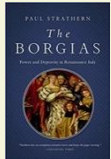
Waking Up to the Dark:
Ancient Wisdom
for a Sleepless
Age

Strand, Clark

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



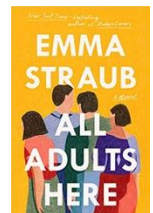
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| <u>The Borgias: Power and Depravity in Renaissance Italy</u> | Strathern, Paul | ***** | <u>2/21/20</u> | <p>Infamy. Consider escaping from contemporary stories of power and depravity and spend some time with Paul Strathern's book titled, <u>The Borgias: Power and Depravity in Renaissance Italy</u>. Whether you know a lot or a little about the Borgias before opening this book, you are likely to re-read some passages when what Strathern says in a straightforward way sinks in. Treachery, entanglements of all sorts, violence and schemes abound on these pages. We hear about boundless ambition, the purchase of the papacy, and the exercise of power.</p> |  |
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[All Adults Here](#)

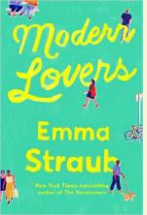
Straub, Emma

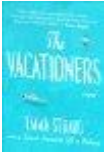
[6/24/20](#)

Love. After spending time reading about three generations of the Strick family in Emma Straub's novel titled, [All Adults Here](#), most readers will feel an extra spark of love for our own parents, siblings, children and grandchildren. Most of us will be more thankful for our relations and their issues when compared to the cast of characters in this novel.



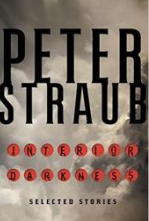


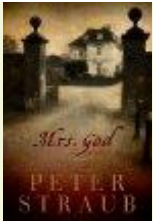

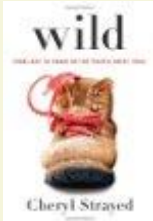
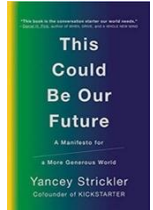
Sixty-eight-year-old matriarch Astrid Strick leads the ensemble, and her teenage granddaughter, Cecilia, may be the most mature member of the family. Straub packs a host of contemporary issues into this family and the small town in which Astrid lives. I loved the sibling dynamics in the novel, and the insight that as parents we may do our best but know there are things we've done that require an apology to our children. Wisdom comes from not guessing what those things are, because they may not be the events or actions we recall.

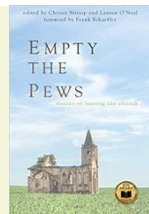



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| <u>Modern Lovers</u> | Straub, Emma | **** | <u>2/16/17</u> | <p>Brooklyn. Relationships can become complicated as they change over time. With a light touch and much psychological insight, Emma Straub explores this subject in her novel titled, <u>Modern Lovers</u>. Four Oberlin students, Lydia, Elizabeth, Andrew and Zoe formed a band they called "Kitty's Mustache." Lydia made one of their songs famous before she died of an overdose in her late twenties. The novel, set mostly in contemporary Brooklyn, shows the other band members dealing with all the expected concerns: midlife crisis, children coming of age, real estate and longing for fulfillment. Aging hipsters and Brooklyn could have fallen into rapid stereotype, but Straub makes the characters complex and interesting, while keeping the story light and engaging.</p> |  |
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| <u>The Vacationers</u> | Straub, Emma | ***** | <u>6/27/14</u> | <p>Island. Vacationing readers looking for a comparison to someone else's vacation that provides humor and pleasure should consider reading Emma Straub's novel <u>The Vacationers</u>. The Posts head to the island of Mallorca for a two week vacation bringing along their troubles and some secrets. After thirty five years of the ups and downs of marriage, Jim and Franny Post have reached a crisis point. Jim lost his job as a magazine editor after he had an inappropriate affair with a young</p> |  |
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colleague. Franny is furious. Daughter Sylvia heads to Brown soon, and her summer plan is to get laid. She knows something is bad in her parents' relationship, but isn't sure what it is. Twenty-eight year-old son Bobby lives in Florida with Carmen, a personal trainer. While his parents think he's selling real estate, he's in debt and working as a trainer and a peddler of nutritional powder. Bobby has no clue about his father's indiscretion. Franny's best friend, Charles, and his husband, Lawrence are also on this vacation while they await news about a potential adoption. On the island, all the secrets have no place to hide, and the two weeks provide just enough time for things to happen to all the characters. I enjoyed this novel because it provided the perfect light reading experience, with enough insight into human behavior to make the actions of every character ring true by the end.

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|--|---------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| A Dark Matter | Straub, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| <u>In the Night Room</u> | Straub, Peter | *** | <u>Mar 05</u> | Ambiguity. Cerebral and entertaining novel that explores the linkages between nature and art, and a wide variety of ambiguous relationships, including the relationship between an author and fictional characters. |  |
| <u>Interior Darkness</u> | Straub, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |

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| <u>Mr. X.</u> | Straub, Peter | *** | We liked Straub's plot, characters and language. We don't read much in the horror genre, and found this book worth our time. | | <u>Buy @ amazon.com</u> |
| Mrs. God | Straub, Peter | Unread | | When I added this to the reading queue, I thought it was a new novel. When I opened it, I realized it was a republished part of a 1990 work. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| More Than It Hurts You | Strauss, Darin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| <u>Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail</u> | Strayed, Cheryl | ***** | <u>5/5/12</u> | Vicarious. Once a started reading Cheryl Strayed's memoir, <u>Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail</u> , I put everything else aside until I finished it. Following her mother's death and her own divorce, Strayed decided to take time off and on something of a whim, decided to hike 1,100 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail. Somewhat unprepared with too much gear and the wrong size shoes, her grit and determination brought me vicarious pleasure as I read about something I would never do. Her reckless behavior and her transformation were compelling to read because of the clarity and candor of her writing. A friend recommended this book, and I pass that recommendation along to any reader who enjoys true stories of the indomitable human spirit. |  |
| <u>This Could Be Our Future: A Manifesto for a More Generous World</u> | Strickler, Yancey | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

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| <u>Empty the Pews: Stories of Leaving the Church</u> | Stroop, Chrissy and Lauren O'Neal | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| Neptune's Brood | Stross, Charles | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| The Apocalypse Codex | Stross, Charles | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>Planet Google: One Company's Audacious Plan To Organize Everything We Know</u> | Stross, Randall | *** | <u>Dec 08</u> | Everything. An interesting and entertaining description of where Google came from and where it's heading in its plan to organize all the information in the world. |  |
| The Launch Pad: Inside Y Combinator, Silicon Valley's Most Exclusive School for Startups | Stross, Randall | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |

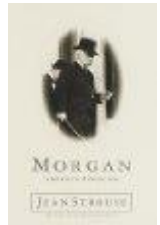
Morgan:
American
Financier

Strouse, Jean

Unread

5/99

Strouse took 15 years to write these 800 pages. We've read 250 pages so far and have found it interesting, but not captivating.

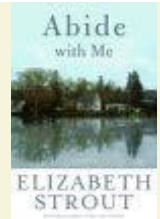


Abide With Me

Strout, Elizabeth

June 06

Community. Compassionate novel about a rural minister's grief in 1959 at the death of his wife and ways in which his breakdown and recovery transform him and his congregation.

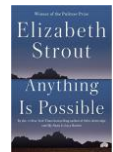


Anything Is Possible

Strout, Elizabeth

5/23/17

Depth. Sometimes after reading a novel, a reader can wonder about fictional characters, wanting to not let the character go and get to read more about a favorite protagonist. The popularity of serial fiction with recurring protagonists rarely crosses into literary fiction, but Elizabeth Strout chose to do that in her novel titled, Anything Is Possible, because she had more to say about Lucy Barton. Strout brought Lucy back in this volume of connected stories, alongside some new and old characters. Strout's prose is constructed with great care, and the depth of character development brought me great pleasure. Things are not as they appear, and that's the making of a fine work of fiction.

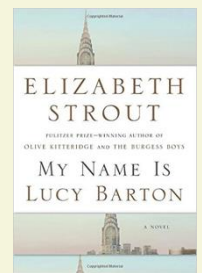


My Name is Lucy Barton

Strout, Elizabeth

2/25/16

Bonds. Our best writers find a way to be simple and complex at the same time. Elizabeth Strout's short novel titled, My Name is Lucy Barton, can be perceived as a simple tale about a mother and daughter. It is also a complex and aching story about love and abuse and the bonds of love that can endure anything. In the same way that the emotions of some characters are implied in the novel, Strout uses great efficiency in her prose to



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| | | | | <p>convey more in a single sentence than many writers can achieve in long chapters. Strout's writing is superb, and she is mastering nuance, to my great pleasure.</p> <p>Forceful. The thirteen connected stories in Elizabeth Strout's new collection titled, Olive Kitteridge, are set principally in Maine, and combine to produce what feels like a novel, and a comprehensive view of a memorable character. Olive could readily be called "a piece of work." Her forceful character, formed by rugged Maine life, dominates these stories. As schoolteacher, friend, wife, mother and grandmother, she comes alive on these pages with the full package of strengths, weaknesses and quirks that make for an authentic human personality. Olive notices everything, has an opinion about the ways things should be, and often runs roughshod over everyone in her life, while she truly enjoys the love and beauty of life. Olive Kitteridge offers fine writing, especially to those readers who enjoy both the precision of the short story genre, and the sweep of continuity from viewing a character from multiple perspectives and time periods. Reading a story a day for two weeks may feel like a vacation in Maine, even in the story when Olive visits her son in New York.</p> | |
| Olive Kitteridge | Strout, Elizabeth | *** | 11/25/09 | |  |
| Olive, Again | Strout, Elizabeth | ***** | 10/25/19 | <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, Olive, Again. Olive continues to speak her 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</p> |  |

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| | | | | 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. | |
| The Burgess Boys | Strout, Elizabeth | ***** | 5/10/13 | <p>Guilt. There must be well-developed psychological insights that Elizabeth Strout learned in her life that help her write fiction that presents readers with well-developed complex characters. I loved her novel The Burgess Boys because of the many ways in which she unmasks the suffering and trouble beneath the persona most individuals present to the world. Some are suffused with guilt. Some have no idea why they do what they do. Many are wounded by the actions of those close to them. Many have to leave one place to discover their true selves somewhere else. All are drawn, eventually, to the bonds of family, and to expressing the love that endures all wounds. This is a novel filled with outsiders, trying to fit into a world that they don't really understand. I raced through this finely written novel, caring about these characters, even or especially, the ones I didn't like.</p> |  |
| Shuggie Bain | Stuart, Douglas | ***** | 8/25/20 | <p>Alcoholic. Douglas Stuart's debut novel titled, Shuggie Bain, packs a wallop. Set in Glasgow, the novel offers a detailed exploration of the relationship between an alcoholic mother, Agnes Bain, and her son, Shuggie. Any reader who has lived in a household where alcohol was a problem will recognize Stuart's insight into family dynamics and what happens when children have to assume responsibilities far beyond what's age appropriate for them. Stuart excels at character development in this novel, and through multiple detailed</p> |  |

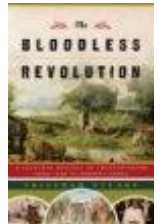
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| | | | descriptions of dysfunctional domestic life readers can share just a small bit of what it is like to live in a house with an alcoholic adult. Stuart seems to keep pounding away at readers with one sad episode after another that can make us weary. That's part of the impressive power of this book: the text itself recreates the repetitive experiences of this family's life. I highly recommend this novel to those readers who appreciate finely written literary fiction and those who find depth and insight from descriptions of domestic life, whether the same as what we've known ourselves or completely different. | |
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The Bloodless Revolution

Stuart, Tristram

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



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|----------------------------|--------------|------|--|--|
| Off Season | Sturm, James | **** | 4/19/19 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, Off Season . 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. | |
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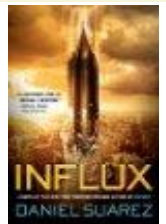


Influx

Suarez, Daniel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.



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| The Holy Vote | Suarez, Ray | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>The Old Neighborhood: What We Lost in the Great Suburban Migration</u> | Suarez, Ray | *** | <u>1/00</u> | The challenge of creating community in cities and suburbs. Great writing. Recommended. |  |
| <u>The Upside of Turbulence: Seizing Opportunity in an Uncertain World</u> | Sull, Donald | *** | <u>12/10/09</u> | Agility. Donald Sull's new book is titled, <u>The Upside of Turbulence: Seizing Opportunity in an Uncertain World</u> . Sull makes a great case for building an organization that's agile enough to exploit opportunities rapidly, and one that can absorb the inevitable setbacks that face every organization. The style of writing reflects Sull's current job as a professor at London Business School. The content reflects both the case approach he learned at Harvard, and the clear communication and analytic approach he learned at McKinsey and in doing leveraged buyouts with Clayton & Dubilier. The result: a readable presentation, packed with cases and examples that illustrate his points clearly. The Upside of Turbulence provides interesting reading to general managers, and will be of particular interest to any manager involved in strategy, innovation, or development. |  |

Highest Duty:
My Search for
What Really
Matters

Sullenberger,
Chesley B.

2/25/10

Competence. The world came to know Chesley B. Sullenberger on January 15, 2009 when he guided the engineless US Airways Flight 1549 onto the Hudson River and all 155 persons aboard were rescued. Sully's book, Highest Duty: My Search for What Really Matters, informs readers about who this pilot is, where he came from, how he achieved such competence, and how he's tried to live his life. For readers who want to know more about what happened to Flight 1549 on 1/15/09, this book will make your heart race as Sully relates the second-by-second action. Readers who are inspired or motivated by learning about how others have become competent and how they choose to live will find chapters in Highest Duty that will lead to high admiration for Sully, and inspiration to be like him.

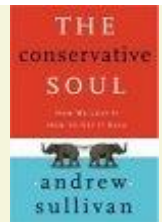


The
Conservative
Soul

Sullivan, Andrew

Jan 07

Doubt. While neo-con fundamentalists demand adherence to faith, author claims real conservative strength comes from doubt, and doubt and faith can and should co-exist.



Commencement

Sullivan, J.
Courtney

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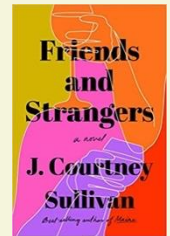
10/15/09

Types. When I finished reading J. Courtney Sullivan's debut novel, Commencement, I stared at the closed book and thought, "huh?" I am willing to accept that a male reader may just not get it when it comes to an exploration of the relationship among four women, but even with that acceptance, I'm not sure that the personality types presented in these characters are recognizable in the real world. April, Bree, Celia and Sally meet when they arrive at Smith for freshman year in the late 1990s. Sullivan stereotypes them as students, and then carries their lives forward to the post-college years. I never quite empathized with any character, so no matter what happened to them, I found myself not caring. If you're willing to take a chance on a debut novel,

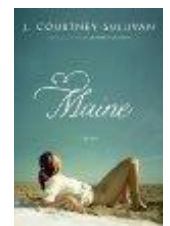


and have some interest in college and early adult female relationships, you may find something to like in [Commencement](#).

Privilege. The combination of finely written prose and psychological insight elevate J. Courtney Sullivan's novel titled, [Friends and Strangers](#), from domestic drama to literary fiction that encapsulates our current time and place. After two decades in New York City, protagonist and journalist Elisabeth moves with her husband and child to the rural town where his parents live. Many readers will identify with Elisabeth staying linked to her Brooklyn Moms group, while she steps slowly into the Moms group in her new community. Sullivan touches all the right nerves when it comes to motherhood. She also explores significant issues about privilege in this novel, and the ways in which insensitivity to the reality of privilege can inhibit the ability of one to see what other lives are like. Is the relationship between Elisabeth and her young babysitter friendship? After the babysitter finds a mentor in Elisabeth's father-in-law, what does that mean for relationships all around? Fans of finely written literary fiction, especially mothers, are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.



Penance. I opened J. Courtney Sullivan's new novel, [Maine](#), with low expectations, since I found the characters in her debut novel, *Commencement*, to be poorly developed and unsympathetic. I was pleasantly surprised to find the generations of characters presented to have depth and the overall story telling was done well and kept me interested for all four hundred pages. Protagonist Alice Kelleher set the course of her life in a specific direction following a life changing event. All her life has been lived in some form of penance for the guilt she felt. The sense of place that Sullivan creates for



[Friends and Strangers](#)

Sullivan, J.
Courtney

[8/5/20](#)

[Maine](#)

Sullivan, J.
Courtney

[7/22/11](#)

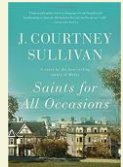
the setting in Maine will resonate for those readers who have ever lived in a special place. The family dynamics are so dysfunctional that this novel could be used in an introductory psychology course. Readers who like imperfect characters with messy lives and odd relationships are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

[Saints for All Occasions](#)

Sullivan, J.
Courtney

[7/6/17](#)

Secrets. As the Irish Catholic child of immigrants, I recognized the families in J. Courtney Sullivan's novel titled, [Saints for All Occasions](#). Parts of the old sod remain present in the new world. Secrets are kept for decades, as are grudges. There can be extended time periods of alienation among family members. Sullivan does many things very well in this novel: the characters are complex and well-developed; the settings are described in enough detail to bring them to life; and the insights into human behavior are wise. Did I say there's a nun in the mix? Sure, it's all here for any reader who enjoys finely written prose and whose family has issues of any sort.

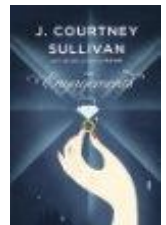


[The Engagements](#)

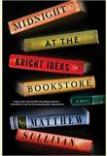
Sullivan, J.
Courtney

[7/8/13](#)

Rings. Readers looking for a sprawling novel to escape into this summer are not likely to be disappointed by J. Courtney Sullivan's [The Engagements](#). She creates an ensemble of characters with interesting connections, and links them together in interesting ways through diamond engagement rings. She weaves their narratives forward and backward, allowing readers to settle into their lives before moving along. We leave one couple at a reasonable break point, and when we return to them, it is as if we never left. Sullivan covers many decades in presenting this story, and every relationship comes alive through finely written prose. I was swept away into the lives Sullivan presents, and I found myself thoroughly entertained by the time I spent with these

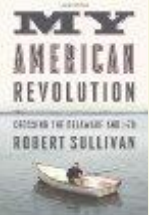


interesting characters. I think that any book club that selects this novel will engage in lively conversation, about the characters and about our own relationships and wedding rings.

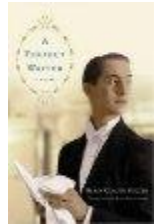
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|---|-------------------|-------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore</u> | Sullivan, Matthew | ***** | <u>7/20/17</u> | <p>Intertwined. I hope Matthew Sullivan had as much fun writing his debut novel titled, <u>Midnight at the Bright Ideas Bookstore</u>, as I had reading it. Skeptical readers who don't associate mysteries with finely written fiction should consider reading this novel. Protagonist Lydia Smith is a bookstore clerk who receives a legacy from a patron, Joey Molina. Lydia follows the trail that Joey left her as the plot twists and turns making multiple connections between the past and the present. No matter when you solve the mystery during the course of this book, you are likely to enjoy the fine writing, interesting characters and well-constructed plot.</p> |  |
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Cross Country Sullivan, Robert Unread Shelf of Ennui 2006

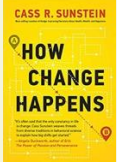
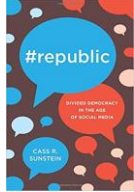
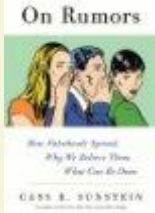
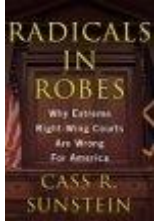
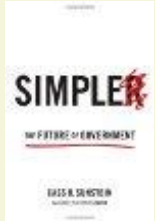


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|------------------------|------------------|--------|--|---|--|
| My American Revolution | Sullivan, Robert | Unread | | I picked up this book after listening to the podcast of an interview with Sullivan. I read the first few pages, and lost interest. Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
|------------------------|------------------|--------|--|---|--|

A Perfect Waiter Sulzer, Alain Claude *** Read and not reviewed.



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|---|---------------------------|--------|------------------------|---|---|
| Every Other Weekend | Summerfield, Zulema Renee | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| The Crow Girl | Sund, Erik Axl | ***** | 7/8/16 | <p>Evil. Fans of crime fiction who have a high tolerance for detailed descriptions of horrific acts are those most likely to enjoy reading The Crow Girl, an almost eight-hundred page novel by Erik Axl Sund, the pen name of authors Jerker Eriksson and Hakan Axlander Sundquist. Originally published as a trilogy in Sweden, the novel is packed with darkness and the evil acts of a cast of characters. I enjoyed the depth of character development, and the doggedness of Detective Superintendent Jeanette Kihlberg and her personal connection with another key character. The authors present the perspectives and recalled memories of a variety of characters, constantly shifting the action from one person, place and time to another. The plot twists are exiting, and readers with strong stomachs should be able to read through every gruesome scene of evil and perverse acts.</p> |  |
| The Making of Toro: Bullfights, Broken Hearts, and One Author's Quest for the Acclaim He Deserves | Sundeen, Mark | ** | Mar 04 | <p>Ole. Those with a certain sense of humor will enjoy this novel, particularly those who don't take themselves too seriously. Fewer than ten copies are likely to be sold within Washington, D.C.</p> |  |
| The Socialist Manifesto: The Case for Radical Politics in an Era of Extreme Inequality | Sunkara, Bhaskar | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

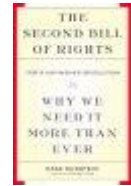
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| <u>How Change Happens</u> | Sunstein, Cass | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>#Republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media</u> | Sunstein, Cass R. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| On Rumors: How Falsehoods Spread, Why We Believe Them, What Can Be Done | Sunstein, Cass R. | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| Radicals in Robes | Sunstein, Cass R. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Simpler: The Future of Government</u> | Sunstein, Cass R. | **** | <u>8/6/13</u> | Complicated. It's complicated to make things simpler, especially in the area of government regulation, but it's achievable, as Cass Sunstein elaborates in his book, <u>Simpler: The Future of Government</u> . Readers who have an interest in behavioral economics and choice architecture will find a lot to enjoy in this book. Sunstein's writing is lively, and he clearly enjoys the topic. I found his exploration of costs and benefits to be cogent and thought provoking. |  |

The Second Bill of Rights

Sunstein, Cass R.

Oct 04

Pragmatic. Explores economic rights for social justice in a free society: employment, adequate food and clothing, decent shelter, education, recreation and medical care, as proposed by FDR in 1944.



The World According to Star Wars

Sunstein, Cass R.

11/22/16

Fanboy. I imagine that Cass Sunstein had a lot of fun writing The World According to Star Wars. An unabashed Star Wars fanboy, Sunstein is better known as a Harvard law school professor. With enthusiastic glee, Sunstein shares his love of Star Wars with readers in areas that resonate for him, including: law, economics, fatherhood and childhood. He prods readers into viewing the movies again, even the ones we didn't like the first time around. His enthusiasm is contagious, but another dozen or two pages might have crossed the line for me. Readers looking for something light and fun to read should consider this book.

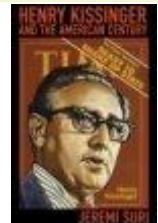


Henry Kissinger and the American Century

Suri, Jeremi

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008



The City of Devi

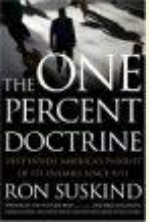
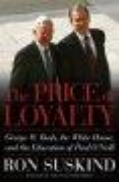
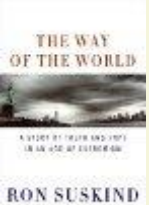

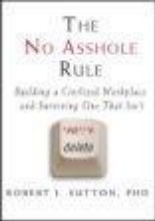
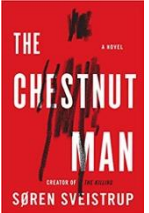
Suri, Manil

7/8/13

Desire. Manil Suri alternates narrators of his novel, The City of Devi, to present different perspectives on the plot. The threat of nuclear annihilation between India and Pakistan provides a backdrop for the tension in the novel. Sarita is searching for her missing husband, Karun. On her journey, she meets the other narrator, Jaz, who is also on a search. As readers learn more about this triangle of characters, their lives become vivid, their strong desires revealed, and the world in which they life laid bare. Suri's writing is clever and provocative, packed with clear descriptive language and insight into human behavior. Readers who are



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| | | | | intrigued should read a sample before plunging into this story. | |
| <u>The Death of Vishnu</u> | Suri, Manil | **** | <u>10/01</u> | A complex and clever story of life, death and forbidden love among residents of a Bombay apartment building. |  |
| <u>The Wisdom of Crowds</u> | Surowiecki, James | ***** | <u>July 04</u> | Collective. Groups are smarter than the smartest person in them, and you can create wise groups by fostering diversity of opinion, independence, decentralization and aggregation. Top rating for good writing, facts and examples, stimulation of thinking, and opportunity to act on what reader learns. |  |
| <u>Confidence men: Wall Street, Washington, and the Education of a President</u> | Suskind, Ron | **** | <u>10/27/11</u> | Mismanagement. Over the course of 500 pages in a book titled, <u>Confidence Men: Wall Street, Washington and the Education of a President</u> , Ron Suskind presents the many missed opportunities and mismanagement in the early years of the Obama administration. He also explores every possible meaning of “confidence.” Assembled from hundreds of hours of interviews with hundreds of people, I found this book to be comprehensive, and also packed with errors in details that were sometimes distracting. Given the broad scope and journalistic style, some errors are to be expected, and historians should sort it all out. The villains of the book are Larry Summers and Rahm Emmanuel, the best examples of Suskind’s key premise: “the key president’s authority was being systematically undermined or hedged by his seasoned advisors” (p. 458). Any reader interested in contemporary politics will enjoy this book. |  |

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|---|-------------------|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The One Percent Doctrine</u> | Suskind, Ron | *** | <u>Oct 06</u> | Suspicion. Investigative journalist takes readers inside the policy making forums of the administration and explores how counterterrorism professionals are trying to implement a new policy: act on suspicion if there's even a 1% chance that the suspicion is accurate. |  |
| <u>The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill</u> | Suskind, Ron | *** | <u>Mar 04</u> | Competence. Forget what you've heard about this book. O'Neill was a competent Secretary of the Treasury, and Suskind is a good journalist. An informative presentation on the process of vetting issues within the Bush administration. Not as bitter a tale as the early stories made it appear. |  |
| <u>The Way of the World: A Story of Truth and Hope in an Age of Extremism</u> | Suskind, Ron | *** | <u>Nov 08</u> | Personal. Cogent exploration of how America has lost moral authority in the world and what each of us can do to move forward and define human progress together. |  |
| <u>Venus As a Boy</u> | Sutherland, Luke | * | <u>July 04</u> | Cupid. Popular U.K. writer published for first time in U.S. Strange tale of Orkney youth full of sex, drugs and alienation, bringing love to others. Some fine writing, mostly quirky. |  |
| <u>The No Asshole Rule</u> | Sutton, Robert I. | *** | <u>May 07</u> | Intolerance. Life's too short to work with jerks: fire them or go someplace else. Keep one around as the ongoing example of behavior not to emulate. |  |
| <u>The Chestnut Man</u> | Sveistrup, Søren | **** | <u>3/6/20</u> | Creepy. The debut novel by Søren Sveistrup is a creepy thriller titled, <u>The Chestnut Man</u> . The characters are interesting and complex, flawed in all the ways we recognize and appreciate. The crimes are bloody and violent and the criminal meticulous and dogged. The plot moves at a pace |  |

that after a while sustains a reader's elevated heart rate level that jumps when a new twist arrives. Most readers will hug their children a little tighter after reading this book. Fans of crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

Resourceful. I think the first time I heard the word "beguine," it was in hearing Cole Porter's song, "Begin the Beguine." His reference was to a popular dance in the 1930s, which became even more popular after his terrific song. In 2013, I read a newspaper article about the death of last beguine. So, when I ran across Laura Swan's book titled, [The Wisdom of the Beguines: The Forgotten Story of a Medieval Women's Movement](#), I picked it up and started to hum the Porter tune. I stopped humming after a page or two and was delighted to read about these resourceful women who gathered in community from medieval times into the 21st century. Spoiler alert: these women were not dancers and they were not nuns. They were laywomen who banded together for their mutual support and for service to their communities. There hasn't been enough accurate examination about the lives of women in society throughout history, since so much of contemporaneous history has been written by men. Any reader interested in learning something new about interesting women should consider reading this fascinating book.

Honor. I was greatly entertained by Christopher Swann's debut novel titled, [Shadow of the Lions](#). Set at an exclusive Virginia prep school, the novel spans two different time periods: when protagonist Matthias Glass was a student at Blackburne, and when he returned there as a teacher a decade later. Matthias' best friend, Fritz, disappeared from Blackburne following an argument they had during their senior year precipitated by one's adherence to

[The Wisdom of the Beguines: The Forgotten Story of a Medieval Women's Movement](#)

Swan, Laura

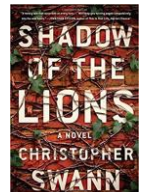
[4/11/15](#)



[Shadow of the Lions](#)

Swann, Christopher

[2/9/18](#)



the school's honor code. Swann teaches at a Georgia prep school, and he captures the setting perfectly. Characters are well-developed, and the plot maintains a steady pace as a mystery unfolds. The prose flows as readers reflect on friendship and the impact of the past on the present.

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|---|----------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Three Bags Full</u> | Swann, Leonie | ** | <u>Oct 07</u> | Baa. Imaginative and creative debut novel in which the sheep are detectives who are trying to solve the murder of their shepherd. With an author named, Swann, who can resist? |  |
| <u>Power Failure: The Inside Story of the Collapse of Enron</u> | Swartz, Mimi and Sherron Watkins | *** | <u>June 03</u> | Living Large. Hubris, office politics, chaos, greed. At some point, we'll tire of the Enron rehashing, but Watkins' involvement in this one caught our attention, and lead to pleasure in reading the horrid tale. |  |
| The Only Guide to a Winning Investment Strategy You'll Ever Need | Swedroe, Larry E. | Unread | | Known the bright author for years, and have wanted to read this, but still haven't gotten around to it. |  |
| <u>Among Other Things, I've Taken Up Smoking</u> | Sweeney, Aoibheann | *** | <u>Oct 07</u> | Changes. Smoking isn't the only new thing Miranda finds in New York City after heading there from rural Maine after high school. Fine debut novel about coming of age. |  |
| <u>The Nest</u> | Sweeney, Cynthia D'Aprix | **** | <u>5/26/16</u> | Plumb. Do readers really need another debut novel about a dysfunctional New York family? Maybe. Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney's novel, <u>The Nest</u> , presents the Plumb family, and chances are that most readers would not trade their own families for this one. The title refers to an inheritance the father of four set aside for them to receive when the |  |

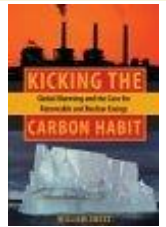
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| | | | | youngest sibling turns forty. The anticipation of receiving this “nest” has influenced the lives of each sibling and their significant others. Sweeney draws out the plot one swerve after another, and develops the characters with great skill. Her writing kept me engaged throughout the novel, and the large cast of characters were a real kick. | |
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[Kicking the Carbon Habit](#)

Sweet, William

[Jan 07](#)

Grim. Factual and scientific exposition of the problems with coal and global warming, and a reasonable set of potential solutions in pursuing alternatives to coal.

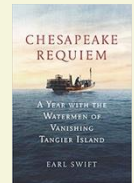


[Chesapeake Requiem: A Year with the Watermen of Vanishing Tangier Island](#)

Swift, Earl

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



England and Other Stories

Swift, Graham

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

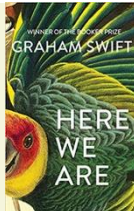


[Here We Are](#)

Swift, Graham

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

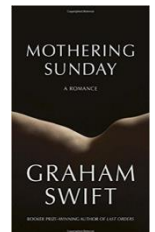


[Mothering Sunday](#)


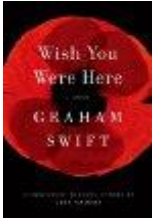
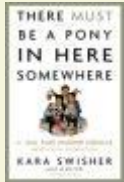
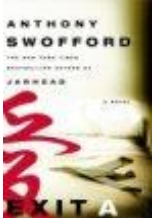
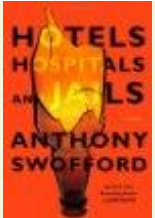
Swift, Graham

[8/24/16](#)

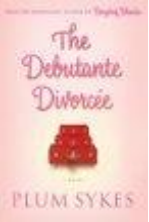



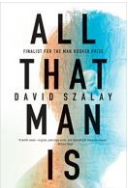
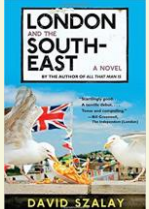
Alive. Readers who enjoy finely written prose are those most likely to enjoy reading Graham Swift’s novel titled, [Mothering Sunday](#). The descriptive language brings both the setting and emotions to life. One afternoon, Mothering Sunday 1924, changes protagonist Jane Fairchild’s life forever. This short novel explores what it means to be alive



and Swift uses romance as the key to that question. Along the way, Swift explores class, gender, memory and sex. I was entertained and delighted from beginning to end.

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|---|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Tomorrow | Swift, Graham | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| Wish You Were Here | Swift, Graham | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>There Must be a Pony in Here Somewhere: The AOL Time Warner Debacle and the Quest for a Digital Future</u> | Swisher, Kara | *** | <u>Jan 04</u> | Culture Clash. Neither AOL nor Time Warner felt they could learn from each other. Reading their foibles is the print equivalent of reality TV shows, and the episodes Swisher describes are often enjoyable, if you like watching the misfortune of others. |  |
| Exit A | Swofford, Anthony | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>Hotels, Hospitals, and Jails: A Memoir</u> | Swofford, Anthony | ** | <u>8/6/12</u> | Turmoil. Some memoirs present reflections about extraordinary lives. Others describe struggles and provide insight into how setbacks and obstacles can be overcome. Anthony Swofford's latest memoir, <u>Hotels, Hospitals, and Jails</u> , tells readers about many of the recent bad choices he's made, and how |  |

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| | | | | close he came to losing touch with what's important. Much of the book involves his struggles with his father. His writing comes through as candid and blunt and with a critical introspection. Swofford's earlier memoir, <i>Jarhead</i> , showcased his fine writing style. While the writing here is good, I became fatigued in reading so many pages about his narcissistic life and the turmoil he created for himself and others. He ends on an up note, but the journey there may be enjoyed only by those readers whose taste tends toward schadenfreude. | |
| <u>Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles</u> | Swofford, Anthony | *** | <u>May 03</u> | Unscrewed. Talented writer and former Marine sniper presents poetic images of life, fear, despair and exhilaration as a Marine interspersed with the salty tongue used by one Marine to another. |  |
| <u>Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking</u> | Syed, Matthew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| DNA USA: A Genetic Portrait of America | Sykes, Bryan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>Bergdorf Blondes</u> | Sykes, Plum | *** | <u>Dec 04</u> | Bouncy. Light laughs and perfect escapist entertainment, full of tales of love, shopping, and the struggles of the uber-wealthy. |  |

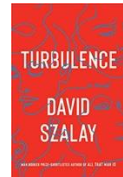
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|--|------------------|--------|------------------------|---|---|
| The Debutant Divorcee | Sykes, Plum | * | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| Softwar : An Intimate Portrait of Larry Ellison and Oracle | Symonds, Matthew | *** | Feb 04 | Intense. Triple treat: good writing; unprecedented access without whitewashing; revealing footnote reactions from Ellison to what Symonds says about him and Oracle. |  |
| Becoming Charlemagne | Sypeck, Jeff | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| The Door | Szabo, Margo | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| All That Man Is | Szalay, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| London and the South-east | Szalay, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |

Turbulence

Szalay, David

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



Mrs. Mohr Goes Missing

Szmiczkowa, Maryla

8/19/20

Vocation. The best murder mysteries in the Agatha Christie tradition have a protagonist detective that's beloved by readers. Maryla Szmiczkowa provides one named Zofia Turbotyńska in a novel titled, Mrs. Mohr Goes Missing. Zofie is a bored socialite in Cracow whose current task is a fundraiser for a local care home and the nuns who operate it. After a resident is found dead, Zofia leaves her boredom behind and comes to life as a passionate detective. She excels at this vocation, to the pleasure of readers like me who are entertained by this genre. Zofia has the wit and flair of some of the greatest fictional detectives who precede her, and I was delighted to stumble on this novel and look forward to Zofia's next case.

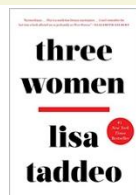


Three Women

Taddeo, Lisa

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

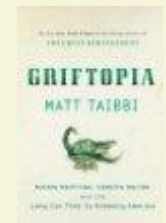


Griftopia: Bubble Machines, Vampire Squids, and the Long Con That Is Breaking America

Taibbi, Matt

12/18/10

Criminals. There's no hemming and hawing or doubt about the author's point of view in Matt Taibbi's book, Griftopia. Using blunt and judgmental prose, he calls Goldman Sachs "a company of criminals" and refers to Alan Greenspan as an "asshole." For some readers, such crass prose may be dismissed as shallow, but Taibbi is not superficial: he follows the money, and with clear and cogent prose opines on great lies and behavior that is not for the common good. He makes the point that "organized greed always defeats disorganized democracy." While he reprises



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| | | | his original Goldman Sachs story from <i>Rolling Stone</i> , with the vampire squid image, there's much more covered in this book beyond the financial crisis: he covers health care and commodities speculation with the same serious edge. Any reader who has followed the financial crisis will find this book to be another valuable contribution to understanding what has been going on for the past few years. | |
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Hate, Inc.: Why Today's Media Makes Us Despise One Another

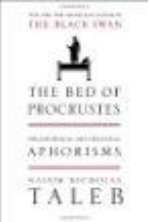
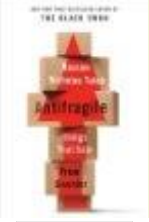
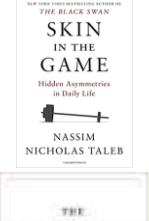

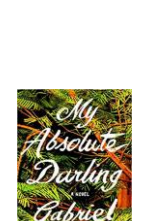
Taibbi, Matt

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

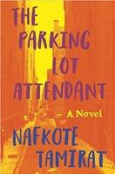


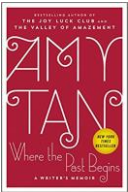


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| <u>The Divide: American Injustice in the Age of the Wealth Gap</u> | Taibbi, Matt | ***** | <u>5/9/14</u> | <p>Wrong. If you can finish reading Matt Taibbi's <u>The Divide: American Injustice in the Age of the Wealth Gap</u>, and not feel a sense of moral outrage, you have no heart. From the time we were toddlers, most of us developed the value that we should strive for fairness in our dealings with others. When faced with injustice, we seek redress. Taibbi presents our current predicament: we have institutionalized injustice in the different ways in which we treat the rich and the poor. The divide that Taibbi explores includes many dimensions, the most significant of which for me involved the crimes we prosecute and the crimes that we consider "too big to jail." The stories of how some people have been treated shocked me, and opened for question my view that the rights of citizens are respected in our society and that the innocent have nothing to fear.</p> | |
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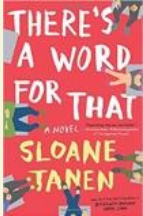
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|---|---------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--|---|
| The Bed of Procrustes: Philosophical and Practical Aphorisms | Taleb, Nassim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
| Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder | Taleb, Nassim Nicholas | Unread | | I quit reading this book after about fifteen minutes. Taleb's made-up words, including the title, and quirky showmanship turned me off. Skim a sample to see if you like it. Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Skin in the Game: Hidden Asymmetries in Daily Life | Taleb, Nassim Nicholas | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable | Taleb, Nassim Nicholas | ***** | Aug 07 | Unknowns. Quirky and thoughtful book riffs on the notion that the highly improbable does happen, is unpredictable, and has a huge impact, all of which we find reason to explain and ignore. |  |
| My Absolute Darling | Tallent, Gabriel | ** | 10/18/17 | Trauma. While reading Gabriel Tallent's debut novel titled, My Absolute Darling , I found myself patiently awaiting deeper character development or insight into human behavior. After four hundred pages, the characters remained poorly developed and I was no closer to understanding behavior than I was on page one. Protagonist Turtle lives almost off the grid with her father, Martin. Their relationship involves physical and psychological abuse and the title is how Martin refers to Turtle. The novel is packed with violence and trauma. While some readers will consider Turtle as a heroine, I considered her more as a survivor, and |  |

it's easy to understand why she loves her father despite the abuse. The extended cast of characters are one-dimensional, and the community that ignores Turtle for most of the book seems keenly aware of her at the end. All those gaps and anomalies led me to close the book feeling as if I was part of the trauma, and I was glad to have it come to an end.

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| <u>Black Irish</u> | Talty, Stephan | **** | <u>5/3/13</u> | <p>Home. Stephan Talty packs his debut novel, <u>Black Irish</u>, with interesting characters, a twisting plot, and a setting that will appeal in a special way to those living in or from western New York. Protagonist Abbie Kearney is a Harvard educated police detective who has returned to Buffalo to be close to her adoptive father, an ailing retired police detective. Talty presents the closed community of Irish South Buffalo with detailed precision and insight, given that he was raised in Buffalo by Irish immigrants. Talty riffs on what makes a home, and the family and connections that include and exclude others. Readers who like grisly crime fiction with interesting characters and engaging plot are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Hangman</u> | Talty, Stephan | **** | <u>7/9/14</u> | <p>Network. Fans of crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading Stephan Talty's latest novel titled, <u>Hangman</u>. The pressure is on for Buffalo homicide detective Abbie Kearney to solve the case of a serial killer. When stymied, Abbie makes the difficult decision to tap into a network of police insiders who follow their own rules and face what consequences that might bring her in the long run. Talty matches Kearney's wits against a creepy killer who seems to stay one step ahead.</p> |  |

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| <u>The Black Hand</u> | Talty, Stephan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>The Parking Lot Attendant</u> | Tamirat, Nafkote | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Saving Fish From Drowning | Tan, Amy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| The Opposite of Fate | Tan, Amy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>The Valley of Amazement</u> | Tan, Amy | ***** | <u>2/20/14</u> | <p>Losses. Amy Tan's latest 600-page novel is titled, <u>The Valley of Amazement</u>. Set in Shanghai, San Francisco and a little in upstate New York, the novel presents the lives of multiple generations across four decades starting early in the 20th century. Tan excels at describing the situation of women in society, and in this novel she leans heavily on the losses and setbacks in the lives of mothers and daughters. There's plenty of sex, violence, love and death on these pages to last through many hours of reading. Amy Tan fans are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel. Some readers may find the story bloated and packed with more detail than necessary. I expected tension in the mother-daughter relationships, and found</p> |  |

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| | | | | <p>plenty of that in this sweeping novel along with much more to say about the condition of women at that time and in those places.</p> <p>Memory. Amy Tan's memoir titled, <u>Where the Past Begins: A Writer's Memoir</u>, was all I expected and more. Tan shares memories of her life and focuses particular attention on writing. Readers are Tan's companions as she draws us into the process by which she uncovers deeply buried memories and uses her fine writing skills to describe those recollections in prose that is engaging and with the insight of a long life well-lived. I found the exchanges with her editor were an added delight in this book. Fans of Tan and readers who enjoy well-written memoirs are those most likely to appreciate this book.</p> | |
| <u>Where the Past Begins: A Writer's Memoir</u> | Tan, Amy | **** | <u>3/9/18</u> | |  |
| <u>What We Were Promised</u> | Tan, Lucy | **** | <u>10/5/18</u> | <p>Secrets. In her debut novel titled, <u>What We Were Promised</u>, Lucy Tan explores themes of family, secrets, and obligations. Set in Shanghai, the Zhen family's new status upon return to China after two decades of success in the United States leads to new ways of living and significant adjustments for the extended family. Tan uses multiple narrators to offer different perspectives about life in Shanghai. A special bracelet links the past to the present. Tan writes with skill and leads readers toward caring deeply for the lives of the complex characters she presents. At the same time, she provides clear descriptive language that makes the setting come alive for readers.</p> |  |
| <u>Things to Make and Break</u> | Tan, May-Lan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

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| <u>There's a Word for That</u> | Tanen, Sloane | *** | <u>8/5/19</u> | <p>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.</p> |  |
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The Death of Conservatism

Tanenhaus, Sam

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010

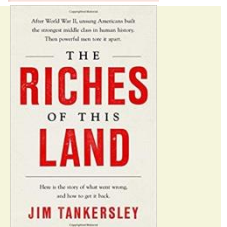


[The Riches of This Land, The Untold, True Story of America's Middle Class](#)

Tankersley, Jim

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

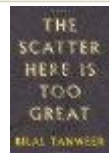




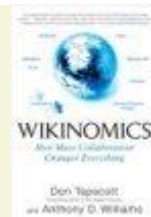


The Scatter Here Is Too Great

Tanweer, Bilal

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



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|---|--------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Move Fast and Break Things: How Facebook, Google, and Amazon Cornered Culture and Undermined Democracy</u> | Taplin, Jonathan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>The Hellfire Club</u> | Tapper, Jake | ***** | <u>7/24/18</u> | Fifties. I picked up Jake Tapper's novel titled, <u>The Hellfire Club</u> , out of curiosity about whether the CNN correspondent could write. I kept reading because Tapper tells a great Washington story, set in the 1950s, that was an ideal escape from today's toxic political environment. I especially enjoyed the finely written dialogue that rang true to my ear. I was thoroughly entertained by this novel. |  |
| Wikinomics | Tapscott, Don | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>The Naked Corporation: How the Age of Transparency Will Revolutionize Business</u> | Tapscott, Don and David Ticoll | *** | <u>Sep 04</u> | Barely. Timely topic with some interesting examples and models, but mostly repetitious and aggregated snippets from recent business books. |  |
| <u>The Goldfinch</u> | Tartt, Donna | ***** | <u>11/26/13</u> | Redemption. I often lose patience while reading a fat novel. I find myself selecting how many hundred pages could be jettisoned without losing much value. While Donna Tartt's novel, <u>The Goldfinch</u> , comes in at just under 800 pages, I never once found myself impatient or wondering which pages |  |

could be deleted easily. Tartt's plot kept me engaged from the opening crisis through the redemptive denouement. The protagonist narrator, Theo Decker, calmly relates his coming of age story from age 13 when an accident kills his mother, until about a dozen years later when his moral compass finds a true course and leads him to face the consequences of his past mistakes. The many other characters are all complex and interesting: fully fleshed out humans whose actions, like ours, are a mix of doing good and choosing a lesser path when expedient. Tartt uses a painting to hold the novel together, and that layer alone made the construction of this novel both interesting and enjoyable. I loved the plot and the characters, as Tartt's language brought me hours of reading pleasure.

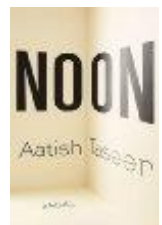
Pieces. I admit to being befuddled by Aatish Taseer's novel, Noon. If the four sections of the book make sense as a whole, I didn't get it. Each on its own seemed finely written and interesting, but my reaction when I finished the whole novel was: "huh?" The character holding together the four pieces is Rehan Tabassum. In the first chapter, he recalls the departure of his father from India to Pakistan. The second involves Rehan's relationship with his stepfather, a wealthy industrialist. The third chapter involves the reaction to a theft and the place of servants in Indian society. The final section is set in Pakistan. Throughout the book, Taseer presents episodes that highlight the contrasts in society. When I finished all the pieces, instead of a whole, I felt left with a recollection of anecdotes and pieces of a whole that left me blank and somewhat confused about what I had read. On the premise that others might see something here

Noon

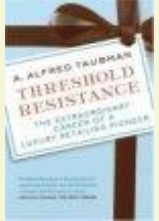
Taseer, Aatish

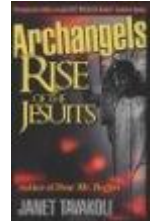
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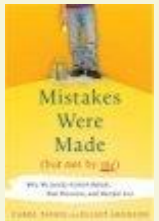
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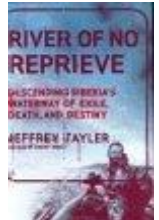



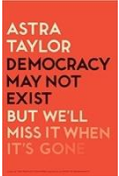
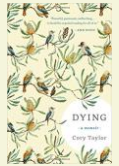
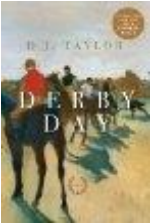

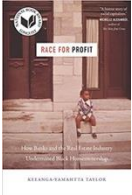
that I missed, I offer a mild recommendation for the novel, and suggest sampling an excerpt first.

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| Threshold Resistance | Taubman, A. Alfred | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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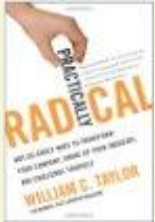
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| <u>Archangels: Rise of the Jesuits</u> | Tavakoli, Janet | *** | <u>12/27/13</u> | <p>Ingredients. Janet Tavakoli's debut novel, <u>Archangels: Rise of the Jesuits</u>, contains many of the ingredients for a successful thriller. For me, those ingredients weren't always harmonious. Tavakoli's previous books have all been non-fiction and in the financial sector. The parts of her novel that relate to money seemed spot on. Her knowledge of the Vatican provided another successful ingredient for this novel. Character development, plot and dialogue fell a little flat for me. For a thriller, I was willing to overlook those distractions, and read through to the end, finding some entertainment, but not enough to highly recommend this book to others.</p> |  |
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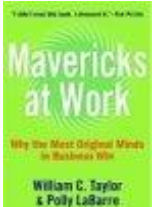
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| <u>Mistakes Were Made (But Not by Me): Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts</u> | Tavris, Carol and Elliot Aronson | **** | <u>Jan 08</u> | <p>Justification. Psychologists present solid research and readable examples and illustrations of why we justify our actions. Readers may not accept culpability more easily, but we can understand why we deceive ourselves and others.</p> |  |
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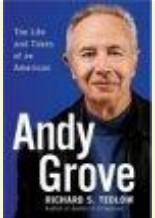
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| <u>River of No Reprieve</u> | Tayler, Jeffrey | *** | <u>Nov 06</u> | <p>Journey. Description of a raft journey along 2,400 miles of the Lena River and what the author and guide encountered as they reconstructed 17th century Cossack trips to annex Siberia for Ivan the Terrible.</p> |  |
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| An Unpunishable Crime | Taylor, Andrew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Democracy May Not Exist, But We'll Miss It When It's Gone | Taylor, Astra | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| Dying | Taylor, Cory | *** | 4/3/18 | Reflections. Preparation for one's expected death can focus the mind. Cory Taylor's beautifully written prose in her memoir titled, Dying , offers her focused reflections on disease, her full life and her journey toward death. Some readers will find a resonance with Taylor's recollections of family life. As her life began to contract, her memories become a constant companion, and these reflections are finely written. |  |
| Derby Day | Taylor, D.J. | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| The Count and the Confession | Taylor, John | * | Sep 02 | Tedious chronicle of true crime story with characters that are stranger than fiction, unlikable and behave in most unusual ways. |  |
| Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership | Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahatta | **** | 8/5/20 | Systemic. Readers of Keeanga-Yamahatta Taylor's book titled, Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership , will gain a deep understanding of systemic racism and its impact for Black American homeowners. Learn about how redlining worked, how people are exploited, and the long-term |  |

consequence of inequality in access to housing. There are human stories here alongside policy analysis. No matter how much you think you know about racial discrimination and predatory lending, this book will teach you a lot more.

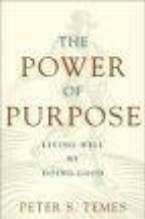

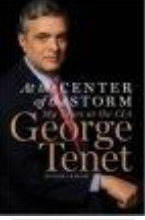

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| Practically Radical: Not-So-Crazy Ways to Transform Your Company, Shake Up Your Industry, and Challenge Yourself | Taylor, William C. | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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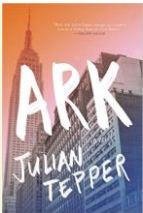
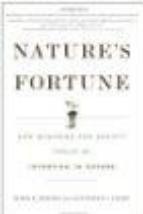
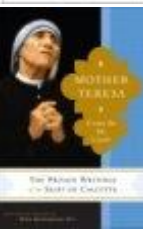
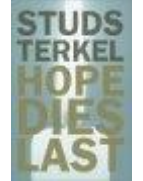

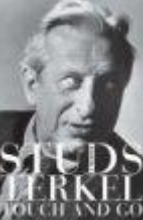
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| Mavericks at Work | Taylor, William C. and LaBarre, Polly | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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| Andy Grove | Tedlow, Richard | *** | Mar 07 | Unrelenting. A well-written biography of Intel and its successful former CEO Andy Grove by Harvard professor and historian. |  |
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| The Big Fat Surprise: Why Butter, Meat and Cheese Belong in a Healthy Diet | Teicholz, Nina | **** | 8/21/14 | Bias. Six decades of nutritional advice to eat a low fat diet represents a failed experiment, according to Nina Teicholz in her fascinating book, The Big Fat Surprise: Why Butter, Meat and Cheese Belong in a Healthy Diet . As an investigative journalist, Teicholz took a questioning approach as she researched where nutritional advice has come from and the science underlying that advice. She makes a convincing case that many of the studies were seriously flawed, and that our fear of saturated fats |  |
|--|----------------|------|-------------------------|---|---|

is unsubstantiated. If you find this counterintuitive, read the book and you're likely to be convinced by her research. Reducing fat in the diet led to increased carbohydrates, more sugar, and an increased risk of disease and weight gain. Devotees of the Atkins diet will find vindication in this book. After I read this book, I enjoyed an extra-thick marbled rib eye steak, finished with a pad of butter. Next up: bacon and eggs for breakfast, all items from the local farmers' market.

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|---|-----------------|--------|--|----------------------|---|
| The Power of Purpose | Temes, Peter S. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| The Broken Shore | Temple, Peter | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| At the Center of the Storm | Tenet, George | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>The Efficiency Paradox: What Big Data Can't Do</u> | Tenner, Edward | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

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|--|---------------------------------------|--------|------------------------|---|---|
| Ark | Tepper, Julian | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| Nature's Fortune: How Business and Society Thrive by Investing in Nature | Tercek, Mark R. and Jonathan S. Adams | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Come Be My Light | Teresa, Mother | *** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| Hope Dies Last: Keeping the Faith in Difficult Times | Terkel, Studs | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| The Spectator | Terkel, Studs | *** | | Studs' conversations are always enjoyable, even the second time around. |  |
| Touch and Go: A Memoir | Terkel, Studs | *** | May 08 | Memories. Terkel's writing style has the same rhythm as his speaking style, and it's easy to listen to and understand his presentation of his memories as a form of history, with lessons for all. |  |

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|---|--------------------|--------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Will the Circle Be Unbroken? Reflections on Death, Rebirth and Hunger for a Faith | Terkel, Studs | *** | May 02 | The master of oral history allows 62 people to tell the rest of us a thing or two about death and dying. |  |
| Men to Avoid in Art and Life | Tersigni, Nicole | **** | 9/22/20 | Mansplaining. For those readers whose attention span has been shortened because of anxiety and lifestyle changes as a result of the novel coronavirus, a book to consider is Nicole Tersigni's Men to Avoid in Art and Life . In fewer than one hundred pages, she pairs artwork with contemporary phrases and will deliver well-needed belly laughs. Many readers will want to share a page or more on Zoom or FaceTime with another reader who will appreciate the subjects, especially the mansplaining. If deadpan wit tickles your funnybone, be sure to read this book. |  |
| Expert Political Judgment | Tetlock, Philip E. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know? | Tetlock, Philip E. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| Fool's Gold: How the Bold Dream of a Small Tribe at J.P. Morgan Was Corrupted | Tett, Gillian | **** | 8/22/09 | Context. Don't let the inflammatory title of Gillian Tett's new book lead you to think that this is a lightweight, quickly written diatribe about the financial crisis. It must have been the publisher who thought more sales would come from the title, Fool's Gold: How the Bold Dream of a Small Tribe |  |

by Wall Street Greed and Unleashed a Catastrophe

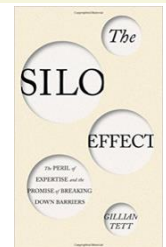
at J.P. Morgan Was Corrupted by Wall Street Greed and Unleashed a Catastrophe. Tett writes for the *Financial Times*, and Fool's Gold is a thoughtful and engaging history of the creation and spread of credit derivatives. A group of talented J.P. Morgan bankers created credit derivatives, and managed them in the context of the credit culture of that company. One of Tett's eureka insights is that the Morgan credit experts had never worked anywhere else, and couldn't imagine that their competitors had such weak credit controls over their business. It was those weak credit controls that led to disaster. Among the recent books about the financial crisis, this focus on the history and spread of credit derivatives is one of the best.

The Silo Effect: The Peril of Expertise and the Promise of Breaking Down Barriers

Tett, Gillian

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.

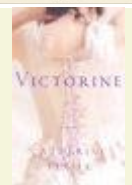


Victorine

Texter, Catherine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004

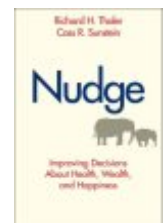


Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness

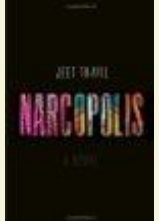

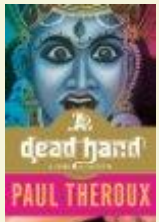
Thaler, Richard H. and Cass R. Sunstein

5/25/09

Defaults. I read half of Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein's collaboration, Nudge, a few months ago. Then I set it aside, and finished it up recently. It's possible that the pause made me like the book even more. Just when I thought I had read enough, and got their point, I stopped reading. After I returned, I learned more that I thought I knew, and found them even more clever as a result of reading Nudge to the end. The authors observed that humans make decisions in ways different from that expected



by economists, or the way econs think they would be made to optimize outcomes. The path of least resistance makes a world of difference, so default choices matter a lot. An expectation of error can also lead to improved decision making because it turns out that humans aren't great decision makers. A nudge is anything that influences our choices, so well constructed nudges can produce better outcomes. These University of Chicago professors have written a cogent, thoughtful and entertaining book about an important subject, and chances are any reader will come away from the book with an increased thoughtfulness about decision making.

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|---|--|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Narcopolis | Thayil, Jeet | Unread | | I got about 25 pages into this and never quite became engaged. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>Donald Trump and His Assault on Truth: The President's Falsehoods, Misleading Claims and Flat-Out Lies</u> | The Washington Post Fact Checker Staff | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>A Dead Hand</u> | Theroux, Paul | ** | <u>2/12/10</u> | Descriptive. <u>A Dead Hand</u> is Paul Theroux's latest novel, and here he dabbles into the mystery genre, with mixed results. His vivid descriptive language enlivens the story, but the novel didn't seem to me to have enough of the conventions of a fine mystery to bring satisfaction. Most of the clues seemed obvious, and the progression of the story was often too predictable. For readers who thrive on feeling one is actually in an unfamiliar place that comes to life through fine language, <u>A Dead Hand</u> will bring |  |

some reading pleasure. For mystery lovers, [A Dead Hand](#) provides more appetizer than entrée.

Blinking Light

Theroux, Paul

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



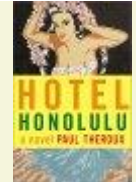
[Hotel Honolulu](#)

Theroux, Paul

*

[06/01](#)

Dreary and sad stories of life in Paradise Lost.

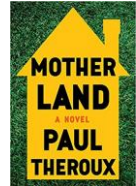


[Mother Land](#)

Theroux, Paul

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

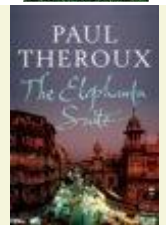


The Elephanta Suite

Theroux, Paul

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

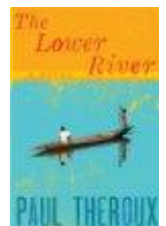


[The Lower River](#)


Theroux, Paul

[11/23/12](#)

Aid. Things are often not as they appear in Paul Theroux's novel, [The Lower River](#). Spend a few hours with protagonist Ellis Hock in Malawi and you'll feel better about your life, no matter how unhappy you may be, or how much you struggle. Hock has left behind his unhappy Massachusetts life in his early sixties and returns to a place where he had found happiness four decades earlier. With a plan to help the people of the remote and desolate Lower River, Hock finds himself powerless and trapped. Theroux presents a dark side of philanthropy that shows how aid may not always be



helpful. The plot twists are complex and entertaining, and Theroux's descriptions of the setting provide a vivid picture of the environment, especially if you like snakes.

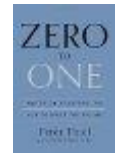
| | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| The Stranger at the Palazzo d'Oro and Other Stories | Theroux, Paul | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
|---|---------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|

[Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future](#)

Thiel, Peter and Blake Masters

[1/23/15](#)

Start. If you're starting a business, or trying to accelerate the growth of one, reading Peter Thiel's book, [Zero to One](#), won't make the job any easier, but you'll probably feel better and more motivated to go full steam ahead. As a serial entrepreneur and successful investor, Thiel has the track record to deserve a listening audience for what he has to say. Take a few minutes to hear his perspective, then get back to work.



[Do Not Say We Have Nothing](#)

Thien, Madeline

[2/3/17](#)

Music. Sometimes fiction can transport readers to unfamiliar places and there to discover that what appears to be different may be universal. In her novel titled, [Do Not Say We Have Nothing](#), Madeline Thien brings key milestones in life in China over the past five decades to life through two families and their love of music. Events like the Cultural Revolution and the Tiananamen Square Protests take on a different level of understanding when viewed through the eyes of characters who we come to know as people just like us. Music has been called the universal language, and Thien uses that framework as a way to draw us into families and characters we care about, into politics that are divisive and harmful, and into a story that is complex on many levels. Patient readers are rewarded with insights about creativity and freedom that are universal.



Dogs at the Perimeter

Thien, Madeline

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

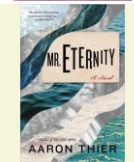


Mr. Eternity

Thier, Aaron

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.

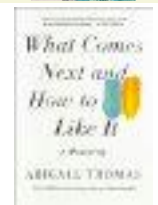


What Comes Next and How to Like It

Thomas, Abigail

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



Liar's Candle

Thomas, August

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

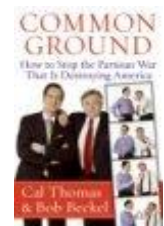


Common Ground: How to Stop the Partisan War That Is Destroying America

Thomas, Cal and Bob Beckel

Apr 08

Cooperation. USA Today columnists collaborate on a prescription to move from partisan rhetoric and politics as usual toward the alignment around principles that can do the most good for the greatest number of people.

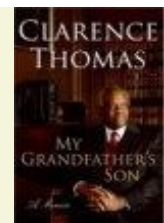


My Grandfather's Son: A Memoir

Thomas, Clarence

Dec 07

Bitter. Unusual memoir covers not only the high points of life, but also the bitterness from so often not fitting in, anger, drinking problems, and broken relationships.



Deluxe: How
Luxury Lost Its
Luster

Thomas, Dana

Oct 07

Cachet. Newsweek's Paris correspondent examines how luxury goods have become mass market thanks to corporate ownership, globalization and marketing.

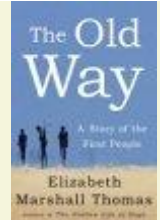


The Old Way

Thomas,
Elizabeth
Marshall

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

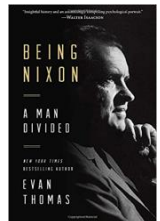






Being Nixon: A
Man Divided

Thomas, Evan

8/4/15

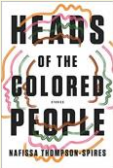
Opaque. The standard by which I measure biographers of United States presidents is Robert Caro and his fine work on making sense of Lyndon Johnson by taking a clear point of view on the subject. I had high expectations upon opening Evan Thomas' biography of the enigmatic Richard Nixon titled, Being Nixon: A Man Divided. I kept waiting for Thomas to sort out Nixon in a way that would answer questions. I had the sense that Thomas came away from this project with many unanswered questions, and was as divided as the subject when it comes to unresolved contradictions in behavior and action. I enjoyed this book best when it enhanced some aspects of Nixon's personal life. I liked his interest in the movies, and the ways in which Nixon played music loudly, especially his favorite *Victory at Sea* album. Readers who love politics are those most likely to enjoy reading this book. For those expecting greater clarity about Nixon, there are tidbits here, but RN remains opaque even after 600 pages.



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|--|---------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>First: Sandra Day O'Connor</u> | Thomas, Evan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| Watchdogs of Democracy? | Thomas, Helen | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>52 McGs.: The Best Obituaries from Legendary New York Times Writer Robert Mc G. Thomas, Jr.</u> | Thomas, Jr., Robert Mc G. | *** | <u>Feb 02</u> | Well-written, offbeat obits lead reader toward understanding deeper truths about life and human nature. |  |
| <u>We Are Not Ourselves</u> | Thomas, Matthew | ***** | <u>2/18/15</u> | <p>Aspiration. I so fell under the spell of Matthew Thomas' fine writing in his debut novel titled, <u>We Are Not Ourselves</u>, that the six hundred plus pages seemed to go by in an instant. The novel is set in Queens and in suburban New York City, which Thomas presents with clarity and insight. Protagonist Eileen Tumulty Leary was born to Irish immigrant parents in 1941. Thomas exposes Eileen's strong aspirations as he draws readers into the many ups and downs of contemporary life. Eileen's husband, Ed, has ambitions that differ from hers, and their son, Connell, may or may not live up to the aspirations of himself and his parents. A fine novel presents the truth of our human condition in ways that draw us into the lives of others to help us understand better the reality of our own lives. I rarely award a top rating to a debut novel, and I often feel that long novels could improve by judicious editing, but this well-written</p> |  |

book is one of the finest I've read in recent years and I enjoyed reading every page.

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|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Man Gone Down</u> | Thomas, Michael | *** | <u>Apr 08</u> | <p>Intense. Debut novel presents the ruminations of a narrator over four days during one summer of his discontent. Skilled writing manages the intensity with precision.</p> |  |
| <u>Fixers</u> | Thomas, Michael M. | ***** | <u>8/26/16</u> | <p>Clever. Who thought that a novel about a Wall Street and Washington conspiracy involving political fixing and easy treatment for executives during the financial crisis would be entertaining? I was thoroughly entertained by Michael Thomas's novel titled, <u>Fixers</u>. Thomas is a former Lehman Brothers partner (way back) and he knows more than enough about finance and Wall Street to present lots of accurate information while not diminishing the entertainment value of the novel. He used great name changes, often humorous ones, to thinly disguise some individuals on whom certain characters were based. While the diary form of the prose can be tedious and a bit didactic, this led to more exposition than dialogue and worked fine for the author's purposes. If you're far enough past the financial crisis for you to imagine being entertained by events from that time, be sure to read this novel. Anyone still angry might be more enraged than entertained.</p> |  |
| <u>Bridge</u> | Thomas, Robert | ***** | <u>1/23/15</u> | <p>Mind. There are 56 short and shorter connected stories in a new book by Robert Thomas titled, <u>Bridge</u>. Protagonist Alice shares the details of her life with us and the exposure of her troubled mind was the highlight of the book. Packed with wit, insight, and finely written prose, I enjoyed this book from beginning to end. There can seem to be madness inside Alice's mind, but then she comes out with a line that takes one back to reassess this</p> |  |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | <p>character. Readers who don't have a lot of time to read, and want every word to count are those most likely to enjoy this finely written book in which there are no wasted words.</p> | |
| <u>The Midwife's Tale</u> | Thomas, Samuel | **** | <u>2/4/13</u> | <p>Lively. I zipped through Sam Thomas' debut novel, <u>The Midwife's Tale</u>, faster than my usual quick reading pace. Thomas drew me in immediately with rapid plot momentum. Historical fiction can become plodding at times, but this novel set during the English civil wars, was lively from beginning to end. Any male novelist, especially in a debut, can create female characters who come across as incomplete, or less fully realized. Protagonist Lady Bridget Hodgson, is the midwife from the title, and Thomas creates her as an interesting, complex, and fully formed character. Supporting characters are also well developed, and the setting, the siege of York, allows readers to appreciate this history: a time of people with divided political loyalties living side by side. Readers who like historical fiction and those willing to give a try to first time novelists are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p> |  |
| <u>Heads of the Colored People</u> | Thompson-Spires, Nafissa | **** | <u>9/12/18</u> | <p>Identity. A collection of short stories by Nafissa Thompson-Spires is titled, <u>Heads of the Colored People</u>. The stories are dark, funny, poignant and finely written. Thompson-Spires explores identity and vulnerability with great skill. She deals with the challenge of social media and violence and just what it means to be a person of color living in the United States today. There's a blend of head and heart in each of these stories, and Thompson-Spires has insight into deep wisdom and a range of strong emotions. I enjoyed each story in this finely written collection.</p> |  |

City Boy

Thompson, Jean

Dec 04

Yup. Well-crafted novel of the deteriorating relationship between two unappealing urban Chicago yuppies.



The Humanity Project

Thompson, Jean

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

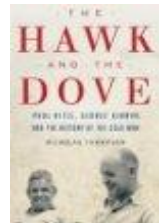


Containment. Nicholas Thompson's new book, The Hawk and the Dove, presents a riveting account of the intersecting lives of George Kennan and Paul Nitze. Thompson is Nitze's grandson, and had access to personal papers not previously available, and the Kennan family also gave him broad access to materials. I knew a lot about both individuals prior to reading The Hawk and the Dove, and was never bored when I read what I already knew, and I enjoyed reading about many things I had not known. Kennan's containment strategy in relation to the Soviet Union provided the intellectual basis for America's approach to the Cold War. Nitze took Kennan's ideas and militarized them. Kennan was the outsider and Nitze the bureaucrat; Kennan the Dove and Nitze the Hawk. With great sensitivity and balance, Thompson concludes that at various times, both Kennan and Nitze were right. These men were giants of their time, and this account of their lives will enlighten those readers with any interest in world affairs.

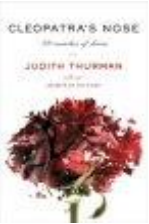



The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War

Thompson, Nicholas

11/7/09



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|---|----------------|------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Communion Town</u> | Thompson, Sam | *** | <u>5/9/14</u> | <p>Differences. There's a real show-off quality to the writing virtuosity that Sam Thompson displays in <u>Communion Town</u>. If when you visit art galleries, you're the one who spends long periods of time in front of a single work of art to appreciate all you possibly can, the ten stories in this book are perfect for you. Don't read it as I did, in two sittings. Instead, read one story a week slowly and carefully to appreciate the differences from one to another. I read this too quickly, and often didn't appreciate how all the varying perspectives and writing styles were both individually well-crafted and contributed to an integrated whole.</p> |  |
| <u>Unthinkable: An Extraordinary Journey Through the World's Strangest Brains</u> | Thomson, Helen | **** | <u>10/10/19</u> | <p>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.</p> |  |
| <u>Night of Fire</u> | Thubron, Colin | **** | <u>10/18/17</u> | <p>Images. Colin Thubron uses the structure of an apartment building and the residents who live separately in some ways and are together in others for his novel titled, <u>Night of Fire</u>. Six tenants and their landlord reveal themselves and their memories as the building in which they sleep burns. Thubron writes with great skill and explores the nature of our stories and the ways in which we know our neighbors and the ways in which we remain strangers. Readers who enjoy finely written</p> |  |

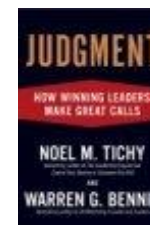
| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel. | |
| Cleopatra's Nose: 39 Varieties of Desire | Thurman, Judith | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| Fortune Favors the Bold: What We Must Do to Build a New and Lasting Global Prosperity | Thurow, Lester C. | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2004 |  |
| The Last Hunger Season: A Year in an African Farm Community on the Brink of Change | Thurow, Roger | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>The Toaster Project: Or a Heroic Attempt to Build a Simple Electric Appliance from Scratch</u> | Thwaites, Thomas | *** | <u>8/6/12</u> | Art. Two different audiences are likely to enjoy Thomas Thwaites' clever book, <u>The Toaster Project</u> : people who think when they see an object that they could replicate it, and those whose projects seem to turn out like the toaster on the cover of this book. This entertaining book describes the process by which Thwaites builds a working toaster from scratch over the course of nine months, at a cost considerably higher than what we would pay for a unit that was mass produced. This is a funky and fun work of art that is like nothing else I've read. |  |

Judgment: How Winning Leaders Make Great Calls

Tichy, Noel M. and Warren Bennis

Apr 08

Framework. Leadership experts describe an approach to three key areas for judgment: people, strategy and crisis. In addition to their approach, they use many examples, and include a handbook should you want to pursue their recommendations.



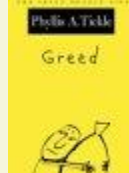
Greed

Tickle, Phyllis A.

*

Sep 04

Imagistic. Using artwork to illustrate how the portrayal of greed has evolved over 2,000 years should have made it easier to understand the author's premises. Instead,

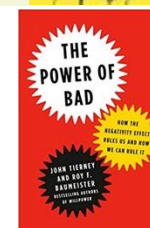


The Power of Bad: How the Negativity Effect Rules Us and How We Can Rule It

Tierney, John and Roy F. Baumeister

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



The Good Thief

Tinti, Hannah

Dec 08

Waif. Worthy debut novel set in 19th century New England packed with the adventures and perils of an orphan after he departs the orphanage.

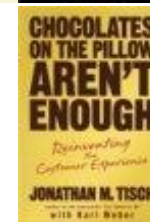


Chocolates on the Pillow Aren't Enough

Tisch, Jonathan M.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

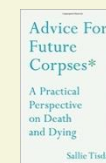


Advice for Future Corpses (and Those Who Love Them): A Practical Perspective on

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



Death and Dying

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.

Deep Down Dark: The Untold Stories of 33 Men Buried in a Chilean Mine, and the Miracle That Set Them Free

Tobar, Hector

12/27/14

Compelling. Any writer could have presented the story of the Chilean miners trapped for two months. Thanks to the fine writing of Hector Tobar in Deep Down Dark, a compelling story becomes compassionate and insightful. Tobar presents the individual miners highlighting their uniqueness and complexity, and brings readers into their lives above and underground. He presents just enough about the families and the mining company to provide a context for the situation. The core of the book presents the miners as they are trapped awaiting rescue. Most readers will find this account to be compelling reading.

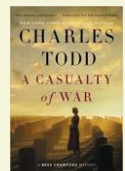


A Casualty of War

Todd, Charles

3/9/18

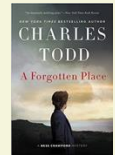
Guns. The mother-son writing team named Charles Todd have brought nurse Bess Crawford back for the ninth installment in this series set during World War I. In the novel titled, A Casualty of War, Bess has met Captain Alan Travis, and she becomes caught up in a predicament as World War I comes to a close. Guns are involved. Most of the action in the novel takes place in England where Bess has returned on leave before returning to France to tend to soldiers who are still at or near the battlefields. The plot is interesting and complex, the characters are finely drawn, and the story is engaging. Fans of the series will be delighted to join



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| | | | the competent Bess in her latest exploits, and new readers can start here or anywhere to enjoy this series. | |
| <u>A Cruel Deception</u> | Todd, Charles | **** | <p><u>2/14/20</u></p> <p>Paris. The eleventh Bess Crawford novel by the writing duo called Charles Todd is titled, <u>A Cruel Deception</u>. This time out, the Great War has wound down, and the need for nurses has diminished. Bess remains conflicted about her future when Matron at The Queen Alexandra's asks her to go to Paris on a personal mission regarding Matron's son, Lawrence. Bess finds the man abusing laudanum, and AWOL from his job at the Peace Conference. Competent and diligent as always, Bess investigates what has troubled Lawrence, and her adventures in Paris and environs are exciting and dangerous. Fans of the series, and anyone who likes historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>A Divided Loyalty</u> | Todd, Charles | **** | <p><u>3/6/20</u></p> <p>Twists. The twenty-second installment in the Inspector Ian Rutledge mystery series by the writing team named Charles Todd is a novel titled, <u>A Divided Loyalty</u>. Fans of historical crime fiction and this series will love the twists throughout this installment as well as the complexity of the case and the continued development of the complex detective as a troubled and talented person. Despite the willingness of the chief inspector to close a cold case that Rutledge has worked on, the final few details to wrap up lead to a very different outcome. Any worker whose boss never seems to recognize talent and success will find a lot in common with Inspector Rutledge.</p> |  |
| <u>A Fine Summer's Day</u> | Todd, Charles | **** | <p><u>3/13/15</u></p> <p>Run-up. Fans of fictional series often clamor for an expanded backstory about the protagonist. In the seventeenth installment of the Ian Rutledge series by Charles Todd, those readers are rewarded. In a novel titled, <u>A Fine Summer's Day</u>, Todd presents Rutledge in 1914 and the run-up to World</p> |  |

War I. The title refers to the pleasant day in June when Rutledge is poised to propose marriage. Between that day in June and the guns of war in August, Rutledge doggedly pursues a case that will provide great entertainment both to loyal readers and to anyone who loves crime fiction. Themes of coercion and love for others weave in and out of the narrative and provide a backdrop for the duty of Rutledge to his job and to his country.

Outsiders. The tenth book in the Bess Crawford mystery series by the mother-son writing team called Charles Todd is set in Wales and titled, [A Forgotten Place](#). While the World War has ended, Bess' nursing work continues. After caring for a group of wounded men from Wales, Bess becomes concerned for their survival and reentry to society, since they may not find jobs. While on leave, she follows up on a letter from Captain Williams, and tracks him down in a remote village in Wales where he is living with his widowed sister-in-law, causing tongue wagging in this secretive community that considers him an unwelcome outsider. Bess finds herself stranded in Wales where there is a murderer at large. Excitement follows. Fans of mysteries and this series are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel.



[A Forgotten Place](#)

Todd, Charles

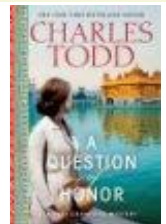
[11/17/18](#)

A Question of Honor

Todd, Charles

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.

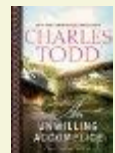


[An Unwilling Accomplice](#)

Todd, Charles

[8/26/14](#)

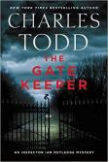
Reputation. The sixth Bess Crawford novel by Charles Todd is titled, [An Unwilling Accomplice](#). There are great plot twists in this very satisfying mystery. Bess' reputation is sullied when a soldier under her nursing care goes AWOL. She decides to



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| | | | | search for him, and the plot revolves around how that search leads her to more trouble. Readers who enjoy character-driven mysteries with plot complications are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel. | |
| <u>Hunting Shadows</u> | Todd, Charles | ***** | <u>6/27/14</u> | <p>Justice. The sixteenth novel by Charles Todd featuring Ian Rutledge of Scotland Yard is titled <u>Hunting Shadows</u> and is set in 1920. Rutledge is eager to get out of London, especially to avoid the impatient acting chief superintendent. Two murders within two weeks in the Fen country represent an unusual event, and the assistance of Scotland Yard is needed. Rutledge begins the case literally in the fog, when he loses his way in a heavy mist while trying to get to his first destination. The case proceeds at a moderate pace, and Rutledge scrambles to figure things out quickly to keep the superintendent happy and to bring the murderer to justice. Fans of the series will love this installment, and any reader who likes character based crime fiction will find something to like in this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>No Shred of Evidence</u> | Todd, Charles | ***** | <u>6/24/16</u> | <p>Motivation. The eighteenth novel in the Inspector Ian Rutledge series by Charles Todd is titled, <u>No Shred of Evidence</u>. Fans of crime fiction may become impatient with the slow plot momentum. Fans of Rutledge will enjoy the ways in which he deploys his skills. Patient readers will be rewarded with a finely written police procedural that explores motivation from multiple aspects. I became so accustomed to the moderate pace that it came as a surprise when all the pieces came together.</p> |  |
| <u>Proof of Guilt</u> | Todd, Charles | ***** | <u>3/25/13</u> | <p>Pursuit. Fans of detective fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading Charles Todd's latest novel featuring Inspector Ian Rutledge titled <u>Proof of Guilt</u>. Set in 1920s England, this Scotland Yard inspector finds himself micromanaged by the Acting Chief Superintendent as he pursues leads in</p> |  |

a murder case. Todd provides ample characters to keep a reader's brain engaged, and just enough red herrings to have readers consider alternative solutions. Despite those trying to thwart his efforts, Rutledge remains in dogged pursuit of the criminal. This novel didn't make my heart beat fast or keep me up late at night to finish reading it, but I found the pacing appropriate and I was well entertained by this novel.

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| <u>Racing the Devil</u> | Todd, Charles | **** | <u>1/4/18</u> | <p>Complex. Readers who enjoy crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading the 19th Ian Rutledge novel by Charles Todd titled, <u>Racing the Devil</u>. Slow and steady exposition takes the action from a promise made by English officers to meet again if they survive World War I to accidents and murder back home in England. As Inspector Rutledge delves into the complex case, secrets are revealed and the truth is uncovered.</p> |  |
| <u>The Black Ascot</u> | Todd, Charles | **** | <u>8/27/19</u> | <p>Hiding. Inspector Ian Rutledge is back and he's breaking more Scotland Yard rules in the novel by Charles Todd titled, <u>The Black Ascot</u>. 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.</p> |  |
| <u>The Confession</u> | Todd, Charles | **** | <u>7/16/12</u> | <p>Identity. While <u>The Confession</u> is the fourteenth novel in a series featuring Scotland Yard Inspector Ian Rutledge by Charles Todd and his mother, Caroline Todd, it was my first. I was hooked. The protagonist is well-drawn, the plot required my mental engagement, and the setting in post-World</p> |  |

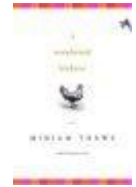
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| | | | | <p>War I England seemed atmospheric. The puzzle in this case involves identity, and Rutledge proceeds with diligence and sensitivity to get to the bottom of things. Readers who like crime fiction are those most likely to enjoy this one.</p> | |
| The Gate Keeper | Todd, Charles | **** | 5/3/18 | <p>Restless. The twentieth installment of the Inspector Ian Rutledge series by the mother-son writing team named Charles Todd is titled, The Gate Keeper. After Ian's sister, Frances, weds and departs on her honeymoon, a restless Rutledge leaves London and takes an aimless drive. On a desolate road in Suffolk, he comes on the scene of a woman standing outside a car in the middle of the road with her bloody hands over a man lying on the ground. Despite having left his Scotland Yard credentials at home and being considered a murder suspect himself, Rutledge injects himself into a complicated investigation that will delight most lovers of crime fiction.</p> |  |
| The Shattered Tree | Todd, Charles | **** | 11/27/16 | <p>Recuperation. The eighth novel in the Bess Crawford mystery series by Charles Todd is titled, The Shattered Tree. Set in 1918, Bess is wounded while tending to soldiers on a battlefield in France. She is sent to Paris to recuperate. Instead of resting, Bess investigates something that has been bugging her since shortly before her injury. An officer arrived on a stretcher at her aid station, exhausted and with multiple wounds, wearing a tattered French uniform. When he talked in his sleep, the language he spoke was German. With the help of an American officer in Paris, Bess tries to find the mysterious wounded officer to find out his story and if he might be a spy. Fans of historical mystery novels and of this series are those most likely to enjoy reading this book.</p> |  |

A Complicated Kindness

Toews, Miriam

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

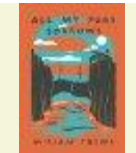


All My Puny Sorrows

Toews, Miriam

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

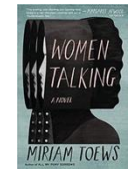


Women Talking

Toews, Miriam

2/7/20

Response. We know the situation that led to the Mennonite women coming together to plan their future: they have realized that over the past two years they were drugged and raped by men in their isolated community. The novel titled, Women Talking, by Miriam Toews takes the true story of a community of women, and offers a fictional entry in the ways in which women relate to each other, take control of their loves, and exert power. There are different viewpoints expressed among the women gathered to consider their response: stay or leave; fight or flee. Toews writes with insight, sensitivity and wit as the resilience of the women in the novel show readers a path in life that may resonate for many.



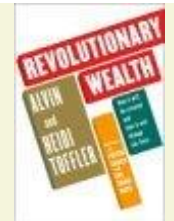
Revolutionary Wealth

Toffler, Alvin and Heidi

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July 06

Snippets. Repetitive from earlier works, replete with jargon and made up words, but still useful for thinking in new and different ways about the future.

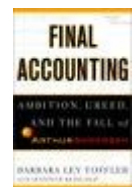


Final Accounting: Ambition, Greed, and the Fall of Arthur Andersen

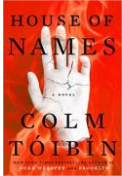
Toffler, Barbara Ley

July 03

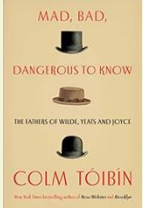
Assimilated. Business ethics professor joins Andersen, becomes assimilated by their culture, and compromises her values. Great inside view of Andersen, and thought provoking about whether we share the values of those with whom we work.



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|---------------------------------|--------------|-----|---|---|
| <u>Brooklyn</u> | Toibin, Colm | *** | <p><u>6/14/09</u></p> <p>Loyalty. Colm Toibin's new novel, <u>Brooklyn</u>, presents the story of Eilis Lacey, who leaves the poor economy in Enniscorthy, Ireland, for the chance of a better life in Brooklyn. While many writers have presented stories like this in both fiction and non-fiction forms, Toibin does something special on the pages of <u>Brooklyn</u>. Toibin portrays Eilis in four major scenes: Enniscorthy, Brooklyn, Enniscorthy and her return to Brooklyn. In each part, Eilis strives to fit in and thrive, and she extends loyalty in many relationships. She's torn between Ireland and America and between personal relationships in both places. Her struggle strikes deep emotional cords that are recognizable, and never sentimental or superficial. I came to care deeply about Eilis and her struggles, and wanted her to find what would be right for her to bring happiness to her life. Toibin's writing is consistently fine: intense, descriptive, concise. If it is true that one can't go home again, how does one create a new home and not feel like a foreigner who pines for a real home? Toibin allows Eilis to grow and mature on the pages of <u>Brooklyn</u>, providing a chance for readers to reflect on what loyalty means and how finding the right people and places makes a world of difference.</p> |  |
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| <u>House of Names</u> | Toibin, Colm | **** | <p><u>12/13/18</u></p> <p>Murder. What better escape from our violent times than a visit to the Greeks and the violence that envelops the family of Agamemnon. Colm Toibin leads readers from murder to murder in his novel titled, <u>House of Names</u>. Every reader familiar with the stories from Aeschylus and others will feel a freshness with Toibin's immersion into these myths. He sends readers to ancient Greece in the middle of revenge killings and explores the human psyche with precision. Toibin is speaking to our</p> |  |
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times through this ancient story told in a fresh way in finely written prose.

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| <u>Mad, Bad, Dangerous to Know: The Fathers of Wilde, Yeats and Joyce</u> | Toibin, Colm | **** | <u>11/9/19</u> | <p>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, <u>Mad, Bad, Dangerous to Know: The Fathers of Wilde, Yeats and Joyce</u>, 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.</p> |  |
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Mothers and Sons

Toibin, Colm

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

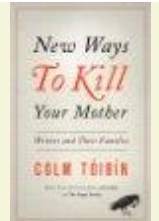


New Ways to Kill Your Mother: Writers and Their Families

Toibin, Colm

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

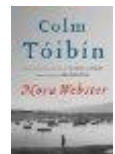


[Nora Webster](#)

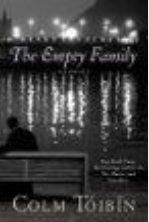
Toibin, Colm


[12/15/14](#)

Grief. The depth of character in the title character of Colm Toibin's novel, [Nora Webster](#), develops from the first page of the novel and continues to the end. Using atmospheric descriptive language, Toibin presents Nora and her life as she grieves the death of her husband. I found that the more closely



I read and absorbed Toibin's choice of words, the more deeply I came to understand Nora and her complexity. The motif about music developed in a similar deliberate way: leading toward resolution and harmony. Those readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction are those most likely to appreciate this novel.

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|---|--------------|------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Empty Family</u> | Toibin, Colm | **** | <u>2/11/11</u> | <p>Taut. Colm Toibin wastes no words in the nine stories of his collection, <u>The Empty Family</u>. He brings characters to life with impressive efficiency, and places them in situations and relationships that unveil the complexities of love and loss and longing. Fans of the short story genre will appreciate the skill displayed in these stories, and most readers will find the stories engaging, especially because of his lyrical and precise writing. Readers of Toibin's novels may find the shift in form leaves one wanting more, or asking "is that all there is?" after completing a story. For those who want more, re-read one of these stories, or revisit one of his novels. Toibin's considerable talent is worth a reader's time.</p> |  |
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| <u>The Testament of Mary</u> | Toibin, Colm | **** | <u>11/26/12</u> | <p>Viewpoint. Of the many thousands of pages ever written about the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, none are quite like those in a novella from Colm Toibin titled, <u>The Testament of Mary</u>. After I finished the book, I thought about the way a friend once asked and answered as follows: "Did you ever wonder why the Madonna has a wistful look on her face in all the depictions of mother and child in art? It's because she was thinking as she looked at the baby Jesus, 'I was hoping for a girl.'" If you don't find that statement offensive, this book is right up your alley. Toibin offers a viewpoint of what Mary may have thought late in her life. As a witness to the death of her son, Toibin has her feeling that his death was not worth it. From page 80: "I was</p> |  |
|--|--------------|------|---------------------------------|--|---|

there,' I said. 'I fled before it was over but if you want witnesses then I am one and I can tell you now, when you say that he redeemed the world, I will say that it was not worth it. It was not worth it.'" The humanity of a mother whom we would all recognize comes through on the pages of this novella. Toibin's writing is superb, whether you agree with his viewpoint or not.

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| <u>On Elizabeth Bishop</u> | Tóibín, Colm | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>Flights</u> | Tokaczuk, Olga | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead</u> | Tokarczuk, Olga | ***** | <u>1/10/20</u> | Blake. Every reader knows (or is) a character like Janina Duszejko, the protagonist of Olga Tokarczuk's novel titled, <u>Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead</u> . On some pages, Janina's narration makes me laugh. I observe her translation of William Blake on another page (the book's title comes from Blake), and step back several paces at her reaction to the death of her neighbor, whom she calls Big Foot. On some pages, I questioned her sanity, or checked in to verify my own. Janina loves animals more than people and her interactions with humans reflect that, while her cogent observations reveal her assessment of their characters. I'm a big fan of listening to eccentric voices, and not underestimating them. When more neighbors turn up dead, Janina writes to the police that the animals are pursuing justice. This novel is a perfectly paced thriller filled with superb writing and deep insight into human nature. |  |

Trick Mirror:
Reflections on
Self-Delusion

Tolentino, Jia

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



The Children of
Hurin

Tolkien, J.R.R.

July 07

Dark. The first age of middle-earth is presented through the sorrow-packed and tragic story of the children of a great warrior. Fantasy provides a backdrop for insights into our human condition.

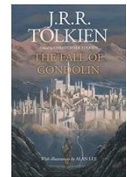


The Fall of
Gondolin

Tolkien, J.R.R.

9/24/18

Versions. During his lifetime, J.R.R. Tolkien produced multiple versions of fragmented stories that remained incomplete at the time of his death. His son and literary executor, Christopher Tolkien, has assembled versions of one of those stories in a book titled, The Fall of Gondolin. I might have enjoyed each version of this story fifty years ago at the time I first read *The Lord of the Rings*. Today, I found myself gaining an increased understanding of the plight of a literary executor going over lots of pages of unfinished works and trying to make sense of it all. This is likely to be the last work by Tolkien to be published, so longtime fans are those readers most likely to enjoy reading every fragment that adds to the world of Tolkien.

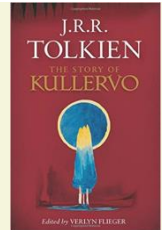


The Story of
Kullervo

Tolkien, J.R.R.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.

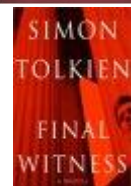


Final Witness

Tolkien, Simon

Mar 03

Inheritance. Yes, J.R.R. Tolkien's grandson can write. Come to the Old Bailey and find a trial, an interesting set of characters, well-crafted plot and good dialogue.



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|---|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Orders from Berlin</u> | Tolkien, Simon | **** | <u>2/22/13</u> | <p>Confidence. Readers who like character-driven suspense novels are those most likely to enjoy Simon Tolkien's <u>Orders from Berlin</u>. This is Tolkien's third novel to feature Detective Inspector William Trave, and in this outing, Trave's skills are put to the test as he places himself at professional risk to get to the bottom of the case. Set in 1940s England, the story involves a plot to kill Churchill, directed from Berlin. MI6 is in the middle of something and Chief Inspector Quaid is confident about a guilty suspect. The real confidence should be placed in Trave's talent. The suspense makes for rapid reading, although the mystery gets revealed earlier than will satisfy some readers. I enjoyed the novel and ended the book quite satisfied.</p> |  |
| The King of Diamonds | Tolkien, Simon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>NK3</u> | Tolkin, Michael | **** | <u>4/12/17</u> | <p>Control. Readers who enjoy dystopian fiction are those most likely to get lots of reading pleasure from Michael Tolkin's novel titled, <u>NK3</u>. Set in Los Angeles in the near future, the novel explores a closed community dealing with the aftermath of a virus that triggered forgetfulness and severed connections to the past. Skills necessary to maintain a quality of life have been lost. In rebuilding society following this catastrophe, several individuals have taken control and they established fences, rituals and myths to survive and to recreate some semblance of order. The novel explores the behavior of a large cast of characters and the ways in which power is exercised. Here's a quote from p. 165 that I found interesting: "You can't do things just the way chief says. You have to</p> |  |

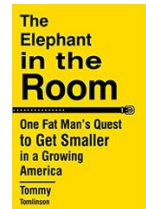
do what he means even if he doesn't know that what he says isn't what he should mean.' Royce Hall closed his eyes to concentrate. 'Say that again.'" If that's too close to current reality for you, take a pass on this novel. If you're intrigued, and if you enjoy dystopian novels, you're likely to enjoy reading this one.

[The Elephant in the Room: One Fat Man's Quest to Get Smaller in a Growing America](#)

Tomlinson, Tommy

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

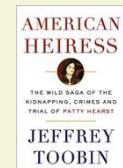


[American Heiress: The Wild Saga of the Kidnapping, Crimes and Trial of Patty Hearst](#)

Toobin, Jeffrey

[10/12/16](#)

Complexity. I fully expected to read a few pages of Jeffrey Toobin's book titled, [American Heiress: The Wild Saga of the Kidnapping, Crimes and Trial of Patty Hearst](#), and then set it aside. Instead, Toobin's presentation of the complexity of this story grabbed me, and I stuck with him to the end. While I was somewhat aware of the events surrounding this story both at the time they took place and in the decades afterward, Toobin helped unravel multiple dimensions of the story as he laid out the kidnapping, the actions while Hearst was with the SLA, and her trial, punishment and pardon. Both readers and Toobin are still left with unanswered questions by the end alongside great satisfaction in exploring the old story in a fresh way.

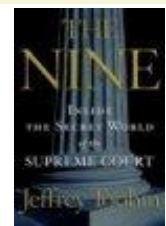


[The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court](#)

Toobin, Jeffrey

[July 08](#)

Ideology. Lively presentation about current and recent Supreme Court justices and the ways in which their ideology frames their decisions, and how their collective decisions change American life.

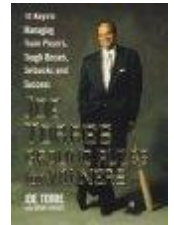


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|--|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Oath: The Obama White House and the Supreme Court</u> | Toobin, Jeffrey | ***** | <u>4/20/13</u> | <p>Upheaval. Jeffrey Toobin's book, <u>The Oath: The Obama White House and the Supreme Court</u>, came out last September at a perfect time: after the health care ruling and before the presidential election. Geared to a general audience, the book presents a viewpoint about each justice and what the court did in their deliberations and rulings during the first Obama term, as well as how the court has changed with new members and under Roberts' leadership. Toobin was a classmate of Elena Kagan at Harvard Law, and I've enjoyed his writing for <i>The New Yorker</i>, as well as his earlier book on the court, <i>The Nine</i>. His viewpoint stresses the many ways in which the Roberts court has been an activist one, making big changes rather than incremental ones, sometimes setting aside decades of precedent. Political junkies and court watchers may consider this as required reading. General readers will gain a perspective on the Supreme Court and its importance from this book, whether one agrees or disagrees with Toobin's viewpoint.</p> |  |
| <u>Slipping</u> | Toomey, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>Boomer1</u> | Torday, Daniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

Ground Rules
for Winners

Torre, Joe

He won the World Series and his 12 keys may help you become a better manager. 3 of the keys involve working with tough bosses.



We the Animals

Torres, Justin

10/8/11

Brothers. Some debut novelists try to cram every possible component of their writing experience into a first novel. Justin Torres displays intensity and focus on the pages of his first novel, We the Animals. The result is a finely crafted short novel that tells a coming of age story by the youngest of three brothers, and how their entwined lives became one. At times, this writing is lyrical. At other times, there is such fast pacing that I found myself reading faster. Most readers will find something to like in this short novel.



Red Weather

Toutonghi, Pauls

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

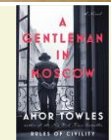


A Gentleman in Moscow

Towles, Amor

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

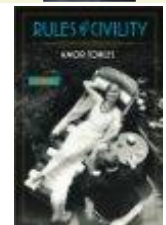


Rules of Civility

Towles, Amor

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011



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|---|-------------------|--------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Who I Am: A Memoir</u> | Townshend, Pete | ***** | <u>11/23/12</u> | <p>Creativity. When I opened Pete Townshend's memoir, <u>Who I Am</u>, I expected to read a revealing story about a talented and troubled artist. I found that and more on the pages of this finely written book. I was surprised at the high quality of Townshend's writing. He tells his story with precision and care, and any reader who enjoys this genre will come away from this book very satisfied. Whether you like music, creativity or human nature, there's something beneficial for you on these pages. Unlike the tell-all sensationalism in some celebrity memoirs, I felt that Townshend was trying to reveal with candor and insight how he has become who he is. That's exactly the value that can be derived from reading a finely written memoir like this one.</p> |  |
| My Time: Making the Most of the Rest of Your Life | Trafford, Abigail | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2004 | |  |
| <u>Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger</u> | Traister, Rebecca | ***** | <u>1/22/19</u> | <p>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, <u>Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger</u>, 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.</p> |  |

Dragonfish

Tran, Vu

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



Academy X

Trees, Andrew

Oct 06

Lessons. Debut novel is a witty satire of the closing weeks of the school year at an elite New York City private high school from the perspective of an English teacher.



The American
Lover

Tremain, Rose

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

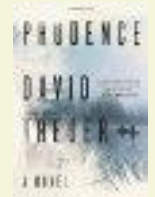


Prudence

Treuer, David

12/18/15

Outsiders. Some of my favorite novels capture our contemporary lives perfectly by setting characters and plot in a different time period and in a place that may be less familiar. David Treuer's novel titled Prudence, is set in the period during and after World War II, mostly in rural Minnesota. By developing complex characters with great depth, Treuer highlights the ways in which those individuals who are viewed as outsiders cope with their situation in a community. Readers will find in this novel so many of the big themes of fiction: desire, love, loss, and the ways in which we all struggle to find connection as we struggle through life. Readers who enjoy finely written prose are those most likely to enjoy this novel.




A Bit on the Side Trevor, William

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



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|--|-----------------|------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Cheating at Canasta</u> | Trevor, William | *** | <u>Dec 07</u> | <p>Structure. Master short story writer showcases his talent in this collection of twelve stories, each of which contains fine language, interesting and developed characters and tight construction.</p> |  |
| <u>Last Stories</u> | Trevor, William | **** | <u>9/5/18</u> | <p>Finale. The ten short stories by William Trevor in the collection titled, <u>Last Stories</u>, are a joy to read. Trevor died in 2016, and his artistry is on display in each of these stories. He had the ability to let us glimpse into the lives of others with such insight that within a few pages we can appreciate a complete life. Trevor narrows into something that seems small with such precision and grace that from this intensity, much is revealed. We look to fine literary fiction to tell us stories about who we are. This collection does just that.</p> |  |
| <u>Love and Summer</u> | Trevor, William | *** | <u>10/24/09</u> | <p>Falling. William Trevor's latest novel, <u>Love and Summer</u>, captures the essence of love: an uncontrollable falling. Protagonist Ellie Dillahan was raised on a convent, and ends up marrying a widowed farmer for whom she was a housekeeper. Although childless, there is no indication that she is unsatisfied in her life. Trevor presents the summer in which she photographer Florian Kilderry. Florian is in town for the summer to sell his late parents' house, and while he is interested in Ellie, it is she who falls in love with him. Neither character is stereotypical in Trevor's hands: Ellie is both naïve and experienced; Florian is feckless, but not cruel. Other characters, especially Miss Connulty, add depth to theme of love and its consequences.</p> |  |
| <u>The Story of Lucy Gault</u> | Trevor, William | **** | <u>Nov 02</u> | <p>Moving. 235 tightly written pages about love, loss, guilt and forgiveness in 20th century Ireland. Depth of understanding of human nature combine with rich description and character development.</p> |  |

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|---|-----------------|-----|--------------------------|---|---|
| A Heckuva Job | Trillin, Calvin | *** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| About Alice | Trillin, Calvin | *** | Mar 07 | Love. A finely written and heart warming book that allows readers to glimpse into the loving relationship between the author and his late wife, who was and is his muse. |  |
| Deciding the Next Decider | Trillin, Calvin | *** | 1/27/09 | Kapow. Now that the presidential election of 2008 is over, and the new President is at work, it's time for the historians and poets to take over the explanation of what happened. Bud Trillin's new book, Deciding the Next Decider , condenses the long campaign into 100 pages, most of which is a long narrative poem. Trillin injects poems previously published in <i>The Nation</i> (where he has been the deadline poet since 1990) and elsewhere throughout the text. His song parodies are especially wicked. Every candidate in the campaign is skewered in verse, and I found myself reading a page or two again after I had stopped laughing. Trillin's talent soars on these few pages, and this book will entertain readers of all political persuasions. |  |
| Dogfight: The 2012 Presidential Campaign in Verse | Trillin, Calvin | *** | 12/18/12 | Waggery. Political junkies of all persuasions will find a laugh or two when reading Calvin Trillin's Dogfight: The 2012 Presidential Campaign in Verse . I prefer Trillin's prose over his poetry, but found a few laughs in this short book. The account of Callista Gingrich's cough is the best of the lot, in my opinion. There's more content on the Republican side, given the primary contest, but Trillin pokes some merry wit at Obama as well. Readers who have the courage to revisit the 2012 campaign and |  |

can do it with the intention of laughing are those most likely to enjoy this book.

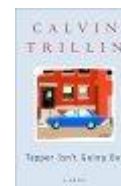
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| <u>Feeding a Yen: Savoring Local Specialties from Kansas City to Cuzco</u> | Trillin, Calvin | *** | <u>July 03</u> | Yummy. When Trillin writes about food, readers want to both read and eat. When you can't find a food you love and miss, add it to your own "Register or Frustration and Deprivation" or go to the place where you can feed your yen. |  |
| <u>Jackson, 1964: And Other Dispatches from Fifty Years of Reporting on Race in America</u> | Trillin, Calvin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>Killings</u> | Trillin, Calvin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| <u>Obliviously On He Sails: The Bush Administration in Rhyme</u> | Trillin, Calvin | * | <u>Nov 04</u> | Swamped. Too many poems at once for most readers, from this collection of deadline poet columns in <i>The Nation</i> . Fine writing from Trillin, but a lot to laugh at during a few sittings. |  |
| <u>Quite Enough of Calvin Trillin: Forty Years of Funny Stuff</u> | Trillin, Calvin | **** | <u>1/23/12</u> | Seconds. I find that even on a second or third reading of a Calvin Trillin piece, I experience it as fresh and interesting. One of his latest collections, <u>Quite Enough of Calvin Trillin</u> , contained many essays I've read before, and I found re-reading them to be entertaining and enjoyable. His wit and writing style keeps a reader engaged, and he has a prodigious skill at observation and in selecting the perfect word and phrase. Readers who love fine and witty writing are those most likely to enjoy this book. |  |

Tepper Isn't
Going Out

Trillin, Calvin

Mar 02

Funny New York situation comedy with great dialogue, imaginative situations, memorable characters and fine writing.



Trillin on Texas

Trillin, Calvin

2/3/12

Tasty. While I enjoy reading whatever topic Calvin Trillin chooses, I think I enjoy his food writing best because of the obvious pleasure that eating brings to his prose. A small collection of Trillin essays was assembled by the University of Texas Press and targeted his connections to the Lone Star State. Titled Trillin on Texas, this book includes pieces on politics and crime, but soars when it comes to food. Some of the connections to Texas are tenuous, but the writing is fine throughout, and will attract readers who appreciate fine writing and the wit of a master like Bud Trillin.

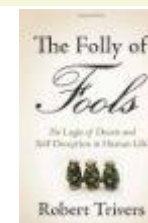


The Folly of
Fools: The Logic
of Deceit and
Self-Deception
in Human Life

Trivers, Robert

Unread

I could have fooled myself and kept reading after page 36, but I couldn't lie: this book wasn't capturing my interest. Shelf of Ennui 2012.



I Was Told
There'd Be
Sexbots

Troost, J.
Maarten

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



40: A
Doonesbury
Retrospective

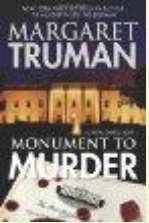
Trudeau, G.B.

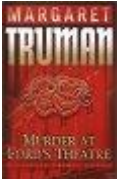
3/5/11

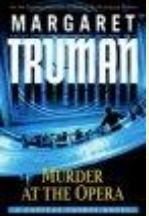
Hernia. Gary Trudeau's new book, 40: A Doonesbury Retrospective, presents 13% of the 14,000 published strips from the past four decades of this comic strip. I hoisted this ten-pound coffee table book onto my lap expecting to sample a few pages, and ended up reading the whole thing. As a long-time reader, I don't know which surprised me more: how many of the specific strips I remembered, or how many seemed fresh and new.

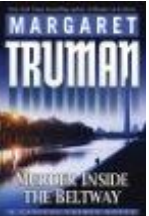


A bonus in this book involves a comprehensive character map showing all the connections among the characters. Any fan will find great entertainment from this hefty book.

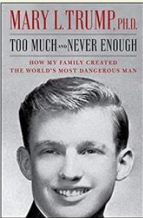
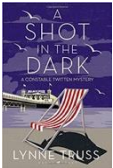
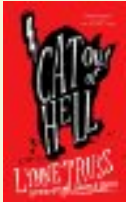
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| <u>Monument to Murder</u> | Truman, Margaret | *** | <u>7/22/11</u> | <p>Coverup. The latest, and probably last, Capital Crimes series novel written by the late Margaret Truman is titled, <u>Monument to Murder</u>. While series protagonists Mac and Annabelle appear in this novel, they don't show up until after one hundred pages of exposition are presented. A private detective has been hired to investigate a decades old murder, and he stumbles his way into a coverup that reaches to the highest levels of government. This novel provides quick, light reading, and the kind of mystery in which all the pieces unfold without requiring a lot of attention. Those readers who enjoy entertaining mysteries with interesting plots and reliable characters are those most likely to appreciate this book.</p> |  |
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| <u>Murder at Ford's Theatre</u> | Truman, Margaret | ** | <u>Jan 03</u> | <p>Curtains. Unless you're a lover of Washington, DC or a reader or prior Truman mysteries set there, there's no reason to read this book.</p> |  |
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| Murder at the Opera | Truman, Margaret | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
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| <u>Murder Inside the Beltway</u> | Truman, Margaret | *** | <u>10/24/09</u> | <p>Power. Unless her estate uncovers another manuscript, the 24th and last Capital Crimes novel from the late Margaret Truman is titled, <u>Murder Inside the Beltway</u>. The murder in this novel is an escort, Rosalie Curzon. Her legacy was in videotaping her intimate relations with clients. The</p> |  |
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mystery is engaging, the exploration of power in Washington adds interest, and the characters are fleshed out well enough to make them real and believable.

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|--|--------------|-------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man</u> | Trump, Mary | ***** | <u>9/8/20</u> | <p>Deprivation. I finished reading Mary Trump's book titled, <u>Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man</u>, with tremendous gratitude that Fred Trump, Sr. was not my father. I almost began to feel a little bit sorry for Donald Trump who has felt deprivation for his entire life, influenced so strongly as it was by his tyrannical father. While the prominent figure to attract readers to this book is Donald, the family story's central character is Fred, Sr. and this is a sad story indeed. I'm glad I read it, but now I really need to disinfect.</p> |  |
| <u>A Shot in the Dark</u> | Truss, Lynne | ***** | <u>3/6/19</u> | <p>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.</p> |  |
| <u>Cat Out of Hell</u> | Truss, Lynne | ***** | <u>12/20/16</u> | <p>Purrs. Any reader with a slightly off-kilter funny bone will find loads of laughs in Lynne Truss' novel titled, <u>Cat Out of Hell</u>. Cat lovers will find even more reasons to purr and will jot down quotes from the novel. Cat haters will find lots of support for a thesis that all cats are from a special place in hell. Any reader will find something to smile about, laugh at, or purr over, on the pages of this witty novel.</p> |  |

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| <u>Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation</u> | Truss, Lynne | *** | <u>July 04</u> | Punchy. Punctuation sticklers unite! Read, but stop telling us about our own errors. Funny and practical. Read and give to someone who needs help. |  |
| <u>Talk to the Hand</u> | Truss, Lynne | *** | <u>Mar 06</u> | Rudeness. Author of <u>Eats, Shoots and Leaves</u> moves beyond punctuation and brings her British wit and acute observations to the theme of rudeness. Laugh aloud and enjoy. |  |
| <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. |  |
| Angelology | Trussoni, Danielle | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| <u>Damascus</u> | Tsiolkas, Christos | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

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| <u>I Married You for Happiness</u> | Tuck, Lily | ** | <u>8/6/12</u> | <p>Recollections. Lily Tuck's novel, <u>I Married You for Happiness</u>, captures one element of grief: the quirky and unconnected ways in which we remember our relationship with a deceased loved one. Protagonist Nina sits beside her dead husband, Philip, holding his hand. She thinks back in disjointed ways about their life together, especially the joys they shared. I sat with Nina for the two hundred pages in this novel, and at times found myself thinking about the elements of a successful marriage. Mostly, I closed the book feeling glad I reached the last page.</p> |  |
| <u>Sisters</u> | Tuck, Lily | **** | <u>4/3/18</u> | <p>Wives. If each member of your book club has been married more than once, there will be a special resonance for all if you select Lily Tuck's short novel titled, <u>Sisters</u>. Even the never divorced will understand the special bond between a first wife and a second wife when it comes to understanding infidelity and the secrets that can be part of a relationship. Tuck's prose is sneaky and wonderful. It creeps into a reader and leaves a mark, perhaps a bruise. If you read it all during one sitting, wine helps.</p> |  |
| <u>The Double Life of Liliane</u> | Tuck, Lily | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>The House At Belle Fontaine</u> | Tuck, Lily | **** | <u>6/25/13</u> | <p>Masterful. The ten unique short stories in the collection from Lily Tuck titled after one, <u>The House of Belle Fontaine</u>, showcase this skilled writer's mastery of the skill of writing short fiction. I felt that each sentence was assembled with care and precision, making its contribution in a critical way to the complete story. This efficient structure can be frustrating to those readers who crave for</p> |  |

more, but I found that I ended each of these stories with a feeling of deep satisfaction at the writing skill displayed. Any reader who appreciates literary fiction, especially in the short form, should consider reading this fine collection.

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| Better by Mistake: The Unexpected Benefits of Being Wrong | Tugend, Alina | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2011 |  |
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Unbelievable: My Front-Row Seat to the Craziest Campaign in American History

Tur, Katy

11/3/17

Unintimidated. NBC News reporter Katy Tur was plucked from a welcome assignment in Europe to cover the 2016 presidential campaign of Donald Trump. Never suspecting that her assignment would last 500 days and that the candidate she was covering would become President, Tur hit the road and came to understand the scope of Trump's support. She writes about her personal experience of the campaign and her early life in a memoir titled, Unbelievable: My Front-Row Seat to the Craziest Campaign in American History. Readers looking for some Teddy White style perspective on the campaign won't find much new in this book. Readers interested in Tur herself and the ways in which she was never intimidated by Trump or his supporters are those most likely to enjoy reading this book.



Our Great Big American God: A Short History of Our Ever-Growing Deity

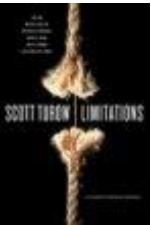

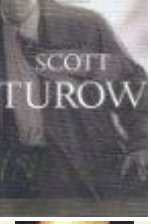

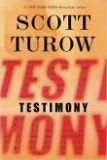
Turner, Matthew Paul

12/15/14

Evolution. If you scratch your head every time you hear a reference to the United States as a Christian nation, you may want to read Matthew Paul Turner's short book on Christianity in America titled, Our Great Big American God: A Short History of Our Ever-Growing Deity. Turner presents this history from a foundation of research, and relates the story with both humor and sarcasm. That means he is likely to offend some readers,

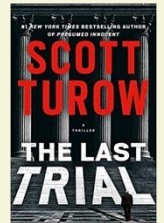


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| | | | including those American believers from faiths outside Christianity. I found the book interesting both for what he includes and for what he excludes. | |
| <u>Identical</u> | Turow, Scott | **** | <u>2/7/14</u> Complicated. One of the things I like most about Scott Turow's crime fiction is the way the author respects the intelligence of readers. Turow presents a complicated plot in <u>Identical</u> , and leaves it to us readers to follow him through all the twists in the story. Turow's protagonists are identical twins, one of whom is being released from prison in 2008 having served time for a 1982 murder. Turow brings us to the past to understand the present, and offers a wide cast of interesting characters. Readers who like crime fiction, especially novels that require paying close attention, are those most likely to be entertained by this book. |  |
| <u>Innocent</u> | Turow, Scott | **** | <u>6/14/10</u> Folly. After two decades, Scott Turow has written a sequel to his 1987 debut novel, <i>Presumed Innocent</i> , titled <u>Innocent</u> . A familiar set of characters return, including Rusty Sabich, Tommy Molto, and Sandy Stern. At any age, a distraction into folly can lead any of us astray. Despite his maturity and prominence as chief appellate judge, Rusty Sabich can still submit to folly, and he does, leading to his trial for the murder of his wife, Barbara. Tommy Molto returns as reluctant prosecutor, prodded by his protégé, Jim Brand, who would like Molto's job. While Sandy Stern is ill, he still performs courtroom virtuosity like no one else. Additional characters include Rusty's son, Nat, and Anna Vostic, Rusty's former law clerk. Turow's writing is outstanding, his plot turns clever, and his fictional insights about marriage and late middle age may resonate with any readers of that age. |  |

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|--------------------------|--------------|------|----------------|--|---|
| <u>Limitations</u> | Turow, Scott | *** | <u>Apr 07</u> | Complexity. Reprised characters and current topics allow Turow to present a terse novel that leads readers toward reflection. |  |
| <u>Ordinary Heroes</u> | Turow, Scott | *** | <u>July 06</u> | Courage. Intelligent novel features World War II army lawyer facing frustrating decisions during war, and how his son decades later learns about what his father did during the war. |  |
| <u>Personal Injuries</u> | Turow, Scott | *** | | We've always liked Turow better than Grisham, and this book remains true to form. Turow creates believable characters and weaves a plot that keeps our interest to the end. |  |
| <u>Reversible Errors</u> | Turow, Scott | **** | <u>Jan 03</u> | Paradise Lost and Regained. Turow's best novel yet tackles death penalty errors, love, loss, human nature and redemption. Lawyers, judges, criminals, and other readers will love this book. |  |
| <u>Testimony</u> | Turow, Scott | **** | <u>6/9/17</u> | Changes. One of the many things I like about Scott Turow's legal thrillers is that the author always respects the intelligence of readers. In a new novel titled, <u>Testimony</u> , Turow describes the work of the International Criminal Court in The Hague and a case involving possible war crimes in Bosnia. Protagonist Bill ten Boom has embarked on several life changes at age fifty: leaving his wife, his law career and his country. Turow develops Boom with great skill, drawing readers into understanding of this character. A supporting cast of characters are also well-drawn and animate a plot that's engaging, although slowed on occasion with expositional |  |

details about the court and war crimes. Fans of Turow are likely to zip through this novel quickly, and any reader who enjoys legal thrillers may find this novel among the best in the genre.

Finale. It won't surprise fans of Scott Turow's fiction that the latest novel titled, The Last Trial, is set in Kindle County, and recurring character Sandy Stern is back for what is positioned as his last trial. At age eighty-five, Sandy is not in prime physical condition, but he knows how to operate in the courtroom, and the best parts of this novel show Sandy weaving his magic before a jury. The client is a friend, and the evidence against him is formidable. Turow shares his insights into our human condition and the legal system in ways that are empathetic about frailty and the humanity woven into the system. I enjoyed every page of this novel, and every minute spent with Turow and Sandy Stern.



The Last Trial

Turow, Scott

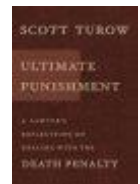
8/19/20

Ultimate Punishment: A Lawyer's Reflections on Dealing with the Death Penalty

Turow, Scott

Dec 03

Evolution. Novelist and lawyer shares his real life struggle over his position on the death penalty. Read and watch your thinking evolve with his.



An Elderly Lady Is Up to No Good

Tursten, Helene

1/22/19

Villain. The protagonist of a group of related stories by Helene Tursten titled, An Elderly Lady Is Up to No Good, 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.

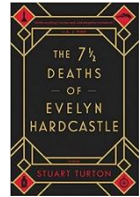


The 7 1/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle

Turton, Stuart

4/19/19

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, The 7 1/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle. 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.



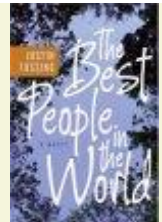
The Best People in the World

Tussing, Justin

**

Apr 06

Hollow. Debut novel set in the 1970s full of beautiful prose, especially place descriptions, but with characters who fail to attract empathy.

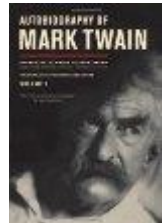


Autobiography of Mark Twain, Vol. 1

Twain, Mark

Unread

Twain's own words cover fewer than 300 of the almost 800 pages of this scholarly tome. I browsed the pictures, skipped the scholarly parts, and read Twain himself. Unlike the lively writing in his novels, the diary entries seemed laborious, and I began to feel that Twain was as bored writing this autobiography as I was reading it, so I stopped after sampling a few dozen entries. Shelf of Ennui 2011.



Spark

Twelve Hawks, John

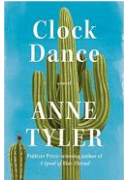
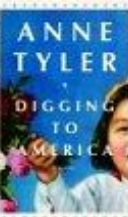
1/16/15

Machines. Readers who like dystopian fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading the latest novel by John Twelve Hawks titled, Spark. Protagonist Jacob Underwood suffered significant injuries in a motorcycle accident, and because of brain trauma he believes he is dead. In the efficient society in which he lives where machines and government exert significant control over life, the absence of a fear of death makes Jacob an ideal assassin. The plot moves quickly and I was well entertained by reading this novel.



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|---|------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Dark River</u> | Twelve Hawks, John | *** | <u>Jan 08</u> | Crossing. The second book of the Fourth Realm trilogy reprises the old characters and introduces new ones, adding an intensity as well as more paranoia as the vast machine expands its reach and the Traveler needs to cross the dark river to another realm. |  |
| <u>The Golden City</u> | Twelve hawks, John | *** | <u>4/25/10</u> | Freedom. Be careful what you start. Having read the first two installments of John Twelve hawks' Fourth Realm trilogy, I figured I had to plow on to the end of the third book, <u>The Golden City</u> . This series has been focused on personal freedom, and may resonate best with those readers who are concerned about restrictions on freedom in a connected society. As a novel, this book stumbles more than it excites, and the resolution wasn't as satisfying as I anticipated. Those readers who worry about life on the grid may like this trilogy; others may wish the hours spent reading this had been used in other ways. |  |
| <u>The Traveler</u> | Twelve Hawks, John | *** | <u>Oct 05</u> | Gridless. First novel of trilogy by an author whose identity is unknown even to agent and editor (living "off the grid"); a story of good and evil, free will and determinism that's well-written. |  |
| Branded Nation | Twitchell, James B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>A Spool of Blue Thread</u> | Tyler, Anne | **** | <u>3/20/15</u> | Storytelling. I think one reason that Anne Tyler's fiction pleases so many readers is that so many of us enjoy fine storytelling. In her latest novel titled, <u>A Spool of Blue Thread</u> , Tyler remains in Baltimore and tells readers the story of the Whitshank family and a house that was important to them across |  |

generations. This melding of people and place is something Tyler does so well. I gave myself over to her in this novel, and enjoyed every minute listening to the story of this family. While giving myself over to her, I was alert to the many ways in which she uses her characters and their situations to deliver deep insight about our human condition. Fans of Tyler will love this novel, and any reader will likely appreciate and enjoy her fine storytelling skills.

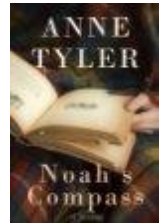
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| <u>Back When We Were Grownups</u> | Tyler, Anne | *** | <u>06/01</u> | Multi-generational stepfamilies in Baltimore live, grieve and care for each other, all with Tyler's craft displayed. |  |
| <u>Clock Dance</u> | Tyler, Anne | **** | <u>8/3/18</u> | Purpose. Each of us needs to find purpose in life. In her novel titled, <u>Clock Dance</u> , Anne Tyler describes the ways in which Willa Drake finds purpose in life and comes to learn new things about herself and her capabilities. Fans of Tyler will find an engaging story, well-written dialogue, and insight into the lives of contemporary women in the United States. There's a large cast of interesting and well-developed characters, including a husband who calls Willa, "little one." Imagine how Tyler (and Wilma) deals with that and then read this novel to find out. |  |
| <u>Digging to America</u> | Tyler, Anne | ** | <u>July 06</u> | Family. Two Korean orphans are adopted by different Baltimore families, and the families interact for better and for worse over many years following the arrival of these children. |  |

Noah's Compass

Tyler, Anne

3/22/10

Tangles. From the beginning of Anne Tyler's novel, Noah's Compass, protagonist Liam Pennywell, finds himself in one tangle or another as he tries to stay afloat. Liam, age 60, has been fired from his teaching job at a private school. He moves to a crummy apartment in a dicey neighborhood, and ends up in the hospital after someone breaks into his apartment and clocks him. Packed with messy relationships, small kindnesses, and the perfect blend of life's misery and happiness, Noah's Compass will captivate many readers, especially those who appreciate the richness of character that Tyler can deliver. Here's my favorite line from Liam, "I just ... don't seem to have the hang of things, somehow. It's as if I've never been entirely present in my own life."

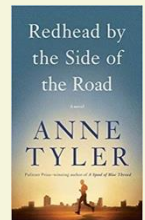


Redhead by the Side of the Road

Tyler, Anne

5/5/20

Connections. Micah Mortimer, protagonist of Anne Tyler's novel titled, Redhead by the Side of the Road, strives for order and perfection. Tyler tosses surprises into Micah's life and incomplete interpersonal connections become transparent. Each of us needs someone in our lives who helps us see ourselves as we really are. Sometimes our routine becomes more important than paying attention to the love in our lives. The portrait of Micah may not look like any of us, but his complexity and humanity will be familiar and offer a glimpse into what lives can become when we are open to love. As always, Tyler draws us into the story, keeps us close, and brings us home by the end.

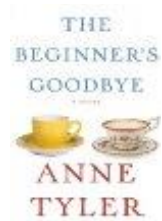


The Beginner's Goodbye

Tyler, Anne

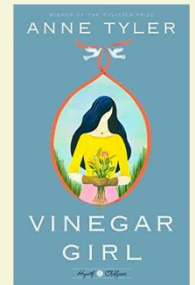
5/5/12

Grief. There are times when Anne Tyler steers close to melodrama in her latest novel, The Beginner's Goodbye. Protagonist Aaron Woolcott struggles with the sudden death of his wife, Dorothy. Tyler tells a story of the ways in which his destroyed life becomes rebuilt and how he finds a



way to say goodbye to his wife. Readers who like love stories, especially those featuring characters with flaws we recognize as our own, are those most likely to enjoy this book. Book club members may want to consider this as a selection to read and discuss.

Sweet. I imagine that Anne Tyler laughed a lot as she adapted Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* in her new novel titled, Vinegar Girl. I certainly laughed a lot while reading it. It should come as no surprise that Tyler sets the novel in Baltimore and that her characters are complex and interesting. Protagonist Katherine Battista holds strong views, does not suffer fools gladly, and runs the household in which she, and her younger sister, Bianca, live with their father, a research scientist at Johns Hopkins. Dr. Battista is a single parent who has established ways of living that seem better suited to a laboratory setting than a nurturing home. His work depends heavily on a student, Pyotr, who may be deported. Dr. Battista decides that Pyotr and Kate should marry so Pyotr can remain in the lab in Baltimore. Tyler takes that set up and lets the plot unravel out of control, providing grist for great humor, and then pulling everything together. Does that sound like Shakespeare's play to you? Whether your answer is yes or no, chances are you will laugh as you read this sweet novel.



Vinegar Girl

Tyler, Anne

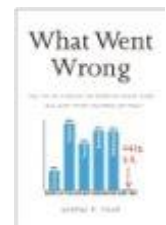
7/22/16


What Went Wrong: How the 1% Hijacked the American Middle Class . . . and What Other Countries Got Right

Tyler, George R.


Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2014.




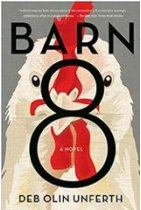
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| <u>Accessory to War: The Unspoken Alliance Between Astrophysics and the Military</u> | Tyson, Neil deGrasse | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Astrophysics for People in a Hurry</u> | Tyson, Neil deGrasse | ***** | <u>6/9/17</u> | <p>Succinct. While I am no hurry when I read, I appreciate the concise prose by Neil deGrasse Tyson in his book titled, <u>Astrophysics for People in a Hurry</u>. Rather than dumbing down the content, Tyson presents astrophysics in a concise way. I found myself reading a chapter and then setting the book aside before starting another chapter. I finished this book still unable to teach astrophysics, but I am better informed for the next article I read, and when I run into the neighbor who heads a university physics department, I won't be totally confused in a conversation. Any reader with a general interest in science will likely enjoy this book.</p> |  |
| The Disposable American | Uchitelle, Louis | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>The Lonely Polygamist</u> | Udall, Brady | *** | <u>8/7/10</u> | <p>Family. Readers who like thick novels that tell stories that dig into the thicket of human behavior will enjoy Brady Udall's 600 hundred page book, <u>The Lonely Polygamist</u>. Protagonist Golden Richards has four wives, twenty eight living children and a job building a brothel that keeps him away from home most weeks, leaving him as the title indicates, lonely. On page 193, Udall sums up Golden's predicament: "He was a man with a crush on a prostitute, a condom in his wallet and gum in</p> |  |

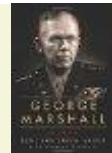
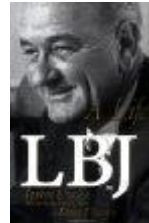

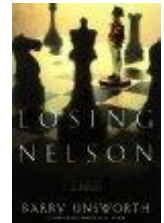
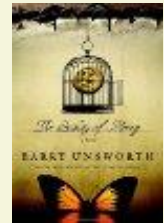
his public hair-what could it all mean?” Despite his lifestyle, or because of it, Golden is a likeable, bumbling everyman. His life and work, his concerns and foibles, could be those of any of us. After six hundred pages, I both laughed and sighed.

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|-----------------------|---------------|----|------------------------|---|---|
| Grace | Ullmann, Linn | ** | Dec 05 | Ending. Novel translated from Norwegian presents complex and troubling end-of-life issues, full of love and caring, with characters in ironic relationships. |  |
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| Unquiet | Ullmann, Linn | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
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| Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History | Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
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|------------------------|-------------------|------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Barn 8 | Unferth, Deb Olin | **** | 6/24/20 | Chickens. Things don't always turn out the way we plan. In her novel titled, Barn 8 , Deb Olin Unferth introduces readers to a group of activists who plan to rescue a million chickens from the barns on a factory farm. What could possibly go wrong? Unferth's writing leads us to care about the cast of characters and to love the chickens, while allowing the madcap action to unfold. I like a funny story that has an important message and this book had me laughing and thinking. There's really no limit to the things we'll do for love. Fans of imaginative and well-written fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel. |  |
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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| George Marshall: A Biography | Unger, Debi and Irwin Unger | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| LBJ: A Life | Unger, Irving and Debi Unger | *** | | Johnson is one of our favorite presidents, and this is a sympathetic biography which we read while waiting for the next Robert Caro volume. |  |
| Land of Marvels | Unsworth, Barry | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009. Not marvelous enough; I exited at page 22. |  |
| Losing Nelson | Unsworth, Barry | * | | Don't read this when you're gloomy. Unsworth creates a character obsessed with Lord Nelson and we get to share in this madness. Decent writing, but not recommended. |  |
| The Quality of Mercy | Unsworth, Barry | **** | 9/17/12 | Mining. Booker-prize winning novelist Barry Unsworth has reprised characters from his novel, <i>Sacred Hunger</i> , for another finely written historical novel. Readers who like historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy The Quality of Mercy . Set in late 18 th century England, Unsworth presents a cast of characters divided on the subject of the abolition of slavery and the property rights of owners. He also presents the lives of those engaged in mining, and the dreams and aspirations they have for themselves and their children. Unsworth takes on big questions and explores answers to those questions through the characters he creates and the ways in which he draws readers into the core of our |  |

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| | | | | human condition. I was captivated by Unsworth's fine writing from the beginning to the end of this finely written novel, especially by the interplay of the concerns of labor and those of management. | |
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The Ruby in Her Navel

Unsworth, Barry

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

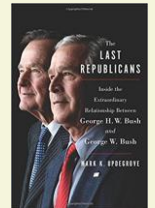


The Last Republicans: Inside the Extraordinary Relationship Between George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush

Updegrove, Mark K.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

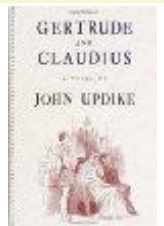


Gertrude and Claudius

Updike, John

5/00

This prequel to Hamlet provides a different take on the key characters. Updike's language is poetic. If you like Hamlet or Updike, give this short novel a try.

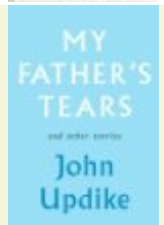


My Father's Tears

Updike, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010

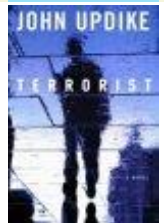


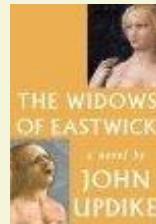
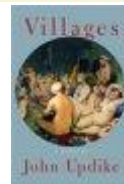

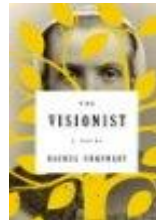
Terrorist

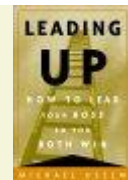
Updike, John

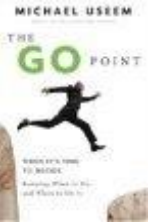



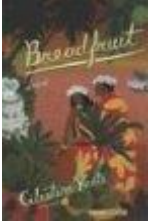
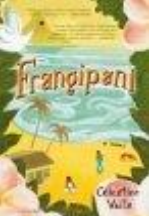
Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



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| <u>The Widows of Eastwick</u> | Updike, John | *** | <u>12/22/08</u> | <p>Aging. John Updike's new novel, <u>The Widows of Eastwick</u>, is a sequel to his 1984 novel, <i>The Witches of Eastwick</i>. Alexandra, Jane and Suki are older, slower, and remain true to the personalities readers met in the earlier novel. Updike begins this novel slowly with the widows traveling to Egypt and China. The pace increases when they agree to see what it would be like to return to Eastwick, Rhode Island. These women and the town have both mellowed, and as the memories and guilt of their lives in Eastwick increase, the three decide to try witchcraft again to right their past wrongs. Not everything works out as planned. Updike's prose can become mesmerizing on these pages, a spell in and of itself. While few may rate <u>The Widows of Eastwick</u> as his finest work, it's a welcome treat.</p> |  |
| <u>Villages</u> | Updike, John | *** | <u>Dec 04</u> | <p>Caring. Well-written novel of seven decades of Owen Mackenzie's New England life, from a slow coming of age to a gentle and caring maturity.</p> |  |
| <u>The Outlaw Ocean: Journeys Across the Last Untamed Frontier</u> | Urbina, Ian | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| The Visionist | Urquhart, Rachel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |

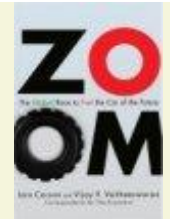
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|---|---------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The House of Broken Angels</u> | Urrea, Luis Alberto | **** | <u>11/24/18</u> | Generations. I felt like one of the revelers celebrating the lives of the extended de La Cruz family as I read the finely written novel by Luis Alberto Urrea titled, <u>The House of Broken Angels</u> . For gringos like me, this novel is a glimpse into the lives of a Mexican American family, crossing borders between Mexico and the United States with consequences. As a universal human story, it's an insight into the relationships across generations: complex lives well-lived. The prose is finely written, the story engaging, and the characters well developed. Fans of great American stories are those readers most likely to enjoy reading this novel. |  |
| <u>Mind and Matter: A Life in Math and Football</u> | Urschel, John and Louisa Thomas | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>The Power of a Positive No</u> | Ury, William | *** | <u>May 07</u> | Useful. Seasoned negotiator, one of the authors of the classic <i>Getting To Yes</i> shares stories about a process that improves outcomes. |  |
| <u>Bureau of Spies: The Secret Connections between Espionage and Journalism in Washington</u> | Usdin, Steven T. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Leading Up: How to Lead Your Boss So You Both Win</u> | Useem, Michael | * | <u>Mar 02</u> | 50 not very useful lessons from sixteen individuals in eight engaging stories of interaction between bosses and superiors from Civil War generals to CEOs to Old Testament prophets. |  |

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|---|------------------|--------|---------------------------|--|---|
| The Go Point | Useem, Michael | **** | Apr 07 | Templates. Wharton professor presents compelling stories of decisions made, templates for handling decisions, and principles and illustration, combine to make this a practical guide for any reader interested in learning how to make better decisions. |  |
| Mergers and Acquisitions | Vachon, Dana | * | Sep 07 | Vacuous. Debut novel by author who worked at JP Morgan after his 2002 Duke graduation features interns at investment banking firm and their relationships. Unimpressive writing, weak and undeveloped characters and some humor. |  |
| The Jaguar's Children | Vaillant, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| The Tiger: A True Story of Vengeance and Survival | Vaillant, John | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| Breadfruit | Vaite, Celestine | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| Frangipani | Vaite, Celestine | *** | August 06 | Mothering. Debut novel, set in Tahiti, presents a familiar and appealing story of the relationship between a mother and her daughter, with all the love and conflict one would expect. |  |

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| Tiare in Bloom | Vaite, Celestine | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |
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| Zoom: The Global Race to Fuel the Car of the Future | Vaitheeswaran, Vijay V. | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |
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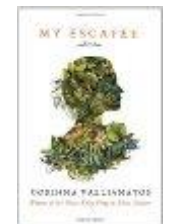


My Escapee

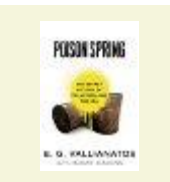
Vallianatos, Corinna

5/10/13

Wondering. There are ten short stories in the collection from Corinna Vallianatos, titled after one of them, My Escapee. If there is a single thread that links these stories, it may be that in each one, the central character is wondering about something important. There is action taking place in the mind. I admire the discipline it takes to craft short fiction. Each sentence can be packed with depth and insight. Vallianatos displays an understanding of human nature in these stories, and uses fine language to unveil these lives with efficiency. Readers who like finely written short prose are those most likely to enjoy the stories in this collection.



| | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| Poison Spring: The Secret History of Pollution and the EPA | Vallianatos, E.G. and McKay Jenkins | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------|----------------------|

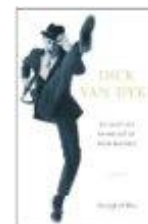


My Lucky Life
In and Out of
Show Business:
A Memoir

Van Dyke, Dick

Unread

Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line.
Shelf of Ennui 2012.

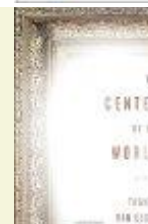


The Center of
the World

Van Essen,
Thomas

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

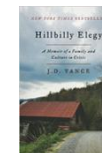


Hillbilly Elegy:
A Memoir of a
Family and
Culture in Crisis

Vance, J.D.

9/23/16

Authenticity. So many of us Americans live in our self-selected homogeneous communities. We can go months or years without any meaningful encounters with individuals whose lives are very different from our own. Some books can help us gain insight into lives different from our own, and one such book is J.D.Vance's memoir titled, Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis. Vance provides a clear voice about a marginalized subculture in American society. His personal story is inspiring and offers great insight into the obstacles that class differences can create and that inhibit or restrict many individuals who are trying to cross boundaries from one subculture into another.

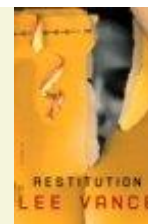


Restitution

Vance, Lee

Sep 07

Faithfulness. Fast-paced and well-written thriller novel in which a husband suspected of his wife's murder races to find the real killer. Complicated plot, complex characters and motifs that hold together throughout.



It Seemed Important At the Time: A Romance Memoir

Vanderbilt, Gloria

**

June 05

Neverland. Another memoir by a unique and eccentric celebrity that should have been subtitled, “Looking For Love in All the Wrong Places.”

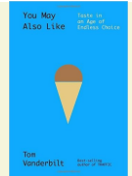


You May Also Like: Taste in an Age of Endless Choice

Vanderbilt, Tom

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2017.



A Peculiar Peril

VanderMeer, Jeff

12/17/20

Magic. Fans of Jeff VanderMeer won't think twice about falling into his latest world, a 650-page YA novel titled, A Peculiar Peril. When protagonist Jonathan Lambshead arrives at the mansion he inherited from his grandfather, a wild adventure begins featuring a gateway to place called Aurora, a different version of Earth. On the adventure, we find talking animals, and versions of Napoleon, Charlemagne and Kafka. Jonathan comes to appreciate his role to keep Aurora and Earth separated. The strange characters are delightful, especially the talking marmots, the fantasy enjoyable, and the writing weird and lighthearted.



Borne

VanderMeer, Jeff

6/2/17

Biotech. If a dose of dystopian fiction is on your reading menu, consider reading Jeff VanderMeer's novel titled, Borne. A biotech firm called The Company, has wreaked havoc on a city with the results of its experiments. VanderMeer uses protagonist Rachel as our avatar living in this hostile environment. Questions of morality, including what it means to be human, elevate this novel above being just another futuristic exploration of a damaged world.

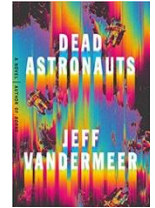


Dead Astronauts

VanderMeer, Jeff

10/27/20

Versions. Jeff VanderMeer, in his novel titled, Dead Astronauts, continues a riff that he began in his science fiction novel titled, *Borne*, describing ways in which ruthlessness leads to trying and trying again as multiple versions of life forms attempt progress, whatever that means. There are villains and rebels on these pages, and a creepy world that no matter how parts are remade remains a horror. Fans of literary science fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this strange and imaginative novel.

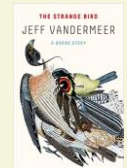


The Strange Bird

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.

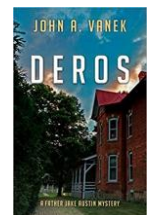


Deros

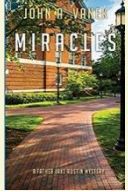
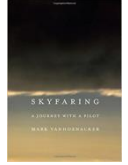


Vanek, John A.

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.

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|--|--------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Miracles</u> | Vanek, John A. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Skyfaring: A Journey with a Pilot</u> | Vanhoenacker, Mark | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>Aquarium</u> | Vann, David | ***** | <u>5/21/15</u> | Depths. I was mesmerized by the words, pictures and story in David Vann's novel titled, <u>Aquarium</u> . On one level, this is a coming of age story in which the protagonist, twelve year old Caitlin, finds escape and joy from her time at the Seattle aquarium. On another level, this is a close examination of love and forgiveness, and what it takes for those of us broken by what has happened in our lives to heal. On another level, the novel draws readers to examine the beauty that lies beneath the surface of our lives. The emotional intensity in the plot and the dialogue are never restrained, and the rawness of life is exposed for all to see. This novel is a story of redemption. Vann does more in fewer than three hundred pages than most writers achieve in many books over a lifetime. Any reader who enjoys literary fiction should love this finely written novel. |  |
| <u>Bright Air Black</u> | Vann, David | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |

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|-----------------------|-------------|-----|---------------|--|---|
| <u>Caribou Island</u> | Vann, David | *** | <u>2/4/11</u> | <p>Cold. Almost everything about David Vann's debut novel, <u>Caribou Island</u>, is cold. The setting in Alaska presents the climatic cold landscape that Vann describes in language that's often poetic and always visual. The marital relationship of the protagonists Irene and Gary has evolved in bitterness, disappointment and disconnectedness to something far beyond frigid. Their children are also in relationships that are rooted in selfishness and maintained by expectations that are likely to be unmet. The bleakness of the situation provides a backdrop for some fine writing that presents aspects of human behavior that come alive in the circumstances and life experiences of these characters. Readers willing to give a debut novelist a chance will find talent on these pages. Perhaps because I read this novel during a blizzard, I can still feel the chill of the story. Those readers susceptible to personal immersion into fiction may want to watch for signs depression and gloom after spending time with these characters in this setting.</p> |  |
| <u>Dirt</u> | Vann, David | *** | <u>6/7/12</u> | <p>Cleansing. I suggest reading David Vann's novel, <u>Dirt</u>, on a sunny day. Readers who are prone to immerse themselves into the lives of fictional characters should be aware of signs of depression. This finely written novel is tragedy at its finest: set in the heart of a dysfunctional family, each member manipulating another. The levels of dirt Vann explores range widely, and it was only after I finished reading that I realized that even dirt can have a cleansing effect when exposed to deeper dirt. The four characters of the novel are drawn with precision, and a reader can anticipate behavior and consequences. Readers who can tolerate disturbing content and who appreciate fine writing are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |

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|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Goat Mountain | Vann, David | ***** | 11/18/13 | <p>Creatures. David Vann pulls no punches as he examines dark dimensions of human behavior in his finely written novel, Goat Mountain. An eleven year old boy anticipates a coming achievement: bagging his first buck on the annual hunting trip he joins with his father, grandfather and a family friend. The setting is the family's 640 acres of land in rural California. Violence and tragedy follow, as the line blurs between man and beast. All the creatures in this novel suffer. The tightly written prose kept me turning pages despite my revulsion at the story. Written as a recollection decades later, the calmness of the narrator contrasts with the violence among the characters. Readers who appreciate fine prose and are open to contemplating the dark sides of human behavior are those most likely to enjoy this novel.</p> |  |
| Halibut on the Moon | 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, Halibut on the Moon, 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> |  |
| Memoirs of a Muse | Vapnyar, Lara | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |

The Lines

Varallo, Anthony

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.

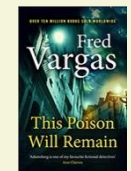


This Poison Will Remain

Vargas, Fred

9/24/19

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, This Poison Will Remain, 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.

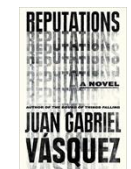




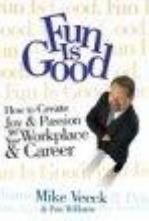
Reputations

Vasquez, Juan
Gabriel

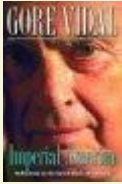
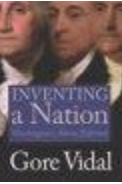
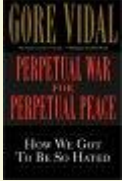



12/15/16

Reevaluation. All is not as it appears in the life of the protagonist of Juan Gabriel Vasquez' novel titled, Reputations, especially when he is compelled to remember his past and reevaluate its meaning. Javier Mallinaro has spent decades as a political cartoonist whose drawings wielded great power in Colombia. Once he begins to examine his past more closely, and think about whether his drawings represent the truth he has thought it did, he uncovers disturbing things. Vasquez delves into the effects of deep questioning in this novel and the impact of the past on the present especially the reliability of memory, drawing readers into pondering what is real and what is illusory. Readers who enjoy literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



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|--|-----------------------|--------|----------------|---|---|
| The Informers | Vasquez, Juan Gabriel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| The Sound of Things Falling | Vasquez, Juan Gabriel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| <u>Lovers on All Saints' Day</u> | Vásquez, Juan Gabriel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| Fun Is Good : How To Inject Joy & Passion into Your Workplace & Career | Veeck, Mike | Unread | | Shelf of Reproach 2005 |  |
| <u>The Great Offshore Grounds</u> | Veselka, Vanessa | ***** | <u>12/9/20</u> | Freedom. What every parent wants most of all is for their child to be happy. In her novel titled, <u>The Great Offshore Grounds</u> , Vanessa Veselka throws readers into the messy lives of parents and children. Thanks to rich character development and vivid description, patient readers can cross the world with these fascinating people as they learn about what's really important in life. Financial insecurity might be a better inheritance than the inability to love or the absence of freedom. Whether on land or the sea, sibling bonds are strong, and a mother's love and care is constant. Readers who |  |

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| | | | love complexity and depth in a novel will find a lot to enjoy in this finely written novel. | |
| <u>Mr. Golightly's Holiday</u> | Vickers, Salley | *** | <u>June 04</u> Respite. Great descriptive language, imaginative characters, literary references and wit combine to provide ideal vacation reading. Worth re-reading once Mr Golightly's identity is recognized. |  |
| <u>The Diver's Clothes Lie Empty</u> | Vida, Vendela | **** | <u>8/12/16</u> Identity. Vendela Vida is a very clever writer, and her novel titled <u>The Diver's Clothes Lie Empty</u> , is a creative exploration of the theme of identity. The setup is that a traveler arrives in a foreign country and loses identifying documents. Written in the second person singular, an unusual voice that kept my attention, the ability to slip into a different identity was handled by Vida with great skill. The title comes from a Rumi poem. Readers interested in novels that explore questions about who we are will find a lot to enjoy in this short and finely written novel. |  |
| <u>The Lovers</u> | Vida, Vendela | *** | <u>10/26/10</u> Grief. Yvonne, the protagonist of Vendela Vida's new novel, <u>The Lovers</u> , has lost the bearings in her life following the accidental death of her husband, Peter. Vida captures the elements of grief in the spare novel, as readers follow Yvonne's journey toward a new life. She travels from Vermont to Turkey, to the town where she and Peter spent their honeymoon, and tries to find a life that got lost somewhere along the way. Her relationship to her son, Matthew, who is engaged to be married, and to her daughter, Aurelia, a recovering addict, are explored by Vida with precision and the language itself seems to reinforce the strains felt by all. Yvonne befriends a young boy in Turkey and other characters who seem to reflect the emotional turmoil Yvonne cannot escape. Readers who enjoy psychological novels are those most likely to enjoy this book. |  |

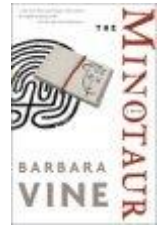
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|---|-----------------------------------|--------|---------------|---|---|
| Imperial America : Reflections on the United States of Amnesia | Vidal, Gore | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Inventing a Nation: Washington, Adams, Jefferson | Vidal, Gore | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got To Be So Hated</u> | Vidal, Gore | *** | <u>Aug 02</u> | Disturbing, agitating and thought-provoking essays from a point of view not frequently heard. |  |
| <u>Point to Point Navigation</u> | Vidal, Gore | *** | <u>Mar 07</u> | Quirky. Second memoir flows in erratic ways, full of riffs, mostly trenchant observations about others and confirmation of his own genius. |  |
| <u>The Golden Age</u> | Vidal, Gore | * | | Vidal finally finishes up his series of historical novels. Disappointing. |  |
| <u>The Trouble with Women Artists: Reframing the History of Art</u> | Vieville, Camilie and Laura Adler | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

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|---|----------------|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Self-Made Man</u> | Vincent, Norah | ** | <u>Apr 06</u> | <p>Anthropologist. Lesbian journalist disguises herself as a man, embeds herself in all-male settings, and tries to see men as they see themselves.</p> |  |
| <u>The Birthday Present</u> | Vine, Barbara | **** | <u>2/19/10</u> | <p>Desire. Many mystery novels are so formulaic that they can try the patience of a reader who wants one's intelligence respected. Ruth Rendell respects her readers, and in her novel, <u>The Birthday Present</u>, written under pen name Barbara Vine, she structures the story with great respect for thoughtful readers. We know what happened within a few opening pages; the pleasure comes from reading the next three hundred pages as she unfolds the context and meaning of it all. The narrator is the brother-in-law of an ambitious rising member of Parliament, Ivor Tesham. An accident makes a sex escapade turn disastrous for Ivor and others. With delicacy and without sordid details, Vine presents what happened to all the key players locking each puzzle piece together with skill. The power of desire permeates the novel and reveals itself from multiple perspectives. <u>The Birthday Present</u> is a fine gift for any mystery lover.</p> |  |
| <u>The Child's Child</u> | Vine, Barbara | **** | <u>1/24/13</u> | <p>Mores. Ruth Rendell, writing as Barbara Vine, compares the mores of two time periods in her novel, <u>The Child's Child</u>. Structured as a novel within a novel, we see troubled characters from the present and from 1929 struggle with the reactions of society to their behavior. Unwed mothers, same sex attraction and sibling relationships are all developed in both time settings. Rendell writes with great skill and I was entertained from beginning to end. If you like fiction with strong character development and psychological and social insight, you should consider reading this one.</p> |  |

The Minotaur

Vine, Barbara

Read, but not reviewed.

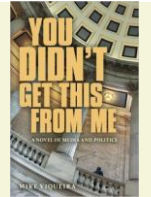


[You Didn't Get This From Me](#)

Viqueira, Mike

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2018.

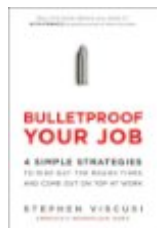


Bulletproof
Your Job: 4
Simple
Strategies to
Ride Out the
Rough Times
and Come Out
On Top at Work

Viscusi, Stephen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009

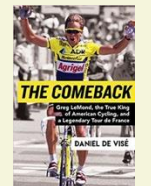


[The Comeback: Greg LeMond, the True King of American Cycling, and a Legendary Tour de France](#)

Visé, Daniel de

[12/6/18](#)

Rehabilitation. There are two comebacks for Greg LeMond in Daniel de Visé's book titled, [The Comeback: Greg LeMond, the True King of American Cycling, and a Legendary Tour de France](#). The first comeback is the story of Gerg LeMond's recovery from a hunting accident to win the Tour de France by eight seconds in 1989. To put that race in context, de Visé tells us the story of LeMond's life, from childhood on. He explains the world of cycling to those readers who may not understand the sport. The second comeback involves the rehabilitation of LeMond's reputation following the story of doping in the world of professional cycling. Many readers will concur with de Visé by the end of this book that LeMond deserves a place at the top of the rankings of American cyclists.

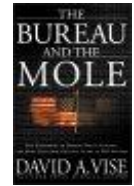


[The Bureau and the Mole](#)

Vise, David A.

[Sep 02](#)

Detailed description of FBI agent and spy Robert Hanssen, and how Louis Freeh lost his job as FBI director.

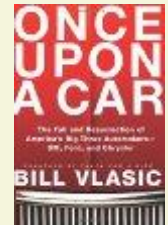


Once Upon a Car: The Fall and Resurrection of America's Big Three Auto Makers--GM, Ford, and Chrysler

Vlasic, Bill

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2012.

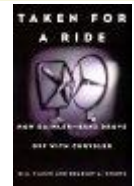


[Taken for a Ride: How Daimler-Benz Drove Off with Chrysler](#)

Vlasic, Bill and Stertz, Bradley A.

[8/00](#)

Great book that discloses the behavior of key players as Daimler steals Chrysler. Reads like a good mystery. Recommended.



The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care

Volandes, Angelo E.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

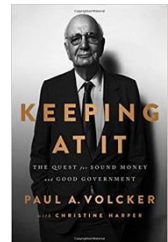


[Keeping At It: The Quest for Sound Money and Good Government](#)

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.

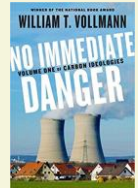


No Immediate
Danger

Vollmann,
William

10/5/18

Nuclear. William Vollmann has a lot to say about energy production and climate change and our future. His publisher and editor agreed to a structure of two six hundred-page books. In the first book titled, No Immediate Danger, Vollman focus on nuclear power generation. Vollmann tells readers of the time he has spent in Japan over the past seven years placing himself at personal risk while measuring radiation around the Fukushima site. His title comes from the Japanese official advisory about the risk. With lots of facts and measurements, Vollmann disagrees about the dangers and uses Fukushima as an example of the consequences of energy policies that rely on nuclear power. In exchange for short term comfort and economic benefits, we've added significant long-term risk and costs. The next volume will focus on oil production, fracking and coal production. In some ways I can't wait, but I need a break before tackling the second installment.



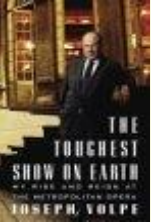


No Good
Alternative

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.



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|---|-------------------|--------|--------------------------|--|---|
| The Toughest Show on Earth | Volpe, Joseph | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| Triangle: The Fire That Changed America | Von Drehle, David | *** | Nov 03 | Burning. Absorbing combination of three stories: immigrant working conditions in NYC; a devastating factory fire; the political shift to the left laying a foundation for the New Deal. Read and see if you agree that a single event can lead to dramatic social changes. |  |
| Look at the Birdie | Vonnegut, Kurt | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| The Gods of Greenwich | Vonnegut, Norb | *** | 6/14/12 | Thrilling. Norb Vonnegut's novel, The Gods of Greenwich , is a classic thriller that uses the backdrop of hedge funds and the financial crisis to provide the setting for the action. The likeable protagonist, Jimmy Cusack, is offset by a smarmy character, his boss Cy Leaser. Readers familiar with financial services will find some plot elements ring true, but it is fans of thrillers with strong character development and interesting plot who will most like this novel. This novel provides entertaining light reading, and may be a perfect summer vacation selection. |  |
| The Trust | Vonnegut, Norb | **** | 10/25/13 | Scheme. If you're tired of reading non-fiction about financial malfeasance, consider the refreshing change you'll feel in switching to fiction featuring characters immersed in finance. Norb Vonnegut grabbed my attention from the first pages of his novel, The Trust , and kept me engaged |  |

through more than three hundred pages of tense action. Vonnegut's own experience working at Morgan Stanley helped him bring Wall Street behavior to life in this novel. Protagonist Grove O'Rourke is reprised from the earlier novel, *Top Producer*, and spends much of this novel in Charleston, helping the family of a deceased client and getting himself in deep trouble. Ample villains are matched by O'Rourke along with another lively character, southern lawyer Biscuit Hughes, who proves himself to be a reliable partner. Readers who like the world of finance and fast-paced fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.

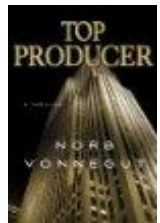
Individualist. Debut novelist Norb Vonnegut seems to have followed traditional advice: write about what you know. In *Top Producer*, Vonnegut writes about Wall Street, where he has worked for a variety of financial firms. Given the wealth of material in light of the current financial crisis, Vonnegut has selected the Bernie Madoff scandal as the prime source for the action of this novel. The protagonist, Grove O'Rourke, is a top producing stockbroker handles wealthy client accounts for the fictional firm Sachs, Kidder, and Carnegie (SKC). Having grown up in Charleston, South Carolina, Grove has a gentility that can seem out of place in New York. Grove doesn't fit the stockbroker stereotype: he isn't pushy; he takes a very conservative approach with clients; and he actually seems to do what clients want. He gets some of his best investment ideas by taking positions opposite those recommended by the top SKC economist. He doesn't spend his own wealth ostentatiously, stays fit through regular cycling, and seems to be nice to everyone. One of the strengths of *Top Producer* is the strong character Vonnegut has created in the independent and successful Grove O'Rourke. The

Top Producer

Vonnegut, Norb

**

7/9/09



Madoff character in the novel is Grove's best friend Charlie Kelemen, who manages a fund of funds and easily spends gobs of money on an opulent lifestyle as well as philanthropy. The thrilling twenty pages that open Top Producer got my heart beating fast, especially when Charlie is brutally murdered. Vonnegut's debut status and inexperience as a novelist comes out in the major weakness in the novel: a tedious exposition that extends for over 250 pages. One through that, the action accelerates for thirty or so pages, and then the novel gets wrapped up cleanly. If you're willing to take a chance on a debut novelist, there's a lot to like on the pages of Top Producer, especially if you have the patience to plow through a lot of exposition with minimal action. Readers who like character-based stories are likely to find Grove O'Rourke as a likeable individual, one whom we are willing to cheer and support.

Odd. Readers need to like two things to enjoy Sarah Vowell's Unfamiliar Fishes: Hawaii and her unique and quirky voice. This talented author can delight many readers with trenchant observation and wickedly funny prose. I found that my own interest in the transformation of Hawaii by American missionaries not strong enough to glide me across her pages of odd narration while I awaited a fine witticism which always arrived. If you like Hawaii, this is the book for you, since your guide presents the history of Hawaii with lively and entertaining writing.

Unfamiliar Fishes

Vowell Sarah

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6/7/12

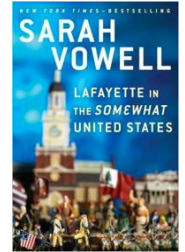


Lafayette in the Somewhat United States

Vowell, Sarah

2/15/16

Wit. Sarah Vowell's wit tickles my funny bone, so I am willing to read whatever she writes. She turned her attention to the eighteenth century in America for her latest book titled, Lafayette in the Somewhat United States. Her curiosity about what brought young Gilbert de Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, to George Washington's side in the Revolutionary War. Vowell studies the topic, thinks about it, and then draws readers into a witty and often ironic story that should keep most readers interested and engaged. Her connections of that time to contemporary life are a bonus and also a delight.

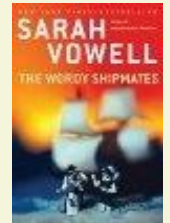


The Wordy Shipmates

Vowell, Sarah

5/25/09

Exceptionalism. If you know a reader who hates reading history because it's boring, read and recommend Sarah Vowell's The Wordy Shipmates. Vowell tells the story of John Winthrop and his fellow shipmates from the Arbella, who arrived in America from England to practice their religion. Winthrop's 1630 sermon, "A Model of Christian Charity," provides the context for Vowell's chatty and irreverent exploration of these people who followed the Bible and set a foundation for American life. Winthrop's "city on a hill" has become a part of our identity that defines our country as an exceptional place with a destiny to perform good acts for the world. Vowell explores the way Anne Hutchinson was treated, and how Roger Williams built a community with tolerance at its center. Vowell's contemporary take on this era and her conversational and quirky writing style makes The Wordy Shipmates a reading adventure rather than a plodding narrative.



On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous

Vuong, Ocean

10/10/19

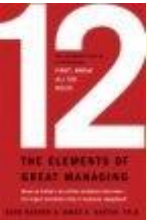
Poetic. If your mother were illiterate, and you knew that a letter to her would never be read or understood, what would you write? We're shown what we could write in the debut novel by Ocean Vuong titled, On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous.



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.

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|--|------------------------|--------|------------------------|---|---|
| Smoke | Vyleta, Dan | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| Our Inner Ape : A Leading Primatologist Explains Why We Are Who We Are | Waal, Franz B.M. de | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Becoming Friends: Worship, Justice, and the Practice of Christian Friendship | Wadell, Paul | *** | May 03 | You've Got a Friend. Gifted teacher Wadell has been writing about friendship since his doctoral dissertation. Latest offering is animated, engaging, and expands our understanding of what it is to be and to have a friend. |  |
| Medicine Walk | Wagamese, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |

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|---|------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Futureface: A Family Mystery, an Epic Quest, and the Secret to Belonging</u> | Wagner, Alex | *** | <u>8/3/18</u> | <p>Identity. For those readers interested in genealogy and genetic testing, Alex Wagner describes in a book titled, <u>Futureface: A Family Mystery, an Epic Quest, and the Secret to Belonging</u>, her search for answers about who she is and where she belongs. Wagner tells readers about her family and her search in Burma and Luxembourg for paper evidence about her family. Those trips came across as more hapless than organized. She shares some results from DNA testing by multiple services with different results. By the end of the book, she reaches a conclusion that will seem obvious to most readers and at last brought her searching to an end.</p> |  |
| Memorial | Wagner, Bruce | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| The Chrysanthemum Palace | Wagner, Bruce | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Cold Tuscan Stone</u> | Wagner, David P. | ***** | <u>2/7/14</u> | <p>Etruscan. Readers looking for a new and fresh crime series should consider reading the debut novel by David P. Wagner titled, <u>Cold Tuscan Stone</u>. Protagonist Rick Montoya has moved from Sante Fe to Rome to work as a translator. Montoya is an interesting and complex character, and Wagner offers readers an enjoyable beginning to what we hope will be a long series. In this outing, Montoya goes to the Etruscan city of Volterra to assist in an investigation. Wagner's descriptive language brings the settings to live, and the plot was entertaining. I'm looking forward to the next installment.</p> |  |

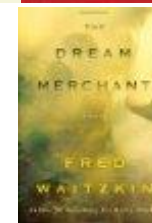
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| <u>12: The Elements of Great Managing</u> | Wagner, Rodd and James K. Harter | ***** | <u>May 07</u> | Tangible. The Gallup Organization folks are back with ten times the data supporting the 12 elements that their research shows make the most difference when it comes to managerial success. Read it now. |  |
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The Dream Merchant

Waitzkin, Fred

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



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|--------------------------|---------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| A Short History of Women | Walbert, Kate | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
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[His Favorites](#)



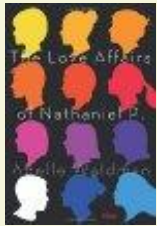
Walbert, Kate

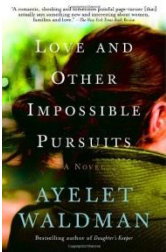
[10/17/18](#)

Vulnerability. Kate Walbert's finely written prose in her novel titled, [His Favorites](#), somehow keeps anger about recollection of childhood sexual abuse at a boil while the tone of the telling the story stays cool and calm. Protagonist Jo Hadley's life changed at age fifteen after her best friend died in an accident that everyone views as Jo's fault. She leaves her Maryland home to board at a prestigious prep school where her vulnerability is noted by a sexual predator. Master Aikens, her thirty-four-year old English professor selects Jo as his latest "favorite" and manipulates her into a sexual relationship. This novel switches between her recollections of high school from a future time back and forth to that formative year. Memories and descriptions begin to be formed, then Walbert switches time periods to focus on rounding out the story. We understand Jo's vulnerability and see the



effect of this formative experience on her life, while Master remains a shadow figure: recalled in part, but never quite a complete character. Master is limited to Jo's recollection of his acts, and that is perfect for this novel which is Jo's story, not Master's. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy this well-crafted novel, as are those readers who are looking for fiction to find a way to tell a #MeToo story and talk to others about the experiences of women. The right book club will find plenty to discuss about this book.

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| <u>She Was Like That</u> | Walbert, Kate | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>The Sunken Cathedral</u> | Walbert, Kate | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>The Love Affairs of Nathaniel P.</u> | Waldman, Adelle | *** | <u>3/22/14</u> | Absorbed. The protagonist of Adele Waldman's debut novel, <u>The Love Affairs of Nathaniel P.</u> is a type. Harvard-educated Nate Piven has just made the transition from freelance writing to having a quality book recognized and published. He's intellectual and self-absorbed. Waldman draws readers into Nate's life through his shallow relationships with women, each of whom must be smart enough to be worthy of his attention. Waldman skewers Nate throughout the book, providing readers with often witty and scathing prose. Readers in their mid-thirties and younger may recognize these relationships as common. Those of at and beyond middle age may find this |  |

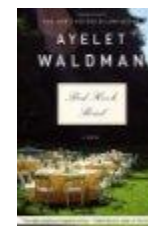
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| | | | | description of relationships somewhat foreign and more sad than comic. | |
| <u>A Door in the Earth</u> | Waldman, Amy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>The Submission</u> | Waldman, Amy | ***** | <u>10/25/11</u> | Faith. Amy Waldman's debut novel, <u>The Submission</u> , tackles a sensitive subject with skill. The plot involves the selection of a design for a 9/11 memorial in New York. The judges select a garden motif from a vast selection of blind submissions. When it turns out that the architect is Muslim, the wonderfully crafted characters react in ways that address trust, vulnerability, and the multiple levels and meanings of "submission." Mo Khan, the architect, reacts with a coldness and rigidity that adds to strength of the novel. Waldman spares no one as the story proceeds, and she allows multiple perspectives to develop simultaneously. Readers can identify with any number of characters. Any reader who likes fine writing, complex characters and a satisfying plot is likely to enjoy this novel. |  |
| <u>Love and Other Impossible Pursuits</u> | Waldman, Ayelet | ***** | | Read and not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Love and Treasure</u> | Waldman, Ayelet | ***** | <u>12/15/14</u> | Restoration. Readers looking for all the elements of a fine novel should consider reading <u>Love and Treasure</u> by Ayelet Waldman. I had not heard of the Hungarian Gold Train until I read this novel. Packed with the stolen possessions of Jews sent to concentration camps, Waldman draws one object from this train, a pendant, and uses its survival as a |  |

contrast to the death of all the owners of objects like it. The plot moves forward and backward in time as an effort is made to restore the pendant to the rightful owner. Along the way, we are treated to great prose and a view on psychoanalysis that added a lot to the novel.

Asylum. Ayelet Waldman’s new novel, Red Hook Road, almost demands discussion among members of a book club. Dramatic action begins with a tragedy: bride and groom are killed in an auto accident on their way to the wedding reception. Married less than hour, and killed off at the beginning of the novel, their lives and relationship provide the grist for the other characters, especially for their mothers, Iris and Jane. Set in Maine, the contrast between the two families is intense: summer versus year-round; blue versus white collar; well-off or getting by. A single misstep changes all their lives, their expectations, their dreams and their obligations. Each character seeks some form of refuge or asylum from their pain and suffering, some way to get through the physical and mental storms. Waldman’s writing is powerful and intense, the characters are well-developed, the plot fast-moving, and the descriptive language brings each setting to life.

Red Hook Road Waldman, Ayelet

9/22/10

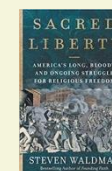


Sacred Liberty:
America’s Long,
Bloody and
Ongoing
Struggle for
Religious
Freedom

Waldman,
Steven

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



[Absolute Trust in the Goodness of the Earth](#)

Walker, Alice

[Apr 03](#)

Comforting. New poems, many of which reveal the meanings of house and home, creating a special place for readers to spend some time in refuge and in pleasure.



[Last Days in Shanghai](#)

Walker, Casey

[1/23/15](#)

Schemes. Casey Walker's debut novel, [Last Days in Shanghai](#), could have gone off the rails at many different places. Walker's great skill kept me suspending disbelief, staying interested in protagonist Luke Slade, and being regularly amused by the complicated schemes at play as the plot progressed. The ingredients Walker mixes include a congressional junket, Chinese construction projects, corruption, sex and alcohol. Luke faces issues of identity and morality, and by the time the novel ends, I was prepared for the decisions Luke makes. Readers willing to try out a debut novelist should consider reading this novel. I was well-entertained.

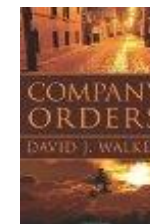


[Company Orders](#)

Walker, David J.

[12/18/12](#)

Brisk. I read David J. Walker's [Company Orders](#) in two sittings. The plot's pace started quickly and seemed to accelerate. I wanted to finish the novel so that I could breathe easier. Protagonist Paul Clark is a Catholic priest in Chicago. His comfortable life gets upended and he ends up in Guyanese jungle fighting for his life. Walker tells a great story, and develops characters quickly and effectively. Readers who like an action-packed mystery are those most likely to enjoy this one.



[The Age of Miracles](#)

Walker, Karen Thompson

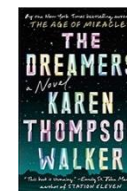
[10/26/12](#)

Changes. Karen Thompson Walker's debut novel, [The Age of Miracles](#), presents a creative device to considering global calamity: the slowing of the earth's rotation. Viewed from the perspective of an eleven year old girl, Julie, the changes in the length of a day, in her family, and in herself, are mined thoroughly by Walker as a coming of age story. Julie is drawn as a complete and complex character,



whose observations are acute. Other characters are less well-developed, but the plot, dialogue and fine descriptive language offset that weakness. Readers looking for a fresh and creative voice should consider this well-written novel.

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, [The Dreamers](#), 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 Dreamers](#)

Walker, Karen
Thompson

[4/4/19](#)

Complete. The thirteenth installment in the Bruno, Chief of Police series by Martin Walker is titled, [A Taste for Vengeance](#). This time out, the Dordogne village of St. Denis revels in the success of girls' rugby and is threatened by IRA criminals in the neighborhood. In the middle of everything is Bruno, who has gotten a promotion. What Walker does so well in this novel and in the series is allow readers to see this interesting protagonist in all aspects of his interesting life: as policeman, coach, cook, friend, lover, etc. During the course of the same day, we spend time with Bruno in each of those roles, and also caring for his dog and riding his horse. Make yourself something tasty to eat,



[A Taste for Vengeance](#)

Walker, Martin

[9/5/18](#)

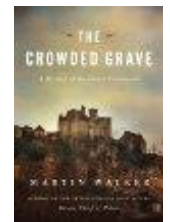
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| | | | | <p>pair a wine, and sit down to read this novel, or any of the ones in the series.</p> <p>Truffles. Chief of Police Bruno Courrèges returns in Black Diamond, the third novel of this series by Martin Walker. Something is amiss with the truffles coming to market, and Bruno is at the center of a complicated investigation with the stakes heightened by local elections that could put Bruno out of a job. Walker does a great job with the police procedural plot, in presenting interesting characters that readers care about, and in describing a place with lively and descriptive prose. I could almost taste the truffles and feel that I was in France. Readers who like light novels with clear plots are those most likely to enjoy this book.</p> | |
| Black Diamond | Walker, Martin | *** | 1/23/12 | |  |
| Fatal Pursuit | Walker, Martin | **** | 8/12/16 | <p>Bugatti. The latest Bruno, Chief of Police, novel by Martin Walker is titled, Fatal Pursuit. Set as always in the Dordogne town of St. Denis, a new element in this novel involves a car rally event for the annual fête, including a Bugatti. The familiar cast of people and animals and food return with different exposition and development of each. For a relaxing excursion to rural France with comfortable characters, consider reading this novel and this series.</p> |  |
| The Body in the Castle Well | Walker, Martin | **** | 7/16/19 | <p>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</p> |  |

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.

Gratitude. Fans of the Bruno, Chief of Police, series by Martin Walker will be delighted by the seventh installment titled, [The Children Return](#). Struggles of the past and present come home to Saint Denis in the Dordogne. An autistic boy named Sami has returned home to Saint Denis after being forced by Islamic extremists to become a terrorist bomb maker in Afghanistan. Jihadists arrive in Saint Denis to kill Sami who had escaped from them. Bruno needs to protect Sami and his family as well as the town. The kindness of farmers in Saint Denis during World War II wins the gratitude of a Jewish woman who was welcomed there as a child. Bruno and the town present her with a plan of how they would benefit from her philanthropy. As with the earlier novels in the series, Walker does a great job with character development, plot momentum, and bringing the location to a reader's vivid awareness. The food can almost be tasted. Readers who like crime fiction as well as fans of the series are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



Feast. Successful character-driven crime fiction requires an appealing protagonist, and Martin Walker has created one in the Chief of Police of St. Denis in the Dordogne, Bruno Courrèges. The fourth novel in this series, [The Crowded Grave](#), presents the central character and the setting in all its richness. The mystery is interesting, the food and drink appealing, and the cast of characters entertaining. This novel is a feast for those readers who like a good mystery, a well-described setting, and characters that are believable.



[The Children Return](#)

Walker, Martin

[5/21/15](#)

[The Crowded Grave](#)

Walker, Martin

[2/26/13](#)

| | | | | | |
|--|----------------|------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <u>The Dark Vineyard</u> | Walker, Martin | *** | <u>11/15/10</u> | <p>Terroir. Martin Walker's mystery novel, <u>The Dark Vineyard</u>, reprises municipal police officer Bruno Courrèges and the small town of Saint-Denis in the Dordogne region of southwest France. In this engaging and entertaining novel, Walker brings the area and characters to life in rich and vivid ways that are best enjoyed when accompanied by a glass or two of the local wine. There's plenty of modernity in the quaint town: a research station is doing something with genetically modified crops, and a California winery has a proposal to bring jobs to the area. Bruno has to navigate local politics while he investigates arson and murder. Readers who like novels in which place and character dominate will find much to enjoy in this novel.</p> |  |
| <u>The Devil's Cave</u> | Walker, Martin | **** | <u>2/20/14</u> | <p>Fraud. I set aside the fifth installment in Martin Walker's Bruno Chief of Police series, <u>The Devil's Cave</u>, the way one would let a fine wine age a bit before consuming it. Since the sixth installment was moving up in my queue, I could wait no longer, and zipped through this novel enjoying every page. The novel opens with a dead woman, marked with a Satanist symbol and accompanied by the accruements of a black mass. St. Denis' police chief, Bruno Courrèges, is on the case, along with a familiar cast from earlier novels, and some fine additions. The plot moves quickly, and turns to real estate fraud. What happens to Bruno inside the cave may be the most dramatic plot action of all the novels so far. Fans will love this contribution to the series. Any reader who likes character based crime fiction will love this one. An added bonus can be found here with the beautiful descriptions of the Perigord and the consumption of lots of fine food.</p> |  |

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| <u>The Patriarch</u> | Walker, Martin | ***** | <u>5/26/16</u> | <p>Conflicts. Old and new conflicts take center stage in the Bruno, Chief of Police novel by Martin Walker titled, <u>The Patriarch</u>. Protagonist Bruno Courreges, is the police presence for the Dordogne town of Saint-Denis. As in the earlier novels of this series, the Dordogne is developed as well as any character, and food and drink are explored with great pleasure. The crime that gives the plot momentum for the eating and for helping readers feel as if we are in the Dordogne, is an interesting one, and Bruno gets just the help he needs to tie all the threads together.</p> |  |
| <u>The Resistance Man</u> | Walker, Martin | ***** | <u>3/7/14</u> | <p>Inheritance. The sixth novel to feature St. Denis' chief of police, Bruno Courrèges, is titled, <u>The Resistance Man</u>. Some crime fiction series become repetitive over time, and they can fail to maintain a reader's interest in the central character, especially when the protagonist remains unchanged. Not this series. Walker seems to increase our knowledge of Bruno in each novel, along with our interest in French food and in the Dordogne region. Walker piles on the plot lines and characters in this novel, beginning with the title, a reference to the death of a World War II resistance fighter. Every plot line was enjoyable and added to my overall interest in the novel. If there's a single theme, it may be the nature of inheritance. By the end of the novel, I was totally satisfied with time well spent in France. Readers new to the series can easily start here.</p> |  |
| <u>The Shooting at Château Rock</u> | Walker, Martin | ***** | <u>9/22/20</u> | <p>Russia. Fans of Martin Walker's Bruno Chief of Police series set in the small French town of St. Denis in the Périgord are those most likely to enjoy reading this year's novel titled, <u>The Shooting at Château Rock</u>. One minute, Bruno is gathering ingredients for a meal, riding a horse, spending time with friends, and the next he's caught up in crime involving Russia way above his pay grade.</p> |  |

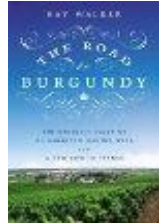
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| | | | | <p>While the plot spends a lot of time with a rock star and a Russian oligarch, the biggest challenge for Bruno in this installment involves mating his dog. I am entertained by every minute I spend reading the novels in this series. Reading is one way to visit the Dordogne while covid-19 travel restrictions are in place.</p> | |
| The Templars' Last Secret | Walker, Martin | **** | 7/20/17 | <p>Terrorists. The twelfth crime novel in the Bruno Chief of Police series by Martin Walker is titled, The Templars' Last Secret. Fans will be pleased to be back in St. Denis and the Dordogne as Walker continues to describe the beauty of the area, its long history and its archeological treasures. The large and familiar cast of characters from the previous novels is back, and no big leaps in relationships or character development happen in this novel. The surprise is that terrorists have come to this bucolic area to wreak havoc, and Bruno and friends are in the middle of everything. Fans of the series are those readers most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p> |  |
| Cherry | Walker, Nico | **** | 1/4/19 | <p>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.</p> |  |

The Road to Burgundy: The Unlikely Story of an American Making Wine and a New Life in France

Walker, Ray

3/22/14

Passion. Many entrepreneurs credit success to hard work, luck, and the kindness of others. An engaging story of the way one individual followed his passion and dream toward success can be found in Ray Walker's book, The Road to Burgundy: The Unlikely Story of an American Making Wine and a New Life in France. Whether you're a wine lover or not, chances are you'll be entertained by this inspiring story of a young man who leaves security behind to follow his dream of becoming a winemaker.



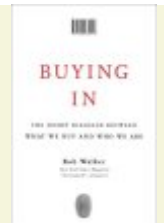
Buying In: The Secret Dialogue Between What We Buy and Who We Are

Walker, Rob

**

Oct 08

Murky. Marketing mavens are likely to love this description of modern methods, but those outside the field are likely to find many parts of this book to be too sluggish and murky to persevere.

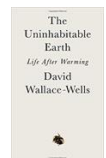


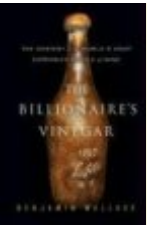
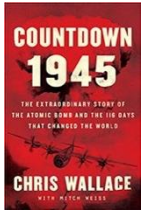
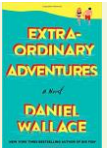

The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming

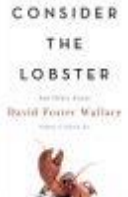
Wallace-Wells, David


4/25/19

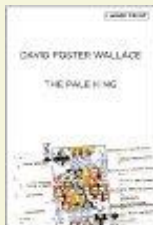
Alarm. How ready are you for severe weather events, climate refugees, food shortages and increasing civil unrest? After reading David Wallace-Wells' book titled, The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming, you're likely to wish you were more prepared. Packed with loads of data, the book tells a horror 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.

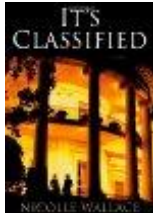


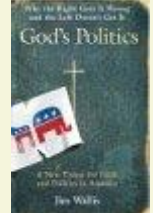
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| <u>The Billionaire's Vinegar: The Mystery of the World's Most Expensive Bottle of Wine</u> | Wallace, Benjamin | *** | <u>Oct 08</u> | Authenticity. Page-turner about the purchasers and sellers of real and fake rare old wines. Sample with a nice Bordeaux and become enamored with fascinating characters. |  |
| <u>Countdown 1945: The Extraordinary Story of the Atomic Bomb and the 116 Days That Changed the World</u> | Wallace, Chris and Mitch Weiss | **** | <u>10/12/20</u> | Momentum. Readers who enjoy twentieth century history meant for a general audience will enjoy Chris Wallace and Mitch Weiss's book titled, <u>Countdown 1945: The Extraordinary Story of the Atomic Bomb and the 116 Days That Changed the World</u> . There's momentum and drama in this book that is structured starting four months before the atomic bombs were released on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I learned more about Truman's decision-making process after reading this book, and the stories of the pilots and others made the account personal. |  |
| <u>Extraordinary Adventures</u> | Wallace, Daniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>Both Flesh and Not</u> | Wallace, David Foster | **** | <u>10/8/13</u> | Words. I found something to like in each of the fifteen essays in the new collection of works by the late David Foster Wallace titled, <u>Both Flesh and Not</u> . His observations are astute, his prose clever and witty. I had the sense that he fine tuned each piece to be sure he selected just the right words and phrases to suit his purpose. Many of these essays were written to pay the bills. Those who paid him received great value. Any reader who likes well-written essays should consider reading this collection. |  |

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| Consider the Lobster | Wallace, David Foster | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
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| <u>Oblivion: Stories</u> | Wallace, David Foster | ** | <u>Nov 04</u> | Wordy. Eight idiosyncratic and quirky stories that call for extra energy to read and understand. Some of the longest sentences ever constructed. |  |
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| <u>The Pale King</u> | Wallace, David Foster | *** | <u>7/22/11</u> | Boredom. I can almost hear David Foster Wallace's laughter from the afterlife when he learns that his unfinished novel, <u>The Pale King</u> , turned out to be his most accessible and popular work when it was edited and published posthumously. This almost six-hundred-page novel makes boredom funny. Set at an IRS office in Peoria, Illinois, the characters made me laugh out loud and their boring work and lives becomes fodder for Wallace's careful choice of words and presentation of life in all its richness. Readers who can tolerate odd structure will be rewarded with a rich reading experience and lots of laughter. |  |
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| It's Classified | Wallace, Nicolle | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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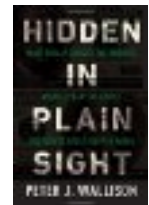
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| God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It | Wallis, Jim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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Hidden in Plain Sight: What Really Caused the World's Worst Financial Crisis and Why It Could Happen Again

Wallison, Peter J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

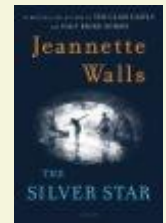


[The Silver Star](#)

Walls, Jeannette

[8/27/13](#)

Courage. Readers looking to read something that will promote good feelings should consider Jeannette Walls' novel, [The Silver Star](#). I finished the book with a reminder about the difference that a single individual can make on a community, and the ways in which courage can overcome injustice. Walls could have crossed a line into sentimentality, but she avoided that with skill. This is a short novel that can be read quickly. When I finished it, I felt refreshed and optimistic.

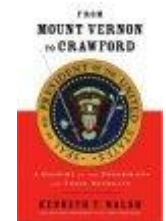


From Mount Vernon to Crawford

Walsh, Kenneth T.

Unread

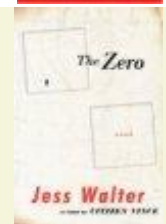
Shelf of Ennui 2006



The Zero

Walter, Jess

Read, but not reviewed.

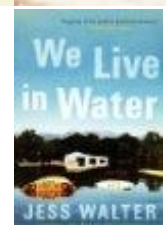


[We Live in Water](#)

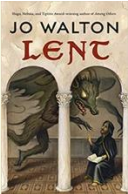
Walter, Jess


[4/20/13](#)


Variety. I enjoyed each of the short stories in the debut collection from Jess Walter titled after one of them, [We Live in Water](#). Walter draws characters efficiently and tells a story with humor or sadness that fits perfectly to the subject and content. These are interesting lives of people whose variety and



differences helped me appreciate how much each of us has in common with one another, no matter what the specifics of our particular situations. Fans of the short story are most likely to enjoy this collection. A book club might find the variety in these stories would lead to interesting conversations.

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| <u>Lent</u> | Walton, Jo | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
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| <u>Family Trust</u> | Wang, Kathy | ***** | <u>12/13/18</u> | <p>Ensemble. Kathy Wang's debut novel titled, <u>Family Trust</u>, introduces readers to the very interesting Huang family, building each character with the complexity we find in people we know well. As patriarch Stanley Huang comes close to death, the truth or fiction about his wealth will be revealed. Of course, there is more to inheritance than money, and Stanley's children, Fred and Kate, his ex-wife, Linda, and current wife, Mary, are all inheritors of Stanley's love. Each character faces ambitions of one sort or another, with varying levels of achievement. Wang draws readers into a family that becomes more interesting as the novel progresses.</p> |  |
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| <u>Chemistry</u> | Wang, Weike | ***** | <u>8/3/17</u> | <p>Commitment. I ached with empathy for the anxiety suffered by the unnamed protagonist in Weike Wang's debut novel titled, <u>Chemistry</u>. The narrator faces key coming of age questions about commitment in her personal and work life. After years of diligent study in chemistry, she realizes that she doesn't like the work. When her scientist boyfriend proposes marriage, she cannot commit herself to what that means. Wang explores different meanings of chemistry and the ways in which</p> |  |
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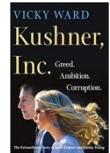
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| | | | | family and commitments become part of who we are. This is a funny and well-written novel that will appeal to intelligent readers who understand the nature of expectations and anxiety that life choices can bring. | |
| <u>Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think</u> | Wansink, Brian | *** | <u>Apr 07</u> | Attention. Food psychologist and researcher shares university experiments that provide entertaining reading and prove that attention to small efforts can produce big results. |  |
| <u>Sing, Unburied, Sing</u> | Ward, Jesmyn | **** | <u>12/7/17</u> | Orchestral. The song in Jesmyn Ward's novel, <u>Sing, Unburied, Sing</u> , will break your heart. An ensemble of characters sing their part in a chorus of racism, drug addiction, poverty, incarceration, child neglect and love. Ward's prose unveils places and people with perfect language and deep sentiment. A reader's empathy builds on every page. Even the ghosts sing in this chorus because they remain attached to the people and places. This novel is on many of the best of the year lists and won the National Book Award for fiction. |  |
| Gorgon: Paleontology, Obsession, and the Greatest Catastrophe in Earth's History | Ward, Peter Douglas | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>Love and Other Thought Experiments</u> | Ward, Sophie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

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.

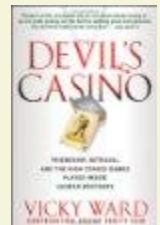


The Devil's Casino: Friendship, Betrayal, and the High Stakes Games Played Inside Lehman Brothers

Ward, Vicky

7/23/10

Inside. Vicky Ward's contribution to the growing shelf of books about the recent financial crisis is titled, The Devil's Casino: Friendship, Betrayal, and the High Stakes Games Played Inside Lehman Brothers. She interviewed scores of people inside and outside Lehman and assembled the information she gathered into what's essentially a morality tale. From Ward's point of view, the villain in the decline of Lehman Brothers was Joe Gregory. Ward presents impressions of the key people, and uses those impressions to construct scenarios about the ways in which those people contributed to the downfall of a company. Real insiders may dispute her views; general readers will enjoy the ways in which she dramatizes the events.



Rusty Brown, Part 1

Ware, Chris

10/15/19

Inexplicable. I worked hard while reading Chris Ware's graphic novel titled, Rusty Brown, Part 1. 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

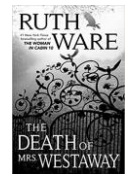


highs and lows of life. This is a story of the struggles of life and love. By calling this volume one, Ware is preparing loyal readers to anticipate continuing the story. This book is way beyond my ability to explain, so I suggest that any interested reader pick up the volume and sample what Ware has to offer.

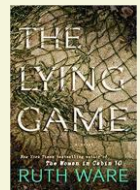
Snoop. Any reader who has attended a corporate offsite retreat will find delight while reading the murder mystery by Ruth Ware titled, [One by One](#). Alcohol, entitlement, and secret agendas provide the ingredients for mischief, and the rustic chalet in the French Alps may take your breath away, literally. By the time an avalanche strikes, most readers will be hooked on this exciting novel, even if it seems like a very familiar plot.



Magpies. One staple of summer reading is a suspense novel, and Ruth Ware's latest book titled, [The Death of Mrs. Westaway](#), will satisfy those readers who like an engaging thriller. A protagonist named Hal living hand to mouth receives a letter about an inheritance. Ware leads Hal to and fro as she considers how to play her hand, which is a skill she has developed as a Tarot card reader. When the magpies arrive on the scene, Agatha Christie fans will feel on familiar ground, albeit without a Miss Marple to straighten everything and everyone out. Instead we have hapless Hal gradually stumbling into jeopardy and reward. I was thoroughly entertained by this novel.



Truth. By midway through reading Ruth Ware's psychological crime novel titled, [The Lying Game](#), I was imagining the scenes with such vivid detail that I could have been watching the movie. During one formative year together at boarding school, four girls formed a clique and enjoyed an adolescent diversion that was based on lying. Ruth Ware draws us forward and backward in time as she lays out



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| One by One | Ware, Ruth | ***** | 11/17/20 | <p>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> <p>Snoop. Any reader who has attended a corporate offsite retreat will find delight while reading the murder mystery by Ruth Ware titled, One by One. Alcohol, entitlement, and secret agendas provide the ingredients for mischief, and the rustic chalet in the French Alps may take your breath away, literally. By the time an avalanche strikes, most readers will be hooked on this exciting novel, even if it seems like a very familiar plot.</p> |  |
| The Death of Mrs. Westaway | Ware, Ruth | ***** | 7/12/18 | <p>Magpies. One staple of summer reading is a suspense novel, and Ruth Ware's latest book titled, The Death of Mrs. Westaway, will satisfy those readers who like an engaging thriller. A protagonist named Hal living hand to mouth receives a letter about an inheritance. Ware leads Hal to and fro as she considers how to play her hand, which is a skill she has developed as a Tarot card reader. When the magpies arrive on the scene, Agatha Christie fans will feel on familiar ground, albeit without a Miss Marple to straighten everything and everyone out. Instead we have hapless Hal gradually stumbling into jeopardy and reward. I was thoroughly entertained by this novel.</p> |  |
| The Lying Game | Ware, Ruth | ***** | 9/6/17 | <p>Truth. By midway through reading Ruth Ware's psychological crime novel titled, The Lying Game, I was imagining the scenes with such vivid detail that I could have been watching the movie. During one formative year together at boarding school, four girls formed a clique and enjoyed an adolescent diversion that was based on lying. Ruth Ware draws us forward and backward in time as she lays out</p> |  |

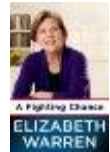
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| | | | | clues about the truth of what really happened at school. Fans of crime fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy reading this novel. | |
| <u>The Turn of the Key</u> | Ware, Ruth | ***** | <u>11/9/19</u> | <p>Story. My prescription for 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 blends the horrors of smart home technology with a house that was the place for tragedy in the past.</p> |  |
| <u>The Woman in Cabin 10</u> | Ware, Ruth | **** | <u>1/16/17</u> | <p>Cruise. Fans of suspense novels are those readers most likely to enjoy Ruth Ware's novel titled, <u>The Woman in Cabin 10</u>. Protagonist Lo Blacklock gets a great assignment from a travel magazine: spend a week on a luxury cruise and write about it. This work becomes not quite a relaxing and stress-free assignment after Lo sees something terrifying and the confinement of the ship becomes overbearing. Lo questions herself and her drinking while Ware keeps readers wondering who and what to believe and twist follows twist.</p> |  |

[A Fighting Chance](#)

Warren,
Elizabeth

[7/9/14](#)

Populist. Most readers with an interest in public policy know some of the highlights of Elizabeth Warren's life, especially her role in the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and her successful campaign to become a United States Senator from Massachusetts. For those who want to learn more about this outspoken public figure, she offers her perspective on her life thus far in her memoir titled, [A Fighting Chance](#). The title refers to her main ambition in public life: to level the playing field to give the average person in America a fighting chance to succeed. The book presents her form of populism with great enthusiasm.

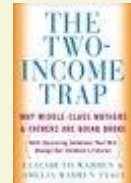


The Two-
Income Trap:
Why Middle
Class Mothers
and Fathers Are
Going Broke

Warren,
Elizabeth

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2004



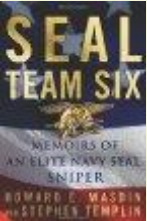
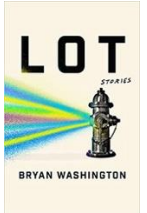
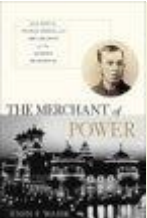
[This Fight Is Our Fight: The Battle to Save America's Middle Class](#)


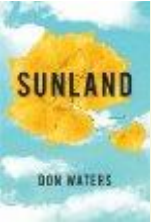




Warren,
Elizabeth

[11/21/17](#)

Pugnacious. One progressive politician with a clear voice about what she thinks is right and wrong in America is Elizabeth Warren. In her book titled, [This Fight Is Our Fight: The Battle to Save America's Middle Class](#), she conveys that clarity by drawing a line with corporations and the wealthy on one side and middle class working people on the other. Her main theme is that corporations and wealthy donors benefit from policies to increase their rewards, while the average worker falls further behind every year. Readers interested in public policy, whether agreeing with Warren or opposed, will benefit from hearing the clarion sound of her voice and passion about our current state of affairs.



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| <u>SEAL Team Six: Memoirs of an Elite Navy SEAL Sniper</u> | Wasdin, Howard E. and Stephen Templin | ***** | <u>6/27/11</u> | <p>Elite. The professional members of the American military are worthy of the respect and admiration of all citizens, along with our profound thanks for their service. Among the most expert and best trained are the SEALs, and within the SEALs, Team Six is the best of the best. Readers gain a rare look at their training and field actions in a new book by former SEALs Howard Wasdin and Stephen Templin in their book, <u>Seal Team Six: Memoirs of an Elite Navy SEAL Sniper</u>. I couldn't put this book down once I started it. The severity of their training, and the manner in which all but the very best are culled from the program, is described in detail. Any reader who wants to learn more about our skilled and brave elite forces will find this book a pleasure to read.</p> |  |
| <u>Lot</u> | Washington, Bryan | ***** | <u>6/10/20</u> | <p>Impressions. There are thirteen finely written short stories in the debut collection by Bryan Washington, the middle story of which is used as title for the collection, <u>Lot</u>. We get impressions in these stories, sometimes fragments, of Houston life. Some of the stories are connected. Many involve losses, and the struggle for survival. All the stories are finely written and will appeal to any reader who appreciates literary fiction.</p> |  |
| The Merchant of Power | Wasik, John F. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |

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|---|---------------------|--------|---------------|--|---|
| Elements of Style | Wasserstein, Wendy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Sunland | Waters, Don | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| The Night Watch | Waters, Sarah | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>The Paying Guests</u> | Waters, Sarah | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| <u>The First 90 Days: Critical Success Strategies for New Leaders at All Levels</u> | Watkins, Michael | ***** | <u>Feb 04</u> | Turbo. Great approach for making transitions faster and more effective by moving beyond sink or swim toward well-structured steps based on what's worked for others. Get copies for both manager and new hire. |  |
| <u>Your Next Move: The Leader's Guide to Successfully Navigating Major Career Transitions</u> | Watkins, Michael D. | *** | <u>1/2/10</u> | Considerations. Transitions within corporate settings can be dicey, and in his new book, <u>Your Next Move</u> , Michael Watkins helps readers consider how to make transitions more likely to succeed. Any reader facing a new role within an organization will find ways to prepare for that transition after reading this book. Watkins does well in offering approaches to assessments, and to diagnosing a |  |

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| | | | | <p>situation prior to taking action. While I was a bit turned off by his buzzword tools like STARS and FOGLAMP, I can see how his templates could be useful. I found the anecdotes or stories he uses to illustrate various transitions will either relate or not to individual readers. At the end of each chapter, Watkins provides questions and a checklist. Your Next Move provides a useful framework and engaging considerations for anyone involved in a work transition.</p> | |
| Miss Jane | Watson, Brad | ***** | 1/3/17 | <p>Vitality. Finely written fiction works or clicks on multiple levels that unite to form an integrated work of art. Brad Watson's skilled art in his novel titled, Miss Jane, delighted me on many levels. Over the course of fewer than three hundred pages, Watson presents readers with the life of protagonist Miss Jane Chisolm, from birth to death in rural Mississippi through most of the 20th century. Jane was born with a genital birth defect that would prevent her from following the typical path of a woman of her time toward marriage and childbearing. Instead, her vitality takes other forms as she finds an authentic life true to her own nature. Watson's prose matches the setting that he describes in vivid detail. His insight into love and nature and beauty inject the novel with elements that will expand every reader's view of those things. Adding a flock of peacocks to the mix brought even more intensity to the joyful experience of reading this finely written novel.</p> |  |
| Semicolon: The Past, Present and Future of a Misunderstood Mark | Watson, Cecelia | *** | 11/21/19 | <p>Audience. As I kept reading Cecelia Watson's book titled, Semicolon: The Past, Present and Future of a Misunderstood Mark, 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</p> |  |

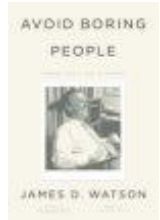
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| | | | | punctuation? I expected something a bit jauntier than what's on offer in this book. I truly didn't know that the semicolon is controversial. I didn't know that there have been periods of popularity followed by periods of aversion whether 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. | |
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[Avoid Boring People: And Other Lessons From a Life in Science](#)

Watson, James D.

[Apr 08](#)

Experience. Nobel winner's memoir is rich with details of a life in which his vivacity probably ensured that he spent very little time boring other people.



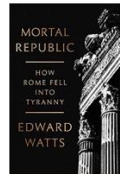
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| <u>Orchard</u> | Watson, Larry | **** | <u>Oct 03</u> | Artistic Vision. Must one understand an enigma in order to portray it to others? Well-crafted novel presents complicated relationship between artist and model, and their respective spouses. Intimacy and alienation co-exist. |  |
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[Mortal Republic: How Rome Fell into Tyranny](#)

Watts, Edward J.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



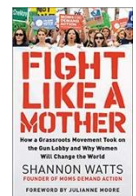
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| <u>What Color is a Conservative? My Life and My Politics</u> | Watts, J.C. | *** | <u>Feb 03</u> | Preacher. Sermonizing biography of this former congressman. He's who he is because of how his parents raised him in a small Oklahoma town. First hundred of 275 pages brings us through high school. |  |
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[Fight Like a Mother: How a Grassroots Movement Took on the Gun Lobby and Why](#)


Watts, Shannon

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.




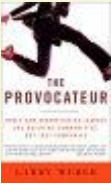
Women Will
Change the
World


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| <u>Apartment</u> | Wayne, Teddy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Loner</u> | Wayne, Teddy | ***** | <u>11/22/16</u> | <p>Obsession. Beware of first impressions when reading Teddy Wayne's novel titled, <u>Loner</u>. Narrator and protagonist David Federman introduces himself to readers as a gifted outsider on the brink of becoming accepted by his peers at Harvard. Over the course of just over two hundred pages, Wayne takes us inside David's mind as his infatuation with another student becomes an obsession. Privilege, class, gender, alienation and inclusion are all explored with great skill and nuance. Readers who enjoy well-written literary fiction are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.</p> |  |
| The Love Song of Jonny Valentine | Wayne, Teddy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| A Pilgrim in a Pilgrim Church: Memoirs of a Catholic Archbishop | Weakland, Rembert G. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |

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| <u>How Bernie Won: Inside the Revolution That's Taking Back Our Country--and Where We Go from Here</u> | Weaver, Jeff | *** | <u>7/6/18</u> | Insider. The manager of Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign, Jeff Weaver, has written an account of that campaign titled, <u>How Bernie Won: Inside the Revolution That's Taking Back Our Country--and Where We Go from Here</u> . Political junkies of any stripe are those readers most likely to enjoy reading this insider's account of the campaign. I especially enjoyed Weaver's account of the tense relationship between the Democratic National Committee and the Sanders campaign. |  |
| Born fighting : how the Scots-Irish shaped America | Webb, James | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| Mormon Christianity: What Other Christians Can Learn From the Latter-day Saints | Webb, Stephen H. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| Life is a Wheel: Love, Death, Etc., and a Bike Ride Across America | Weber, Bruce | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| <u>Still Life with Monkey</u> | Weber, Katharine | ***** | <u>4/4/19</u> | 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 |  |

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| | | | | <p>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> | |
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| <u>Triangle</u> | Weber, Katharine | ** | <u>Sept 06</u> | <p>Oratorio. Novel recounts the working conditions for women and the memorable fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in 1909, as recalled by the sole remaining survivor, showing how stories define us, whether true or false.</p> |  |
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| <u>The Provocateur: How a Generation of Leaders Are Building Communities, Not Just Companies</u> | Weber, Larry | DNR | <u>Apr 02</u> | <p>Fact-less observations, not unlike the worst of Tom Peters: reflections on his own consumer experiences, and generalizations that the rest of us could care less about.</p> |  |
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| In CHEAP We Trust: The Story of a Misunderstood American Virtue | Weber, Lauren | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
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| <u>The Courage to be Catholic: Crisis, Reform and the Future of the Church</u> | Weigel, George | *** | <u>Mar 03</u> | Fiddling with Fidelity. Weigel's clear cut and direct solution to the current crises in the Catholic Church: return to the faithfulness you never had. |  |
| The Great Glass Sea | Weil, Josh | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| The Real Deal | Weill, Sandy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>The Truants</u> | Weinberg, Kate | ***** | <u>6/10/20</u> | Teacher. Intelligent readers will find a lot to like in Kate Weinberg's debut novel titled, <u>The Truants</u> . Protagonist Jess Walker can't wait to be on her East Anglia university campus and experience the skills of a charismatic teacher, Dr. Lorna Clay, an expert on Agatha Christie. Weinberg develops a cast of fascinating characters and structures the novel in ways that Christie would recognize. Jess becomes part of a small fun-loving group and Lorna Clay becomes the major influence on how Jess thinks and lives. We're treated to love triangles, significant coming of age moments, murder, pages of clever writing and just the right amount of plot twisting tension. |  |
| Taking on the Trust: The Epic Battle of Ida Tarbell and John D. Rockefeller | Weinberg, Steve | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009. I got as far as page 21, and decided this is one epic battle that I could skip. |  |

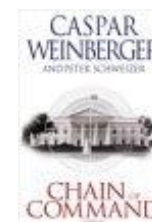
Chain of Command

Weinberger, Caspar W. and Peter Schweizer

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Oct 05

Resistible. Plenty of suspense, but plodding and predictable plot with preposterous elements that distract from what should have been better novel by former Secretary of Defense.



Uncanny Valley

Weiner, Anna

3/13/20

Outsider. Most readers don't work in Silicon Valley, so for us outsiders, Anna Weiner's memoir titled, Uncanny Valley, gives us a view into one person's perspective on what it might be like to work for startups in that place. Weiner entered the Valley as an outsider, moving from New York to San Francisco, and not bringing with her the highly valued tech skills that dominate the region. Instead, she brought smarts, emotional intelligence, and the ability to communicate with customers. Weiner's writing makes the book engaging and interesting for those readers who want a glimpse inside the culture of Silicon Valley startups.



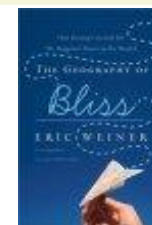
The Geography of Bliss

Weiner, Eric

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May 08

Xanadu. Often funny anecdotes of author's search for the source of happiness in those places where people are known to be happiest.



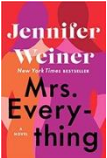

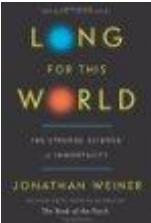
Big Summer

Weiner, Jennifer

8/5/20

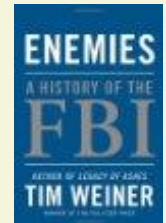
Friend. Female friendships can be complicated things, and there's plenty of complexity in Jennifer Weiner's novel titled, Big Summer. Protagonist Daphne Berg is surprised when estranged high school friend Drue Cavanaugh contacts her six years after a dramatic breakup and invites her to be the maid of honor at a huge society wedding in outer Cape Cod. Daphne ends up feeling sorry for friendless Drue, so she agrees. What follows is a whirlwind of Instagram posts to plus-size Daphne's followers, and to all the buzz around Drue and her



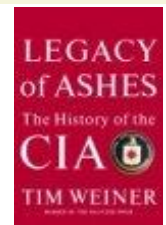
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| | | | | <p>fiancée. There are rom com elements in this novel that will make readers laugh, and enough seriousness to keep turning pages to the end. For those with covid-19 diminished attention, this novel is likely to be a fun and satisfying distraction.</p> <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 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.</p> | |
| <u>Mrs. Everything</u> | Weiner, Jennifer | ***** | <u>11/21/19</u> | |  |
| <u>Paris in Stride</u> | Weiner, Jesse Kanelos and Sarah Moroz | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Long for This World: The Strange Science of Immortality</u> | Weiner, Jonathan | ***** | <u>9/10/10</u> | <p>Grave. I was unaware of the extent of longevity research until I read Jonathan Weiner's entertaining new book, <u>Long for This World: The Strange Science of Immortality</u>. I found myself recalling the daily remark of a high school teacher who began each class with the glooming, but accurate, statement: "Here we are, one more day closer to the grave." Weiner presents how some scientists are exploring ways to dramatically extend</p> |  |

human life spans. The eccentric British scientist Aubrey de Grey provides much of the color in this story, and I found myself alternating between thinking of him as a visionary or a crackpot. Any reader who would like to ponder some of the what-ifs about extending life spans will find a lot to think about on the pages of this interesting book.

Lawbreakers. It takes special writing skill to describe dramatic and consequential activities in a measured way. Many writers about the inner workings of government wear a prejudice with pride. Tim Weiner is that special writer who presents a true story in a carefully researched, measured way. His latest book, Enemies: A History of the FBI, draws on vast amounts of raw material, some recently released (after his three-decade-old FOIA request was approved). Weiner lays out in detail a century-long legacy of surveillance and secret intelligence. The conflict between the need to gather information and the importance of protecting civil liberties remains in tension during the entire history of the FBI. I was enlightened by just how many laws were broken in our name. Readers who are interested in government, power and intelligence are those most likely to enjoy this book.



Bunglers. Author concludes that CIA has been packed with bunglers from the beginning to the present, spending huge amounts of money and producing little timely and useful intelligence. You'll shake your head and get angry.



Enemies: A History of the FBI

Weiner, Tim

5/25/12

Legacy of Ashes

Weiner, Tim

Dec 07

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| <u>One Man Against the World: The Tragedy of Richard Nixon</u> | Weiner, Tim | ***** | <u>10/15/15</u> | <p>Enemies. The criminal behavior of Richard Nixon while president of the United States may have been a turning point in the attitude of citizens about political leadership. Tim Weiner presents a fresh look at Nixon in his book titled, <u>One Man Against the World: The Tragedy of Richard Nixon</u>. Thanks to the ongoing release of documents and tape recordings, more is known now than in the past about what happened during the Nixon presidency. It was even worse than I imagined. Nixon's focus on enemies, domestic and foreign, real and imagined, became all-consuming. His duplicity at the time he was in office led me to a rule of thumb about most politicians: whenever they say, "this is not about x," it is most certainly all about x. Readers interested in politics and recent history will find a lot to enjoy in this finely written book.</p> |  |
| <u>One Day: The Extraordinary Story of an Ordinary 24 Hours in America</u> | Weingarten, Gene | ***** | <u>2/21/20</u> | <p>Herculean. Treat yourself to a celebration of life by reading Gene Weingarten's finely written book titled, <u>One Day: The Extraordinary Story of an Ordinary 24 Hours in America</u>. Pulitzer-prize winning Weingarten had strangers pick a random date, and then he went out looking for human interest stories from that date. His process involved conducting hundreds of interviews over the course of six years. The result is a glimpse into all kinds of lives and their stories. Weingarten approaches the complexity of human behavior and presents real people and their interesting and compelling stories.</p> |  |
| <u>I'm With Stupid</u> | Weingarten, Gene and Gina Barreca | *** | <u>June 04</u> | <p>Hilarious. Subtitle tells it all: One Man. One Woman. 10,000 Years of Misunderstanding Between the Sexes Cleared Right Up. At times, you'll laugh out loud. Often, you'll read sections aloud to someone of the other gender.</p> |  |

Ronald Reagan Weisberg, Jacob Unread Shelf of Ennui 2017.



The Bush Tragedy

Weisberg, Jacob

May 08

Junior. Shakespearean quotes begin each chapter of this reflection on George W. Bush, with heavy doses of superb writing and amateur psychological insights into Bush's behavior, especially family relationships.



An Ordinary Spy

Weisberg, Joseph

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008

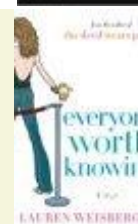


Everyone Worth Knowing

Weisberger, Lauren

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Read, but not reviewed.



The Devil Wears Prada

Weisberger, Lauren

*

Sep 03

Role Models. Odd novel of the relationship between the boss from hell and a naïve and submissive assistant in a job a million women would die for. Some funny parts, then pathos, then ennui. Unappealing characters.



(((Semitism)))
Being Jewish in
America in the
Age of Trump

Weisman, Jonathan

5/11/18

Targeted. Jonathan Weisman's sense of his Jewish identity became upended after his role as a *New York Times* editor gave him visibility in the last presidential election campaign and he found himself targeted and attacked on Twitter in what all can agree is a renewed anti-Semitism in America. In his book titled, (((Semitism)))
Being Jewish in
America in the Age of Trump, Weisman explores



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| | | | aspects of our current society and the ways in which hate and tolerance influence our politics. Weisman offers ways to leave behind any remaining complacency about hate and targeting of any groups and then aligning ourselves with anyone who is vulnerable in today's toxic environment. | |
| <u>The Chosen Wars: How Judaism Became an American Religion</u> | Weisman, Steven R. | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Daniel Patrick Moynihan: A Portrait in Letters of an American Visionary</u> | Weisman, Steven R. (editor) | ***** | <u>4/22/11</u> Illuminating. Pat Moynihan was a prolific writer who served in government in a variety of roles for over forty years. A new book, <u>Daniel Patrick Moynihan: A Portrait in Letters of an American Visionary</u> , presents the scope and scale of his interests in a succinct 700 pages. The fine editing by Steven Weisman allows the words of Moynihan to come to life and to illuminate readers on the issues that engaged him, and the sage and visionary advice he provided to many United States Presidents. After both short and long pieces in this collection, I found myself saying, "Wow." Here's one such summary (p. 664): "In some 40 years of government work I have learned one thing for certain. As I have put it, the central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society. The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself. Thanks to this interaction, we're a better society in nearly all respects than we were." Any reader interested in politics, especially over the past half-century, will find much to savor in this fine book. |  |

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| <u>Born to Steal: When the Mafia Hit Wall Street</u> | Weiss, Gary | ** | <u>Sep 03</u> | Unwise Guys. Business Week reporter uses the life of Louis Pasciuto to describe some ways that the Mafia operates on Wall Street. Meet unsavory characters doing bad things. |  |
| <u>Jack: Straight From the Gut</u> | Welch, Jack | **** | <u>11/01</u> | Jack sums up his GE career: “Almost everything should and could have been done faster.” |  |
| <u>Winning</u> | Welch, Jack with Suzy Welch | *** | <u>June 05</u> | Spinning. Royalties to charity, written by Suzy, the conversational presentation of management theories and practices will provide two or three useful ideas for any reader. |  |
| <u>Big Ugly</u> | Weld, William | *** | | We recommended <i>Mackerel by Moonlight</i> , and also recommend this sequel, especially as a respite from election year rhetoric. |  |
| <u>Mackerel by Moonlight</u> | Weld, William | *** | <u>1/00</u> | For a change of pace from the political campaigns, give this novel by the former governor of Massachusetts a try. |  |
| Shadow Show: All-New Stories in Celebration of Ray Bradbury | Weller, Sam | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |

Travels with
Barley: A
Journey
Through Beer
Culture in
America

Wells, Ken

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005



Vegetable
Harvest

Wells, Patricia

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Read, but not reviewed.



[The Wages of Sin](#)

Welsh, Kaite

[6/9/17](#)

Doctor. Kaite Welsh's debut novel titled, [The Wages of Sin](#), introduces readers to a great protagonist, Sarah Gilchrist, a medical student in Edinburgh in the 1890s. This novel will appeal to readers who love character-based descriptive historical fiction. Sarah faces the obstacles that women of her time encountered especially at a medical school that "welcomed" her in its first coed class in 1892. Many readers will want Welsh to reprise Sarah in future novels.



31 Days

Werth, Barry

**

Read, but not reviewed.

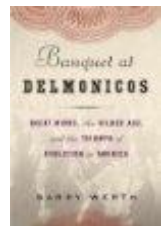


Banquet at
Delmonico's:
Great Minds,
the Gilded Age,
and the
Triumph of
Evolution in
America

Werth, Barry

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009. Put this down after 30 pages and didn't pick up again.



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| <u>Faith Ed: Teaching About Religion in an Age of Intolerance</u> | Wertheimer, Linda K. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| Everything That Rises | Weschler, Lawrence | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>In Fed We Trust: Ben Bernanke's War on the Great Panic</u> | Wessel, David | *** | <u>9/19/09</u> | <p>Sobering. David Wessel, <i>The Wall Street Journal's</i> economics editor, presents a measured and sobering account of the current financial crisis in his book, <u>In Fed We Trust: Ben Bernanke's War on the Great Panic</u>. At each new crisis moment, Bernanke pushes to do whatever it takes to avoid a depression. Wessel shows that at the time of each action, there was a lack of sufficient pessimism that things could get worse. Mostly, the Fed was wrong, and things did get worse. I was struck by the challenges for decision makers given the rapid deterioration of companies, and the limited number of alternatives. The fact that the Fed had \$800 billion in assets that it could deploy without oversight was a shocker. This is a time period that will receive increasing scrutiny and analysis in coming years. This timely account presents one version of whether or not the actions were the best that could have been taken at the time. The costs of the Fed's decisions remain unknown, and Wessel's revelation of the Fed as a fourth branch of government gives all readers a chance to reflect on whether or not that's a situation that we as citizens will want to solidify.</p> |  |

Black Prophetic
Fire

West, Cornel

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.



Democracy
Matters

West, Cornel

Nov 04

Instructive. Professor provides insight into the challenges facing democracy in America. Free markets, imperialism, nihilism, religion, hip-hop are all covered as West turns a mirror on us.



The Political
Brain

Weston, Drew

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008



Dirty Work

Weston, Gabriel

8/26/14

Introspective. Gabriel Weston uses great restraint in her novel titled, Dirty Work, as she sends readers on a month-long internal journey with narrator and protagonist Nancy Mullion. Nancy is a surgeon who has been suspended because of a botched procedure. As she awaits the verdict of a review panel, she reflects back on what happened in the operating room that day. Weston structures the novel one week at a time, as we follow Nancy in real time and in the past. This debut novel takes readers into a situation fraught with psychological tension, and Weston capably helps us understand human nature and I closed this novel with greater insight.

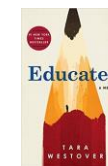


Educated: A
Memoir

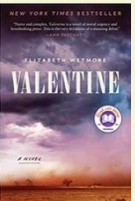
Westover, Tara

7/24/18

Survival. There were many times while reading Tara Westover's memoir titled, Educated: A Memoir, that my jaw dropped. This young woman's extraordinary life kept me turning pages wanting to find out what happened next. Westover was raised in rural Idaho, home schooled, and limited to a world defined and interpreted by her survivalist



parents. The end of the memoir is Westover earning her doctorate from Cambridge. The journey will interest any reader who enjoys learning about people whose experiences are quite different from ours.

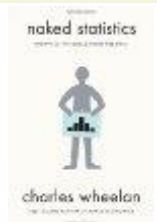
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| <u>Valentine</u> | Wetmore, Elizabeth | **** | <u>6/24/20</u> | <p>Odessa. The five female narrators of Elizabeth Wetmore's debut novel titled, <u>Valentine</u>, never flinch as they describe their lives in Odessa, Texas during the 1970s oil boom. After an opening scene involving the brutal rape of a young Mexican by a violent oil worker, the pace never stops as Wetmore lets these women tell us of their struggle for survival in a culture that stacks the deck against them at every turn in life. Wetmore develops complex characters and leads readers to hear their stories with compassion and feel their struggle with empathy.</p> |  |
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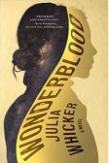
Naked Statistics: Stripping the Dread from the Data

Wheelan, Charles

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



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| <u>Wonderblood</u> | Whicker, Julia | **** | <u>4/23/20</u> | <p>Magic. In her debut novel titled, <u>Wonderblood</u>, Julia Whicker presents a future United States where we have turned away from science and toward magic. Science failed half the world's population as it did not protect people from disease. We turn to faith and interpret portents and provide blood sacrifice to ward off danger. Violent factions struggle for control and the locus for worship becomes Cape Canaveral, a relic of a time long past. Whicker offers interesting characters, political machinations, and an apocalyptic vision that will make many readers shiver.</p> |  |
|------------------------------------|----------------|------|--------------------------------|--|---|

American Turnaround: Reinventing AT&T and GM and the Way We Do Business in the USA

Whitacre, Edward

3/25/13

Focus. It's highly unlikely to find "humble" and "Fortune 500 CEO" in the same sentence. That rare combination can be found in Edward Whitacre, former CEO of both AT&T and GM. Any manager looking for a wise and thoughtful perspective from this successful CEO will enjoy reading Whitacre's book, American Turnaround. In a folksy Texas conversational writing style, Whitacre describes how attention to focus and accountability leads to outstanding results. There's no magic formula to success as a manager, from Whitacre's point of view, just a lot of common sense, humility, and respect for others. With those elements in place, success follows, even in the situation of a challenging turnaround like General Motors.



The Sign of the Weeping Virgin

White, Alana

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.

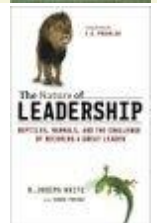


The Nature of Leadership

White, B. Joseph

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



Underwater Home: What Should You Do if You Owe More on Your Home than It's Worth?

White, Brent

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011

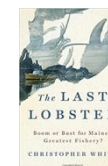


The Last
Lobster

White,
Christopher

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



You Talkin' To
Me?: The
Unruly History
of New York
English

White, E.J.

9/22/20

Linguistics. As a speaker of New York English, Brooklyn 1950s variety, I learned new things about my native tongue after reading E.J. White's book titled, You Talkin' To Me?: The Unruly History of New York English. Between the tidbits of delight, there's a lot of pages to travel that are steeped in linguistics. While I had views about social class differences in language, White helped me understand context for that. Media depictions that have selected from the broad New York patois have spread the language and reinforced certain aspects over others. If you have any interest in language and its spread, you may find this book interesting and informative.



A Saint from
Texas

White, Edmund

9/19/20

Sisters. In a novel by Edmund White titled, A Saint from Texas, identical twin sisters take different roads away from their East Texas start in life. Their daddy's land provided an oil fortune to nurture their dreams. Yvonne decides to join Parisian society, while Yvette aligns with the poor in Columbia. White takes us across a half century and treats us to fine writing infused with great wit and joy. There's Texas-sized exuberance on these pages, and wisdom about the nature of human behavior. White's characters are finely drawn with all the complexity and foibles of all of us.

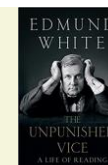


The Unpunished
Vice: A Life of
Reading

White, Edmund

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

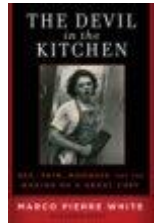


The Devil in the Kitchen: Sex, Pain, Madness and the Making of a Great Chef

White, Marco
Pierre

Aug 07

Freedom. Chef's memoir of obsessive work, perfectionism, setting goals, achieving recognition, and then having the freedom to quit at the top and go do something else.

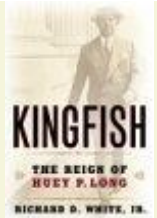


Kingfish

White, Richard

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

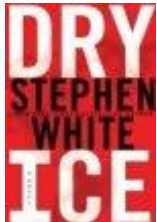


Dry Ice

White, Stephen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

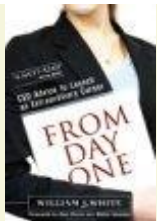


From Day One

White, William
J.

Mar 07

Mentor. A great book of practical advice, especially to new workers. A mentoring experience in print.

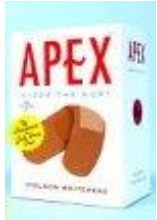


Apex Hides the Hurt

Whitehead,
Colson

June 06

Naming. Quirky novel in which the protagonist, a nomenclature consultant, is called to a small town to help solve its identity crisis, while the consultant struggles with issues of his own.

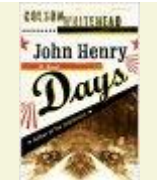


John Henry Days

Whitehead,
Colson

Feb 02

Well-written novel of parallel lives of railroad worker John Henry and writer J. Sutter.



Sag Harbor

Whitehead,
Colson

5/25/09

Break. For some teens, Summer provides a separation from the world of school in one place, and the world of a summer in another. Each location has its unique set of friends and activities. Colson Whitehead presents a finely written account of such a life in his new novel, Sag Harbor. Protagonist Benji Cooper leaves the world of his private Manhattan school, where at age fifteen he is one of the few black students, for the Long Island enclave of choice for many black urban professionals, Sag Harbor. This is the Summer when Benji and his younger brother, Reggie, achieve some identity separation from each other. Parents are mostly absent, and their work and play adventures are carried out in the lazy special way that perfect summers can be. I was transported by Sag Harbor back to my childhood and early teenage years of spending one part of the year in the city and the summer at a bungalow on the beach. Parents rarely knew and never learned of most of what happened on those summer days and nights. Whitehead's prose includes descriptive language that conveys the sights and sounds of place, alongside dialogue and settings that bring the 1980s to life on every page. You have until Labor Day to read this fine book and make your summer of 2009 a special delight.

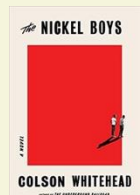


The Nickel Boys

Whitehead,
Colson

8/15/19

Elwood. It seemed that I had finished reading Colson Whitehead's novel titled, The Nickel Boys, 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



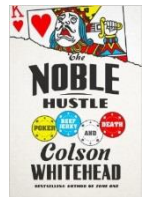
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| | | | | mission entails reform. Whitehead's fine prose soars on the pages of this novel, and the powerful story is enhanced by a well-crafted plot and complex and interesting characters. If the finest fiction reveals the depths of human behavior and draws readers into feeling deeply, this novel does that expertly. | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|

[The Noble Hustle: Poker, Beef Jerky, and Death](#)

Whitehead,
Colson

[5/16/14](#)

Anhedonia. Colson Whitehead may be one of those individuals among us unable to experience pleasure (he describes himself as a citizen of the Republic of Anhedonia), but he sure knows how to deliver pleasure through his writing. I've enjoyed his novels, and found his new non-fiction hilarious. In [The Noble Hustle: Poker, Beef Jerky, and Death](#), he relates his experience competing in The World Series of Poker. I laughed at the many characters and their antics, and found Whitehead's self-deprecating comments the funniest of all. The popularity of poker should draw even more fans to Whitehead's great writing.

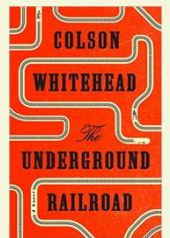



[The Underground Railroad](#)

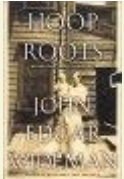
Whitehead,
Colson

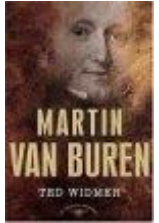
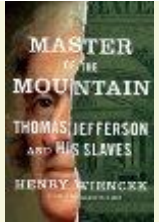
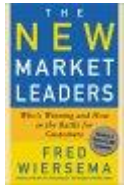

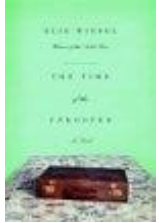

[9/9/16](#)

Cora. Readers can count on Colson Whitehead to offer something new with each book he writes, whether fiction or non-fiction. For me, he's written his finest book yet in his novel titled, [The Underground Railroad](#). Through the journey of protagonist, Cora, a slave, Whitehead draws readers into many of the long lasting effects of slavery on modern life. While I laughed at first at Whitehead's depiction of the Underground Railroad as something under the earth with trains and tracks, I realized how important that image was to the nature of the journey and its effects. Whitehead draws out so many of the insidious aspects of racial conflict and different manifestations of the exploitation of "the other." Cora longs for true freedom, and Whitehead writes about that longing with great skill, in a story that will keep most



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|---|-------------------------|--------|-----------------|--|---|
| | | | | <p>readers engaged and enraged from beginning to end.</p> <p>Survivors. After reading Colson Whitehead's novel, <u>Zone One</u>, covering three days in the lives of survivors of a plague, I concluded that being a survivor can be worse than dying. Whitehead's prose describes the setting and the characters with literary skill, and those readers who appreciate fine writing will find much to appreciate and enjoy on these pages. I'm not a regular reader of the zombie genre, but I'll hazard a guess that few other zombie novels display this high level of writing skills.</p> | |
| <u>Zone One</u> | Whitehead, Colson | *** | <u>12/16/11</u> | |  |
| It's My Party, Too: The Battle for the Heart of the GOP and the Future of America | Whitman, Christine Todd | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| Crash Course: Imagining a Better Future for Public Education | Whittle, Chris | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Mayflower Lives: Pilgrims in a New World and the Early American Experience</u> | Whitlock, Martyn | **** | <u>7/23/20</u> | <p>Personal. Thanks to covid-19, there will be no vacation trip to Cape Cod in Summer 2020, so I took a virtual journey to that area thanks to reading Martyn Whitlock's book titled, <u>Mayflower Lives: Pilgrims in a New World and the Early American Experience</u>. Whitlock profiles fourteen individuals as a way to personalize the lives of the saints and strangers who came to the New World in the 17th century. One of those profiled is my namesake, Stephen Hopkins, one of the strangers and not a saint, probably the only thing we have in common. Every time I read a book about this time and place,</p> |  |

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| | | | | I learn something new. Fans of history are those readers most likely to enjoy the well-told stories in this book. | |
| <u>You May See a Stranger</u> | Whyman, Paula | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. |  |
| Nothing Daunted: The Unexpected Education of Two Society Girls in the West | Wickenden, Dorothy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
| <u>Dwight D. Eisenhower</u> | Wicker, Tom | *** | <u>Mar 03</u> | Like Ike Lite. Think of this book as Ike Lite. Chug it down and move on. Lovers of stout should read something else. |  |
| <u>George Herbert Walker Bush</u> | Wicker, Tom | ** | <u>Dec 04</u> | Friend. From the Penguin Lives series, a biography that captures the 41 st U.S. President as a friend who made friends. |  |
| <u>God's Gym</u> | Wideman, John Edgar | *** | <u>June 05</u> | Virtuosity. Ten stories showcase the range of fine writing from very good through great. Difficult at times, but worth the workout on a theme of faith and strength in many forms. |  |
| <u>Hoop Roots: Basketball, Race, and Love</u> | Wideman, John Edgar | *** | <u>Jan 02</u> | Words and images dribbled out expertly giving insight into basketball, race, and love. |  |

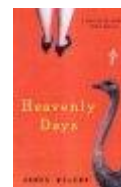
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| Martin Van Buren | Widmer, Ted | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| Master of the Mountain: Thomas Jefferson and His Slaves | Wiencek, Henry | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>The New Market Leaders: Who's Winning and How in the Battle for Customers</u> | Wiersema, Fred | **** | <u>10/01</u> | Quantitative ways to measure market leadership and case studies of what successful companies are doing. |  |
| <u>The Judges</u> | Wiesel, Elie | * | <u>Nov 02</u> | Terror. Wiesel, not at his best, presents five stranded strangers who are forced by a madman to examine the meaning of their lives. Forced dialogue and obtuse language. |  |
| The Time of the Uprooted | Wiesel, Elie | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| The Shadow Catcher | Wiggins, Marianne | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

Heavenly Days

Wilcox, James

Dec 03

Charm. Life in Tula Springs presents encounters with real characters and some prolonged chuckling at their relationship foibles. Some serious brushes with racial and religious tolerance.

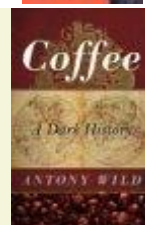


Coffee: A Dark History

Wild, Antony

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



Kiss Me Like a Stranger : My Search for Love and Art

Wilder, Gene

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

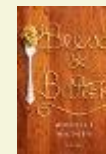


Bread and Butter

Wildgen, Michelle

4/7/14

Tension. Michelle Wildgen grabbed me in the first few pages of her novel titled, Bread and Butter. She whetted my appetite to read more about this cast of characters who work in restaurants. When the youngest of three brothers returns home after a short life in academia and other pursuits to open a new restaurant, the stress and tension in relationships among the brothers takes center stage. Wildgen captures sibling relationships with great skill in the early parts of the novel. By the middle, the exposition slowed, and all relationships involved stress and tension for a variety of reasons. Just when my attention began to drift, Wildgen spiced up the narrative and brought the novel to a satisfying conclusion. Those who work in restaurants will know better whether she represents that crazy worklife with accuracy. For me, I was satisfied with this finely written presentation of contemporary life and relationships.



I Feel
Earthquakes
More Often
Than They
Happen

Wilentz, Amy

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

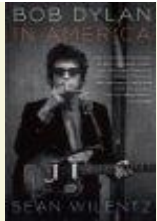


Bob Dylan in
America

Wilentz, Sean

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011

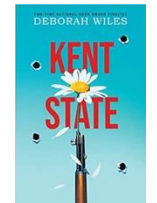


Kent State

Wiles, Deborah

6/24/20

Voices. Even fifty years after the Ohio National Guard opened fire on unarmed students at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, there remain conflicting accounts of what happened then over the course of several days of protests. In her book titled, Kent State, Deborah Wiles allows multiple voices to relate different perspectives using free verse. We hear from white and black students, National Guard troops, and residents of Kent. As is the case with many books written for younger audiences, this book removes what's unessential to the narrative. The result is a mining of multiple memories of the past that provide another context for discussing contemporary protests and violent responses to peaceful as well as disruptive activities.

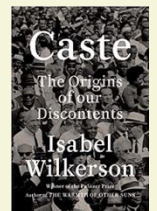


Caste: The
Origins of our
Discontents

Wilkerson,
Isabel

9/8/20

Hierarchy. Sometimes all it takes is a small shift in perspective for the lightbulbs to shine on a complicated subject. In her finely written book titled, Caste: The Origins of our Discontents, Isabel Wilkerson describes the ways in which the United States has established a hierarchy that explains many of our historic and contemporary divisions and challenges. Having studied global caste systems



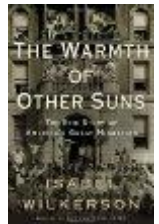
thoroughly, Wilkerson examines how life in America reflects the eight pillars typical of caste alignments. Under caste, it is necessary to have a bottom rung of society, creating a comparison of superiority and inferiority. The system is meant to maintain status and caste so that those defined as inferior remain on the bottom rung. Her stories are vivid and gripping, and by moving away from the loaded language of racism, she may help many readers alter perspective and think about issues differently and accept responsibility to move society forward.

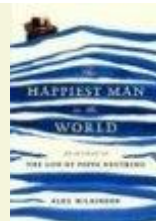

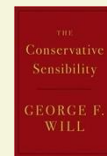
Drama. Pulitzer-prize winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson's outstanding new book is titled, [The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration](#). Having conducted extensive research on the six million blacks who left the Jim Crow South for different lives in the North, Midwest and West, Wilkerson selects three individuals whose stories enliven this experience. I found the six hundred pages of this book to fly by as I read about what was an immigrant experience because the situation in different parts of the United States was as if one left one country for another. While I was aware of the migration before reading this book, I came to understand it much better through Wilkerson's fine writing, productive research, and the liveliness of the three people she follows throughout their lives. Any reader who enjoys history, especially the American experience, will find great writing and insight on these pages as Wilkerson makes history come alive.

[The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration](#)

Wilkerson,
Isabel

[12/11/10](#)



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|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------|---------|--|---|
| The Happiest Man in the World | Wilkinson, Alec | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| <u>American Spy</u> | Wilkinson, Lauren | ***** | 5/24/19 | <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, <u>American Spy</u>. 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> |  |
| <u>The Conservative Sensibility</u> | Will, George F. | ***** | 7/16/19 | <p>Thoughtful. Longtime readers of George Will's newspaper columns expect his views to be calm, reasoned and thoughtful. He sustains those qualities over the course of more than six hundred pages in his book titled, <u>The Conservative Sensibility</u>. Swimming against a current that distills thoughts to sensational and partisan 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</p> |  |

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| | | | | 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. | |
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Honored Guest Williams, Joy Unread Shelf of Ennui 2005



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|---|---------------|--------|--|----------------------|---|
| <u>The Visiting Privilege</u> | Williams, Joy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2016. | JOY WILLIAMS <i>The Visiting Privilege</i> |
|---|---------------|--------|--|----------------------|---|

[My Soul Looks Back in Wonder](#)

Williams, Juan

[Jan 05](#)

Voices. 30 ordinary and extraordinary people tell personal stories about the civil rights struggle, supplemented with photos that capture through image the power of the movement.

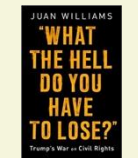


[What the Hell Do You Have to Lose: Trump's War on Civil Rights](#)

Williams, Juan

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

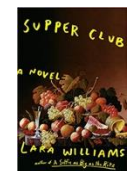


[Supper Club](#)

Williams, Lara

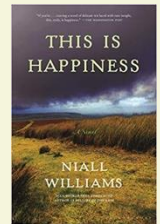
[9/3/19](#)

Appetite. I found Lara Williams' debut novel titled, [Supper Club](#), 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

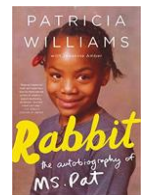


in this novel, and as we get to know her, we come to understand her engagement, no matter how different it is from our own. Williams' prose is finely written, and I can say with certainty that I've never read a novel quite like this one.

Change. Change is in the air in the rural Ireland town of Faha, and not just because the electricity is coming. Niall Williams pulls readers into Faha and its people in his finely written novel titled, [This Is Happiness](#). Williams writes beautiful sentences that capture the setting and the people in ways that may lead a reader to underline or reread. Since the next sentence is usually as good as or better than the last, this can become rhythmic and we begin to feel as if we are in Faha among these fascinating people. Fans of literary fiction are those readers who will enjoy every hour spent in Ireland on the pages of this finely written novel.



Transformative. Sometimes a memoir describes a life similar to one's own. Other times, a reader can learn about a world that bears little resemblance to our reality. I was gobsmacked when I read Patricia Williams memoir titled, [Rabbit: The Autobiography of Ms. Pat](#). This is a story about growing up poor and black in America. While she says, "Everybody's got a struggle. Nobody gets through this life easy." (p. 211), her life was never easy, and her struggle was very hard. While much of her story is sad, this memoir is all about the transformative power of love, and about how our lives can change. If you think you know a thing or two about growing up poor and black in America, or if you don't, read this fine book and be inspired by one person's story, and be angry about the conditions that create such a hard struggle to survive.



[This Is Happiness](#)

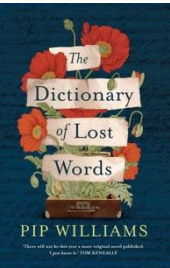

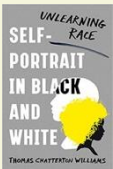
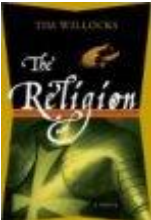
Williams, Niall

[2/14/20](#)

[Rabbit: The Autobiography of Ms. Pat](#)

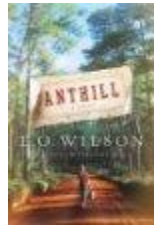
Williams, Patricia

[11/21/17](#)

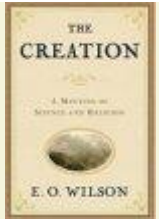
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|--|-----------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Dictionary of Lost Words</u> | Williams, Pip | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Erosion: Essays of Undoing</u> | Williams, Terry Tempest | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
| <u>Self-Portrait in Black and White: Unlearning Race</u> | Williams, Thomas Chatterton | ***** | <u>6/10/20</u> | <p>Categories. If Thomas Chatterton Williams can't convince you that our racial constructs are meaningless, no one can. In his book titled, <u>Self-Portrait in Black and White: Unlearning Race</u>, Williams uses the backdrop of his own identity and the strains of black and white and how he is perceived as a way to ditch some categories as he applies principles that make sense. This book should lead most readers to rethink our notions of race. Some readers may find his book controversial. I didn't. I listened to the struggle of a son and a father trying to unlearn the categories relating to race. Williams writes of big things in a light way, inviting readers to join him in moving ahead.</p> |  |
| The Religion | Willocks, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |

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|---|----------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Why Priests?: A Failed Tradition</u> | Wills, Garry | **** | <u>2/7/14</u> | Inquiry. Garry Wills has a well informed and inquiring mind. A recent book by this prolific author is titled, <u>Why Priests? A Failed Tradition</u> . Having started with the disclaimer that some of his best friends are priests and that he himself once aspired to be one, Wills goes on to make a case for why the priesthood was built on a shoddy foundation and is no longer necessary. Any reader looking for a clear viewpoint will find it here. |  |
| Bomb Power: The Modern Presidency and the National Security State | Wills, Garry | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
| Head and Heart: American Christianities | Wills, Garry | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| <u>Henry Adams and the Making of America</u> | Wills, Garry | *** | <u>Jan 06</u> | Optimism. Adams' nine volumes of the history of America 1800-1817 come alive, thanks to Wills, and his optimism and historical methods shine. Engaging reading for all interested in this historical period. |  |
| Colors Insulting to Nature | Wilson, Cintra | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |

Anthill: A Novel Wilson, E. O. Unread Shelf of Ennui 2010

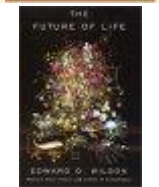


The Creation Wilson, E. O. Unread Shelf of Ennui 2007

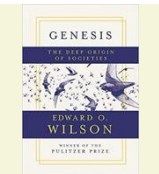


[The Future of Life](#) Wilson, E. O. *** [May 02](#)

Well-written primer on what's happening to ecosystems and what can be done to sustain biodiversity, and why we should take immediate, specific actions.



[Genesis: The Deep Origin of Societies](#) Wilson, Edward O. Unread Shelf of Ennui 2019.

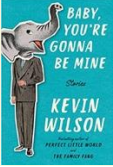
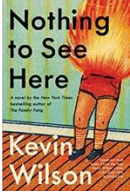
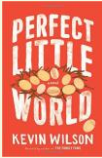


[The Meaning of Human Existence](#) Wilson, Edward O. ***** [11/7/14](#)

Teacher. Our best teachers find ways to take their observations and extensive study and condense and communicate it to us in ways that we can think for ourselves and gain greater understanding. Edward O. Wilson is a very fine teacher, and the synthesis he offers in his book, [The Meaning of Human Existence](#), will lead most readers to much thought and reflection. After finishing this book, I've been thinking about the interplay of science and the humanities and the importance of each to our lives. Very often while reading this book, I found myself captivated by the simplicity of his language, and at other times, I was frustrated by why he chose to pursue a particular line of exposition. Like all teachers, Wilson has strengths and weaknesses, and



I found the strengths were reason enough to listen to what he has to say.

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|--|---------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Baby You're Gonna Be Mine</u> | Wilson, Kevin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Nothing to See Here</u> | Wilson, Kevin | ***** | <u>1/2/20</u> | <p>Children. We parents want our children to become their best selves. Each child is unique and needs love and support from people who care for them. In his book titled, <u>Nothing to See Here</u>, Kevin Wilson presents us with twin ten-year-olds whose uniqueness is expressed when they spontaneously burst into flames. While the twins are unharmed when this happens, there can be collateral damage. Stepmother Madison hires an acquaintance from school, Lillian, to care for the twins. Lillian comes from poverty and Madison from privilege. As Lillian narrates this story, we laugh and enjoy Wilson's finely crafted prose. We begin to understand the friendship between Madison and Lillian and reflect on the responsibilities we take on when we care for others. Readers who appreciate wacky and finely written literary fiction, rooted in deep understanding of human nature are those most likely to enjoy this imaginative and insightful novel.</p> |  |
| <u>Perfect Little World</u> | Wilson, Kevin | **** | <u>7/14/17</u> | <p>Experiment. Every parent who has dreamt of time off from child-rearing will find an interesting experiment to consider in Kevin Wilson's novel titled, <u>Perfect Little World</u>. A research project structured as an experiment in child rearing creates a closed environment with an extended family comprised of ten children and nineteen parents, along with a doctor and his researchers. Wilson creates engaging and interesting characters and develops them well as the experiment extends over many years.</p> |  |

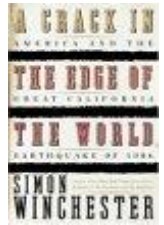
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| <u>The Family Fang</u> | Wilson, Kevin | *** | <u>9/14/11</u> | <p>Performance. Readers who are up for a quirky and humorous reading experience may enjoy Kevin Wilson's witty novel, <u>The Family Fang</u>. The parents of this family, Caleb and Camille Fang, are artists, and for their performance art, they have used their children, Buster and Annie, who are referred to in the videos of these performances as Child A and Child B. The stage for these relationships over time and the things they do for love and art provide a backdrop for Wilson's sharp writing. The comfort of home takes many forms, and the home that Buster and Annie seek refuge in brought comfort and chuckles to me as I read this engaging novel.</p> |  |
| Rewards That Drive High Performance | Wilson, Thomas B. | *** | <u>11/99</u> | Read this if you're interested in finding out more about what other companies are doing with reward systems. |  |
| Five Myths About Nuclear Weapons | Wilson, Ward | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>There Goes the Neighborhood</u> | Wilson, William Julius and Richard P. Taub | *** | <u>Feb 07</u> | <p>Coalitions. Sociologists and their students research four Chicago neighborhoods and discover the key to strong community: active coalitions of common interest that unite individuals.</p> |  |

A Crack in the
Edge of the
World

Winchester,
Simon

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

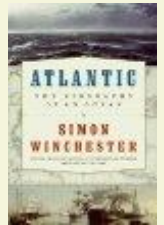


Atlantic: Great
Sea Battles,
Heroic
Discoveries,
Titanic
Storms, and a
Vast Ocean of a
Million Stories

Winchester,
Simon

1/4/11

Homage. I never expected that I would have read all 500 pages of Simon Winchester's Atlantic. After all, how interesting could a biography of the Atlantic Ocean be? Thanks to Winchester's skill, very interesting. He swings backwards and forwards in time, flitting from one subject to another in ways that kept enlivening my interest. He makes this both a personal story by conveying what his experience of the Atlantic has been, and a history and science exploration that remained engaging throughout. Any general reader with an interest in history or science will find much to enjoy in this book. Winchester's homage to this ocean makes for eclectic reading at its best.

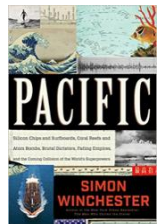


Pacific: Silicon
Chips and
Surfboards,
Coral Reefs and
Atom Bombs,
Brutal Dictators,
Fading Empires,
and the Coming
Collision of the
World's
Superpowers

Winchester,
Simon

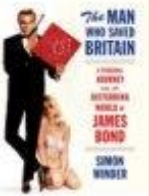
Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2016.



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|---|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Man Who Loved China: The Fantastic Story of the Eccentric Scientist Who Unlocked the Mysteries of the Middle Kingdom</u> | Winchester, Simon | *** | <u>Nov 08</u> | Legend. A fine biography of Joseph Needham, the Cambridge professor whose 24 volume work titled <i>Science and Civilization in China</i> explained that country to the West in new ways. An amazing legend of the 20 th century. |  |
| The Meaning of Everything: The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary | Winchester, Simon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2004 |  |
| <u>The Men Who United the States: America's Explorers, Inventors, Eccentrics and Mavericks, and the Creation of One Nation, Indivisible</u> | Winchester, Simon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
| <u>The Perfectionists: How Precision Engineers Created the Modern World</u> | Winchester, Simon | **** | <u>6/9/18</u> | Measurement. I never expected to be mesmerized by a book about precision. In his book titled, <u>The Perfectionists: How Precision Engineers Created the Modern World</u> , Simon Winchester describes the improvements in technology as a result of doing a better job at measurement. In addition to this being a story about technology, Winchester does a great job in making this a story about people and their obsessions. Those readers who are not engineers or scientists will find this book interesting and readable. Scientists are likely |  |

to fine a few ways in which Winchester could have been more precise.

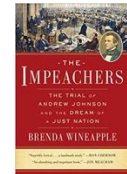
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|---------------------------|---------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| The Man Who Saved Britain | Winder, Simon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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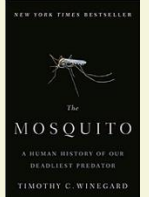
The Impeachers: The Trial of Andrew Johnson and the Dream of a Just Nation

Wineapple, Brenda

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



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|--|----------------------|------|-----------------|---|--|
| <u>The Mosquito: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator</u> | Winegard, Timothy C. | **** | <u>11/14/19</u> | <p>Deet. After reading Timothy C. Winegard's book titled, <u>The Mosquito: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator</u>, 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.</p> |  |
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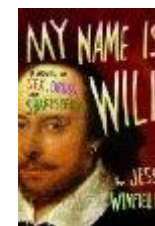
My Name Is Will: A Novel of Sex, Drugs, and Shakespeare

Winfield, Jess

**

Oct 08

Amuse. Debut novel weaves a version of the life of the bard with that of a 1980s graduate student at UC-Santa Cruz. Funny for all readers, probably hysterical for those who know most about Shakespeare.



Before We Were Yours

Wingate, Lisa

5/15/20

Sisters. Lisa Wingate based her novel titled, Before We Were Yours, on the true story of an adoption agency that sold children. She gives readers a compelling and emotional story, packed with characters that readers will come to know and love or hate. The sisters in this story will stir your heart and might even produce a tear or two. You'll be caught up in this novel from the beginning to the end and will come away carrying something of an emotional overload. If that's what you're looking for in a novel, this is the book for you.



We the Corporations: How American Businesses Won Their Civil Rights

Winkler, Adam

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



In West Mills

Winslow, De'Shawn Charles

2/7/20

Knot. I fell in love with the people and the place so finely presented in De'Shawn Charles Winslow's debut novel titled, In West Mills. Protagonist Azalea "Knot" Centre is a force to be reckoned with, sober or otherwise. Readers move into the small town and we come to understand the secrets and complications of normal lives in this tender and warm story. We love and we want to be loved. We want to be free and we are often selfish. We may not know where we came from or where we are going, so we plod along doing our best. Love endures.

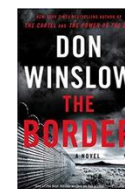


The Border

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.



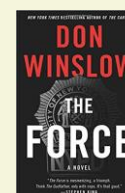
The Force

Winslow, Don

**

7/20/17

Corrupt. When I finished reading Don Winslow's novel titled, The Force, I experienced déjà vu. I felt the same way as I did after seeing a performance of *The Book of Mormon*. The performers were talented, the music lively and energetic, but I didn't really like the play because all I could feel was that I spent two hours listening to mockery of the beliefs of millions of people. Winslow's crime novel is exciting and he creates a clear view of a corrupt justice system from dirty cops to complicit prosecutors to politicians and wealthy and powerful people who exploit the community. I spent a few hours reading about a criminal world and the cops caught up in a corrupt system. Perhaps out of respect to my sister, a retired NYPD detective, I couldn't like what I read, even as fiction, given the depiction of the police in this novel. The NYPD and justice system Winslow describes in this novel matches exactly what many people think is true among police departments across the country. I just can't like a novel that adds fuel to that particular



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| | | | fire, especially in relation to the professional NYPD and the thousands who serve with honor and integrity. | |
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The Kings of
Cool: A Prequel
to Savages

Winslow, Don

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2013.



The Care and
Management of
Lies: A Novel of
the Great War

Winspear,
Jacqueline

10/6/14

Morale. I opened Jazqueline Winspear's novel, The Care and Management of Lies, with skepticism. Having just completed Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See*, I wasn't sure that I had the appetite for another novel set during World War I. Winspear hooked me at once: the simplicity of her story brought with it tremendous power as she explores the nature of love and duty. Protagonist Kezia Marchant has left the city that was familiar to her, and has barely settled into life as a farm wife when her husband, Tom, enlists in the army. Winspear captures the scope of love and duty through the way she used the device of Kezia's morale-building letters to Tom that described the delicious meals that she was making with love for him. Tom's whole unit wanted him to read her letters aloud to them. With a handful of characters and finely written prose, Winspear offers readers a memorable and touching story.

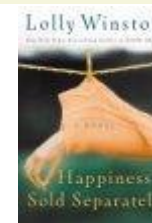


Happiness Sold
Separately

Winston, Lolly


**


Read, but not reviewed.



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|---|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Break in Case of Emergency</u> | Winter, Jessica | **** | <u>9/9/16</u> | Foundation. I laughed, winced and nodded in affirmation often while reading Jessica Winter's debut novel titled, <u>Break in Case of Emergency</u> . Protagonist Jen is a painter whose day job has been working at a feminist not for profit foundation. The celebrity boss is wacko, the workplace toxic, and Jen is trying to have a baby. The themes of motherhood and art elevate this novel beyond light satire and toward insight into the struggles of contemporary life and our search for meaning. I enjoyed Winter's fine writing, her ability to skewer with precision, and to draw a distinction between what is important and what isn't. |  |
| Craftsman Style | Winter, Robert | Unread | Shelf of Ennui 2004 | |  |
| <u>Golden State</u> | Winters, Ben H. | **** | <u>6/18/19</u> | Lies. In his novel titled, <u>Golden State</u> , 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>Underground Airlines</u> | Winters, Ben H. | ***** | <u>7/15/16</u> | Slavery. Fiction that relies on alternative history can attract or repel readers when a premise may be seen as too unlikely or as very plausible. The key premise in Ben Winters' novel, <u>Underground Airlines</u> , is that the Civil War didn't happen, and |  |

that slavery continued in four southern states. With that premise fixed, Winters creates a world that seemed totally plausible to me, and one in which the motivation and behavior of all characters makes a great deal of sense. Protagonist Victor is a bounty hunter for the U.S. Marshalls Service, hunting for a runaway slave. The plot remains thrilling throughout the novel, the characters are consistently complex and believable, and the longing for freedom remains as strong in this alternative reality as ever it has been in our known reality. Given the complexity of contemporary race relations, this novel is timely and uncomfortable, which seems just right.

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| <u>Christmas Days</u> | Winterson, Jeanette | ***** | <u>1/24/17</u> | <p>Twelve. Midway through the twelve days of Christmas, I started reading Jeanette Winterson's book titled, <u>Christmas Days</u>. Fans of Winterson's prose will discover twelve well-written stories that I found totally entertaining. On top of that are two bonuses: tasty recipes for the season and reflections by Winterson about her Christmases past that are written as finely as her fiction. Whatever time of year you read this book, you will receive a taste of Christmas and be entertained by good stories.</p> |  |
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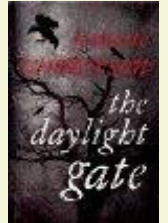
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| <u>Frankissstein</u> | Winterson, Jeanette | ***** | <u>10/25/19</u> | <p>Hybrid. Should your book club select Jeanette Winterson's novel titled, <u>Frankissstein</u>, be prepared to open more wine as questions explored in the novel will lead to 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 Daylight Gate](#)

Winterson,
Jeanette

[2/20/14](#)

Twilight. Readers who like historical fiction are those most likely to enjoy a short and tightly written novel by Jeanette Winterson titled, [The Daylight Gate](#). Set in England early in the 17th century, the plot involves the witch trials of that period. The title refers to dusk, and much of the atmosphere of the novel has a twilight feel to it. Protagonist Alice Nutter became wealthy from Queen Elizabeth I's pleasure in the garments made from a dye Nutter created. Winterson achieves in this short novel exactly what I want from historical fiction: she presents complex characters, many based on the historical record, and describes the time and place with finely written prose. She grabbed my attention in the first few paragraphs, and I sped through this novel, finding pleasure throughout, despite much disturbing subject matter.



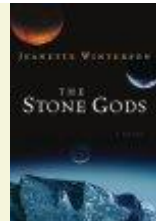
[The Gap of Time](#)

Winterson,
Jeanette

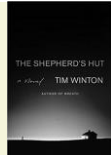
[10/26/15](#)

Winter. Hogarth has initiated a series in which contemporary writers present versions of Shakespeare's works. The first in the series is by Jeanette Winterson and is titled, [The Gap of Time](#). Based on *The Winter's Tale*, I wondered whether Winterson chose that less familiar play because of her name. In any event, while it has been decades since I read the play, I remembered enough to delight in Winterson's novel. Even readers who don't know the play will enjoy Winterson's novel because of her successful development of characters and plot and the brief synopsis she presents of the play. In fewer than three hundred pages, Winterson presents passion, anger, betrayal, child abduction, love and much more using vivid prose that kept me entertained from beginning to end. Readers who like Shakespeare and a ripping good story and those most likely to enjoy this novel.



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|----------------|---------------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| The Stone Gods | Winterson, Jeanette | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
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| Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal? | Winterson, Jeanette | Unread | | Other titles pushed this one to the back of the line. Shelf of Ennui 2012. |  |
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| <u>The Shepherd's Hut</u> | Winton, Tim | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
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All Gone: A Memoir of My Mother's Dementia. With Refreshments

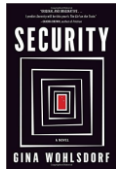
Witchel, Alex

12/18/12

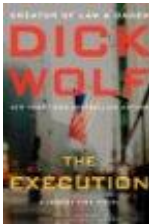
Nourishment. The clarity and candor of Alex Witchel's writing made reading her latest book a delight. In All Gone: A Memoir of My Mother's Dementia. With Refreshments, Witchel expresses the range of reactions when her mother experiences dementia. There's a way in which Witchel deals with the grief of being with someone who is both present and absent, changed and the same. Through cooking, especially the comfort foods of childhood, Witchel struggles to reconnect the broken links in their shared lives. The meatloaf alone is a reason to read this book. Anyone close to the struggle of those facing dementia and their loved ones will find hope and nourishment in this finely written book.




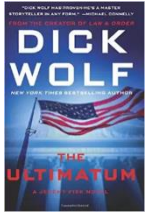
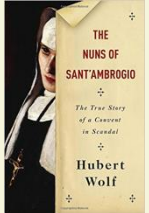

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|----------------|---------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| The Spare Wife | Witchel, Alex | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
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| <u>Security</u> | Wohlsdorf, Gina | ** | 8/12/17 | <p>Horror. I can be entertained for hours reading a scary Stephen King novel, so I was disappointed when reading Gina Wohlsdorf's novel titled, <u>Security</u>. Manderley Resort is a newly built hotel with state-of-the-art security preparing for its grand opening. Wohlsdorf brings readers into the resort through the security cameras and multiple narrators. I enjoyed the structure and some of the character development. What overwhelmed me was the sheer amount of violence and gore. While I stuck with the novel until the end, the blood and guts became too much for me and I can't recommend this novel to any reader with low tolerance for violence.</p> |  |
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|---|----------------|--------|--|---------------------|--|
| Naked in the Boardroom : a CEO Bares Her Secrets So You Can Transform Your Career | Wolaner, Robin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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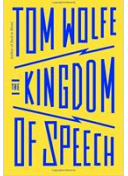
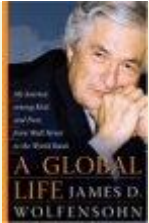
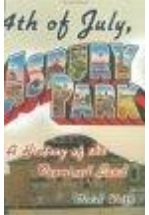
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|----------------------|------------|------|--------|---|---|
| <u>The Execution</u> | Wolf, Dick | **** | 4/7/14 | <p>Appearances. Things are not as they appear in Dick Wolf's second novel to feature protagonist Jeremy Fisk. In <u>The Execution</u>, Fisk teams up with Mexican Federal Detective Cecilia Garza to search for a deadly assassin known as Chuparosa, who leaves an image of a hummingbird on his victims. Wolf tells a great story with perfect pacing, and explores the themes of grief, loneliness and revenge. Fans of action thrillers are those most</p> |  |
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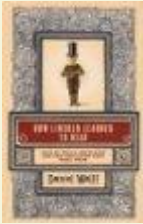
likely to enjoy this novel, especially those who can absorb descriptions of violence.

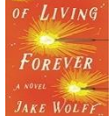
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| <u>The Intercept</u> | Wolf, Dick | ***** | <u>7/26/13</u> | <p>Deception. Fans of thriller novels will find a lot to enjoy in Dick Wolf's debut novel, <u>The Intercept</u>. While a first-time novelist, Wolf is a longtime storyteller, having created the <i>Law and Order</i> series. In this novel, Wolf explores a clever and deceptive terrorism plot set in New York City. The protagonist is Jeremy Fisk, a NYPD detective in the intelligence division. His skills are sorely tested by a plot that twists and turns in his favor and against him. His instincts and persistence provide great reading entertainment.</p> |  |
| <u>The Ultimatum</u> | Wolf, Dick | ***** | <u>9/2/16</u> | <p>Drones. Dick Wolf has reprised detective Jeremy Fisk for another thrilling novel titled, <u>The Ultimatum</u>. A sniper wreaks havoc and uses drones in ways that cause terror on the streets of New York. Wolf's pace starts fast and then accelerates in this novel. Fans of crime fiction who like fast-paced action are those readers most likely to enjoy this novel and this series.</p> |  |
| The Nuns of Sant'Ambrogio: The True Story of a Convent in Scandal | Wolf, Hubert | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| The Shifts and the Shocks: What We've Learned—and Have Still to Learn—from the Financial Crisis | Wolf, Martin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |

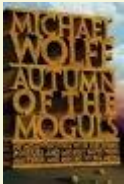
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| <u>Reader, Come Home: The Reading Brain in a Digital World</u> | Wolf, Maryanne | **** | <u>12/20/19</u> | <p>Neuroscience. What happens in my brain when I read? That's the question that led me to opening Maryanne Wolf's book titled, <u>Reader, Come 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 positive outcomes from the process, and I am pleased to recommend this book to your brain as well.</p> |  |
| <u>Moral Freedom: The Search for Virtue in a World of Choice</u> | Wolfe, Alan | *** | <u>06/01</u> | Like it or not, moral freedom and non-judgmentalism are here to stay, according to 209 Americans. |  |
| <u>Unveiling</u> | Wolfe, Suzanne M. | *** | <u>Jan 05</u> | <p>Restoration. As protagonist Dr. Rachel Piers restores a work of art to unveil what it really is, readers see Piers for the person she has become as scars from her past begin to fade away.</p> |  |
| <u>Back to Blood</u> | Wolfe, Tom | *** | <u>1/16/13</u> | <p>Shaggy. Tom Wolfe often takes a magnifying glass focus on some aspect of American life and culture and uses his novels as a form of social commentary. It took me a long time to plow through the shaggy dog story he presents in his latest novel, <u>Back to Blood</u>. Wolfe sets the novel in Miami, and uses the diversity of that place to swipe at Cuban-American assimilation, art world snobbery, pornography, body building, media sensationalism, prejudice and the decadence of modern life in general. I think Wolfe enjoyed writing the 700+ pages of this novel</p> |  |

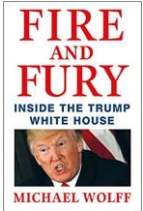
more than I enjoyed reading them. Buried inside, there might be a very fine 300 page novel. While I read through to the end, Wolfe tested my patience at many turns as he wove his story to be sure to include every element he wanted to display. Readers who like a lot of pages for the buck, and who are fans of Wolfe are those most likely to enjoy this sprawling novel.

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|---|----------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>I Am Charlotte Simmons</u> | Wolfe, Tom | *** | <u>Jan 05</u> | Identity. 688 pages of the first six months in college experienced by small-town Charlotte who tries to remember who she is as she becomes transformed by college life and adolescent love. |  |
| <u>The Kingdom of Speech</u> | Wolfe, Tom | **** | <u>9/9/16</u> | Artifact. Tom Wolfe uses fewer than two hundred pages in his book titled, <u>The Kingdom of Speech</u> , to offer his views and skewer Charles Darwin and Noam Chomsky in the process. More like a long essay, this book makes one key point: speech is a special artifact, unique to man, and is not evolutionary. I'm not sure about Wolfe's science on this topic, but his verbal dexterity met my expectations. Read for yourself if you have any interest in the subject matter. |  |
| A Global Life: My Journey Among Rich and Poor, from Wall Street to the World Bank | Wolfensohn, James D. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2008 |  |
| 4th of July, Asbury Park: A History of the Promised Land | Wolff, Daniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |



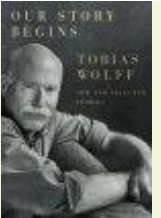
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| How Lincoln Learned to Read: Twelve Great Americans and the Educations That Made Them | Wolff, Daniel | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |
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| The History of Living Forever | Wolff, Jake | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |
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| Autumn of the Moguls: My Misadventures with the Titans, Poseurs, and Money Guys Who Mastered and Messed Up Big Media | Wolff, Michael | * | Mar 04 | Vacuous. Participant-observer's account of players and action in big media by author of <i>New York Magazine</i> column, This Media Life. Read only if your interest in media companies and characters is high, or if your curiosity about mega-mergers hasn't been sated. |  |
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|---|----------------|----|-------------------------|--|---|
| Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House | Wolff, Michael | ** | 1/23/18 | <p>Aggregator. The three days I spent reading Michael Wolff's controversial book titled, Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House, put me in a funk. Daily White House distractions and self-inflicted drama are tough enough to endure. Spending hours in a return to the early months of the Trump administration added to my misery. Wolff spent those early months hanging out in the West Wing, available as a sounding board or an outlet for anyone working there who wanted to vent. He recorded them and took notes, aggregating all he heard from inside with what was written by others from the outside, along with the public statements by all the key players. The result is a gossipy book by a writer with a flair for clever</p> |  |
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prose. Wolff is not a historian, and as a journalist, let's say he's no Bob Woodward. What we get in this book is his take on what happened, and his judgment of what he believes he heard and observed. Most observers of 2017 in politics would agree that the White House often seemed undisciplined with individuals unaligned among themselves. Wolff's book documents the early months of the administration in ways that will please few readers. Thanks to the President's tweets about the book, it has become a best seller. My guess is that a minority of buyers will read the whole gossip thing.

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|--|----------------|-----|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <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>Old School</u> | Wolff, Tobias | *** | <u>May 04</u> | <p>Prodigal. Fine, tightly written novel set in 1960s at prep school. A study in how character is formed by expectations, failures, and redemption.</p> |  |
| <u>Our Story Begins</u> | Wolff, Tobias | *** | <u>June 08</u> | <p>Mastery. A great way to spend a month is to read one of the 31 stories in this collection every day. Ten are new from this master of the short story.</p> |  |

Summer
Reading

Wolitzer, Hilma

**

Dec 07

Shallow. Novel's action centers around a summer reading group in the Hamptons and a half-dozen characters. Alternating narrators provide some interest, but empathy for characters never develops.



Belzhar

Wolitzer, Meg

12/5/14

Journal. Words matter. In Meg Wolitzer's novel, Belzhar, the adolescents at The Wooden Barn, a Vermont boarding school for troubled kids, who have been selected for the Special Topics in English class learn quickly how much words matter. They are required to write in special journals for this class that does close reading of Sylvia Plath. The journal writing transports the students to a place they named "Belzhar," a take on the famous Plath book. While this may be categorized as a young adult novel, that distinction may not mean much to those readers who appreciate finely written prose. I was entertained and delighted by this novel.

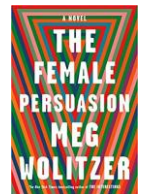


Pathways. I thoroughly enjoyed becoming immersed in the lives of a large cast of interesting characters in Meg Wolitzer's novel titled, The Female Persuasion. Protagonist Greer Kadetsky follows a path through life that aligns with what most of us experience: highs, lows, and a road that meanders in directions we never imagined. It's easy to spend time with Wolitzer because her sentences are finely crafted, and her insights into human nature are revealed in every character as they emerge as complex and true to life. Central to the novel are two significant relationships: Greer's longtime friendship with the smart neighbor boy, Cory; and the ways in which a feminist leader, Faith Frank, becomes a mentor to Greer. Wolitzer allows us to meander forward and backward in time as we get to know the complexity in the lives of Greer,

The Female
Persuasion

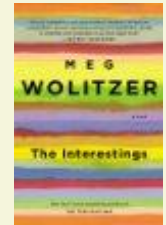
Wolitzer, Meg

4/16/18



Cory and Faith. As Greer matures and finds her voice, she uses it ways that she never imagined.

Camp. We're coming up on the summer camp season, and this will be a perfect time to read Meg Wolitzer's novel, [The Interestings](#). The bonds formed as teens at an arts camp in the early 1970s have endured for decades for an ensemble of characters, each of whom Wolitzer presents and develops with precision. One could try to categorize this novel as a coming of age story, a tale of enduring love and friendship, parenting, social satire, or a sampling of life over the past five decades. This finely written novel is some of all that and more. Wolitzer teased me into the lives of these characters, and once I was there, she helped me care about them. I enjoyed their good times and mourned their losses. Most of all, I understood them as real, complex people whose authenticity holds a mirror to my own life and that of those I know and love. This is a big novel that I enjoyed while reading it, and appreciated all the more after I reflected on it.



[The Interestings](#)

Wolitzer, Meg

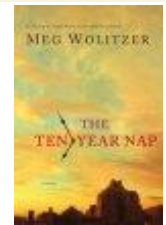
[5/21/13](#)

The Ten-Year Nap

Wolitzer, Meg

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2008



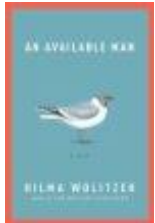
[The Uncoupling](#)

Wolitzer, Meg

[4/22/11](#)

Enchanted. "Comfort was the best thing, and maybe the worst." (p.182) I smiled often at sentences like that one as I read Meg Wolitzer's latest novel, [The Uncoupling](#). After a new drama teacher selects *Lysistrata* as the next play for the high school, discomfort invades the suburban community of Stellar Plains, New Jersey. A spell was cast over the community, and the women in town cease physical relations with men, to the



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| | | | | discomfort of all. This imaginative novel is quick to read, and many readers will find it entertaining. I was enchanted from beginning to end. | |
| <u>An Available Man</u> | Wolitzer, Hilma | **** | <u>2/17/12</u> | <p>Charming. There are at least a half dozen ways in which Hilma Wolitzer could have messed up her latest novel, <u>An Available Man</u>, and one way or another she avoided every potential pitfall and wrote a fine book. The protagonist, Edward Schuyler, is a sixty-two year old science teacher at a private school whose wife has died of cancer. The novel picks up as Schuyler's grief has progressed to the point where can date again. Readers are likely to recommend this book to others by relating one or another anecdote from these dates. This tender and charming novel will appeal most to those readers who like a good love story packed with the confusion setbacks and humor of every life.</p> |  |
| <u>What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained</u> | Wolke, Robert L. | ** | <u>Nov 02</u> | <p>Smart cookin'. Retired Chemistry prof tells more than you may want to know about the science that's going on in your kitchen. Often humorous. Always clear and understandable. Buy for your cook.</p> |  |
| <u>A Left-Hand Turn Around the World</u> | Wolman, David | * | <u>Apr 06</u> | <p>Special. Left-handers aren't sinister, just special. Proves that a book can be written about anything, and there are scientists out there studying just about everything.</p> |  |
| <u>Friends Divided: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson</u> | Wood, Gordon | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |

Revolutionary
Characters

Wood, Gordon S.

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



How Fiction
Works

Wood, James

Nov 08

Compact. This succinct explanation of the novel form by a longtime critic will bring joy to academics and allow regular readers enough time to return to reading novels with a little more understanding of what is going on.

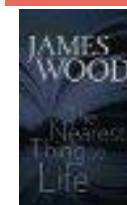
How
Fiction
Works
—
JAMES WOOD

The Nearest
Thing to Life

Wood, James

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2015.

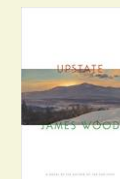


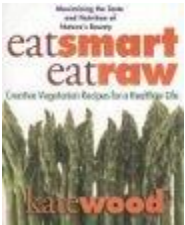

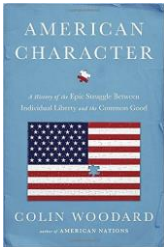
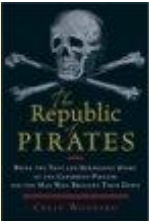

Upstate

Wood, James

8/3/18

Depth. Gobs of novels published every year explore family dynamics, and some of them provide depth, insight and understanding of our human predicament. James Wood introduces readers into an interesting family in his novel titled, Upstate. Protagonist Alan Querry leaves England to visit his daughter, Vanessa, in upstate New York. Alan's younger daughter, Helen, a music executive, joins the visit. Wood presents deep insights into these characters and their relationships within a compact novel that wastes no words. While he doesn't show off, he can make writing seem easy with his perfectly crafted sentences. He provides great contrasts between the UK and New York and explores depression and happiness with skill.



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| Eat Smart Eat Raw | Wood, Kate | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| Weathering | Wood, Lucy | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| American Character: A History of the Epic Struggle Between Individual Liberty and the Common Good | Woodard, Colin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| The Republic of Pirates | Woodard, Colin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
| Exposure: Inside the Olympus Scandal: How I Went from CEO to Whistleblower | Woodford, Michael | **** | 2/7/14 | Outsider. The most unusual business story readers may ever encounter is Michael Woodford's Exposure: Inside the Olympus Scandal: How I Went from CEO to Whistleblower . By virtue of position as President of Olympus, Woodford should have been an insider. After he gets an anonymous email calling to his attention signs of financial shenanigans, he investigates and goes to the company chairman and to members of the board of directors with his concerns. He asks to become CEO to give him the authority to get to the bottom of the |  |

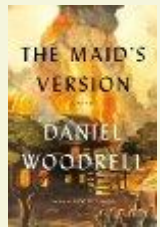
scandal. Weeks after he becomes CEO, he's fired. Having already shared the concerns about the likely financial fraud with the company's independent auditors, the cover up by the perpetrators is doomed from the start. Woodford relates his side of this story, showing how he tried to get the board to do the right thing. Any reader interested in business, especially in the challenges of global concerns, will find this book fascinating to read.

Secrets. In fewer than two hundred pages, Daniel Woodrell provides readers with a gripping story about a catastrophe and the secrets kept about its cause. The Maid's Version is a tightly written compact novel that moves forward and backward in time, from multiple points of view. Because of Woodrell's skill readers gradually come to understand the mystery. Most readers are likely to read this novel quickly and then consider reading it a second time. Woodrell's lyrical prose is worth more than a single glance.

The Maid's Version

Woodrell, Daniel

11/26/13

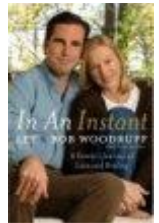


In an Instant

Woodruff, Bob

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007

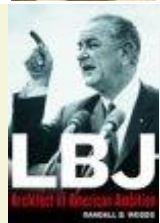


LBJ: Architect of American Ambition

Woods, Randall B.

Nov 06

Larger. Thanks to tapes and records newly released, even more information about the active and complicated U.S. President can be uncovered, and under Woods' scholarship, the impact of LBJ can be understood in a more balanced way than was presented in earlier biographies.



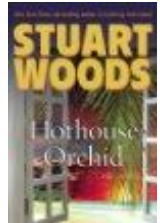
[Hothouse Orchid](#)

Woods, Stuart

**

[12/12/09](#)

Bodies. Midway thorough Stuart Woods latest Holly Barker mystery titled, [Hothouse Orchid](#), I remembered why I had a mixed reaction to an earlier book in this series: there are just too many dead bodies. One murder or two can be enough for most mysteries. Beyond two, it's just gratuitous violence that distracts from solving the mystery. In this installment, Holly is forced to take a vacation from her busy CIA job in Virginia, and she returns home to Orchid Beach, just in time to meet up with figures from her past, and a local crime spree. Holly Barker is a very interesting character, but [Hothouse Orchid](#) offers a weak vehicle to showcase her personality and skills. Woods fans will read out of habit, other readers may want to think twice.

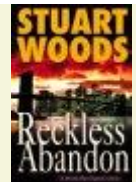


[Reckless Abandon](#)

Woods, Stuart

[July 04](#)

Serial. Author brings together characters from Stone Barrington and Holly Barker series to solve serial murders. Not his best work, but entertaining light reading, like a summer rerun.

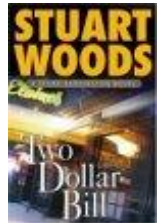


Two Dollar Bill

Woods, Stuart

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

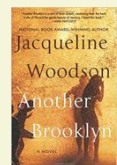


[Another Brooklyn](#)

Woodson, Jacqueline

[12/2/16](#)

Lyrical. Most readers of Jacqueline Woodson's novel titled, [Another Brooklyn](#), may not identify with the experience of coming of age in Brooklyn in the 1970s. Readers who enjoy finely written literary fiction will identify with, enjoy and appreciate the quality of Woodson's lyrical prose. I may have read too many books this year about female friendship, but the prose in this novel sets it apart and I recommend it to any reader of fine fiction, whether interested in Brooklyn or not. Where you live is



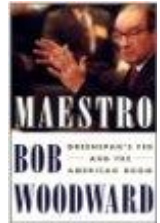
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| | | | | <p>very likely to be another Brooklyn, and reading this novel may help you know that.</p> <p>Immersive. The novel by Jacqueline Woodson titled, Red at the Bone, packs a wallop inside a compact two hundred pages. Woodson plants us into an 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> | |
| Red at the Bone | Woodson, Jacqueline | ***** | 11/21/19 | |  |
| Fear: Trump in the White House | Woodward, Bob | ***** | 10/17/18 | <p>Sources. I think that a Bob Woodward book featuring an American President falls into the required reading category for those who are engaged in public policy. By now, every political junkie has heard about the “revelations” in Woodward’s book titled, Fear: Trump in the White House. One that comes to mind is Gary Cohn taking a paper off Trump’s desk so that the President wouldn’t sign it. But this is not an exciting book about revelations: it’s a detailed look at the Trump White House and it documents much of what we already know. The slow and pondering text can distract readers from the importance of the book: the description of a recklessness in dealing with important matters. Woodward has lots of sources for what he describes, and some of them are obvious to every informed reader. Trump creates fear, stokes fear where it appears, and mines fear to do what he wants to do. If Woodward’s objective in writing this book was to make some readers afraid, he achieves that in spades.</p> |  |

Maestro:
Greenspan's Fed
and the
American Boom

Woodward, Bob

01/01

Feel like you're standing next to Greenspan when decisions are made behind the scenes at the Federal Reserve.

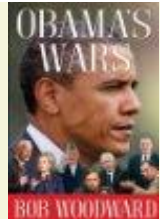


Obama's Wars

Woodward, Bob

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011

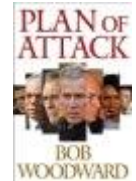


Plan of Attack

Woodward, Bob

June 04

Sources. Fast reading inside view of how Bush administration developed policies on Iraq, thanks to the confidence more than 75 sources placed in Woodward who makes this account read as if he were inside every room of the White House.



Rage

Woodward, Bob

10/27/20

Hubris. Having declined interviews with Bob Woodward for his 1998 book, *Fear*, Donald Trump decided to make himself available to the journalist for a new book titled, Rage. Full of blinding hubris, Trump must have assumed that he could talk his way through whatever Woodward asked and ensure that a favorable view of the American President would follow in the book, unlike the earlier book which made the President look bad. Instead, what we get from Woodward are Trump's own rambling, disconnected and unhinged words as recorded in seventeen on the record interviews. On topics including the pandemic, racial unrest and international relations, we revisit things we think we know, and learn a little more about the reality behind the statements and stories. We observe denial, combat, bluster and occasional revelations of the difference between what the President knew and what he told the rest of us. In addition to the



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| | | | | <p>Trump meetings, Woodward spent hundreds of hours interviewing witnesses to the events related along with their notes, emails, diaries and other documents. He also read twenty-five letters from Kim Jong Un that reveal how manipulation was used to soften up Trump in his dealings with North Korea. Readers interested in public affairs and politics are those most likely to enjoy this enlightening book.</p> | |
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Shadow: Five Presidents and the Legacy of Watergate

Woodward, Bob

DNR

8/99

Take a pass.



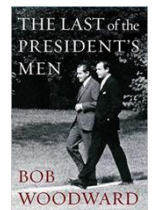
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|------------------------|---------------|-----|---------------|---|--|
| <u>State of Denial</u> | Woodward, Bob | *** | <u>Mar 07</u> | <p>Indictment. Book 3 of the Bush at War series indicts the President and the administration for creating an alternative reality and denying whatever doesn't fit their made-up view of the situation in Iraq.</p> | |
|------------------------|---------------|-----|---------------|---|--|

More. Just when I assumed there was nothing new to learn about Richard Nixon or Watergate, who comes back with more information? Bob Woodward, of course, in a book about Alexander Butterfield titled, The Last of the President's Men. Those of us who watched the Watergate hearings recall noticing Butterfield for the first time on the witness stand when he disclosed the presence of listening devices in the White House and tape recordings of conversations. Thanks to files kept by Butterfield and Woodward's fine research and writing, readers interested in this aspect of history have new information to consider about the Nixon presidency.

The Last of the President's Men

Woodward, Bob

1/19/16



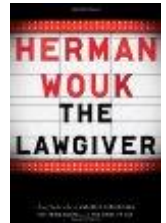
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|---|----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Secret Man</u> | Woodward, Bob | *** | <u>Nov 05</u> | Motivation. The world now knows that the FBI's second in command W. Mark Felt was Deep Throat. This book describes more details of what happened during that time, especially Woodward's relationship with Felt, but reveals nothing clear about why Felt did what he did. |  |
| The War Within | Woodward, Bob | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2009 |  |
| <u>The Poet and The Murderer: A True Story of Literary Crime and the Art of Forgery</u> | Worrall, Simon | ** | <u>Jul 02</u> | Page-turner about master forger Mark Hofmann who swindled academics and the Mormon Church, forging 129 different people and over 1,000 documents. |  |
| <u>A Hole in Texas</u> | Wouk, Herman | *** | <u>Aug 04</u> | Particles. Entertaining romp into the world of science and politics through the love and passion of captivating characters. Great summer reading from veteran talented writer. |  |
| <u>Sailor and Fiddler: Reflections of a 100-Year-Old Author</u> | Wouk, Herman | ***** | <u>3/24/16</u> | Masterful. If you only read one memoir this year, why not make it Herman Wouk's fine book titled, <u>Sailor and Fiddler: Reflections of a 100-Year-Old Author</u> ? After all, the competition for centenarian memoirs is thin, and if you want to learn something about life, why not read the reflections of someone now in his eleventh decade of life and still sharp as a tack? The writing is masterful, and the experiences he relates are curated with great wisdom and wit. At about 160 pages, most readers can complete this memoir quickly. |  |

[The Lawgiver](#)

Wouk, Herman

[2/9/13](#)

Funny. I never expected Herman Wouk to write a funny novel. I've read his lengthy novels and enjoyed them, so when I saw this new short novel, [The Lawgiver](#), I was intrigued. Wouk uses himself and his wife as characters and the plot involves writing a novel and screenplay about Moses. Wouk pokes fun at Hollywood, himself, and Moses. Peppering the text with email transcripts added to my reading pleasure. For a lighthearted reading experience that will bring smiles and laughs to most readers, consider reading this funny novel.

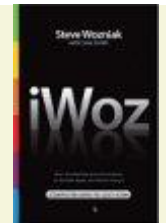


iWoz

Wozniak, Steve

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2007



[Godsend](#)

Wray, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

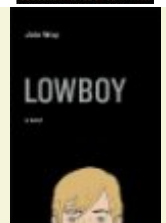


Lowboy

Wray, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010

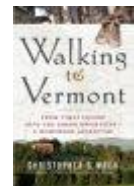


[Walking to Vermont: A Foreign Correspondent Greets Retirement by Hitting the Road for the](#)

Wren,
Christopher S.

[May 04](#)

Take a Hike. Well-written personal tale by retired *NY Times* writer and editor of his journey into retirement by walking from Times Square to his home in Vermont in five weeks. Even readers under age 65 will enjoy this chronicle of Wren's passage.



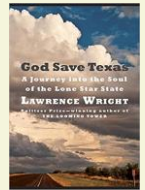
Crowning
Adventure of
His Life

God Save Texas:
A Journey into
the Soul of the
Lone Star State

Wright,
Lawrence

7/12/18

Home. I can offer three great reasons to read Lawrence Wright's book titled, God Save Texas: A Journey into the Soul of the Lone Star State. First, the writing will delight those readers who enjoy well written prose. Second, Wright gives readers with no familiarity with Texas or those who know the state well a great sense of a big place that the author loves. Finally, this is a personal story that describes an intentional life and decisions to remain in the place he proudly calls home. Thirty years ago a transplanted Texan told me that when his children were born, he placed a pot of Texas dirt under the delivery bed so that the children could claim forever that they were born on Texas soil. After reading Wright's book, I now understand a little better something I had considered very odd.

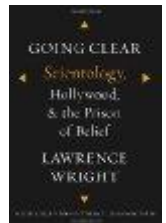


Going Clear:
Scientology,
Hollywood, and
the Prison of
Belief

Wright,
Lawrence

4/20/13

Strange. Lawrence Wright's book, Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief, may be the strangest work of nonfiction that I've read in years. Wright bends over backwards to be fair and objective in his presentation of Scientology, and if the voluminous notes are any indication, he appears to have support for everything he writes. We use the phrase "leap of faith" because the nature of belief requires going beyond factual evidence. The beliefs that comprise Scientology may require a larger leap than most religions. The treatment of believers by the leaders of Scientology seems very severe, and the sources and uses of money made for fascinating reading. Wright's profiles of founder L. Ron Hubbard and current leader David Miscavige are detailed and disturbing. I finished the book with a much deeper understanding of the people, practices and appeal of Scientology.



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| <u>The End of October</u> | Wright, Lawrence | ***** | <u>7/6/20</u> | <p>Pathogens. If living through a real pandemic makes you hungry to read about a fictional one, be sure to read Lawrence Wright's novel titled, <u>The End of October</u>. I had to keep reminding myself that Wright wrote this novel well before anyone knew about covid-19 because he gets so much of our contemporary experience right. That said, we read fiction for other reasons. Protagonist Dr. Henry Parsons provides one of those reasons. Wright enflashed this flawed hero with all the human qualities that make us fascinated by other people. This skilled epidemiologist does so much right, makes some big mistakes, and tries to move along, just like us. This thrilling novel provides lots of suspense and a cast of interesting characters, full of good and malice, focused often on the wrong things. Pathogens and nature are powerful forces, as we're learning, and our human inclinations are not always focused on doing what's best for ourselves and for others.</p> |  |
| Thirteen Days in September: Carter, Begin, and Sadat at Camp David | Wright, Lawrence | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
| <u>Non-Zero: The Logic of Human Destiny</u> | Wright, Robert | *** | <u>6/00</u> | A well-argued thesis that organic history and human history have a direction. If we are heading somewhere, Wright thinks it's likely to be toward mutual cooperation, hence the non-zero concept from game theorists. |  |

The Evolution of
God

Wright, Robert

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009. I got as far as page 70, and then I stopped.



Three Scientists
and Their Gods

Wright, Robert

6/00

Understanding the nature of life from three different perspectives.

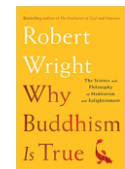
Buy @
amazon.com

Why Buddhism
Is True: The
Science and
Philosophy of
Meditation and
Enlightenment

Wright, Robert

11/6/17

Meditation. Robert Wright offers a secular and not a religious perspective about Buddhism in his book titled, Why Buddhism Is True: The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment. Wright is a thoughtful writer who offers his personal perspective about meditation and its place in his life. Readers get to observe Wright and his struggles on silent retreats and with trying to meditate. Each of us is on some path away from suffering and from our delusions, and this book describes the path that Wright has chosen.



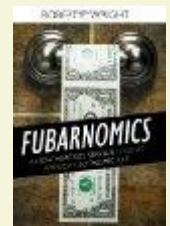
Fubarnomics: A
Lighthearted,
Serious Look at
America's
Economic Ills

Wright, Robert
E.

Ennui

10/26/10

After about twenty pages, the writing style that Robert Wright uses in his book, Fubarnomics, began to drive me nuts. With the knowledge that 300 more pages followed, I gave up. My impression as I departed was that the book is more pedantic than interesting, and far less clever than *Freakonomics*.

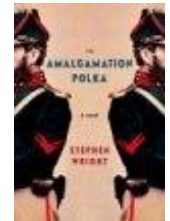


The
Amalgamation
Polka

Wright, Stephen

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006



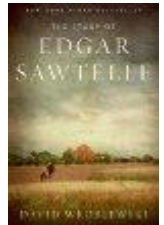
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|---|------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Coyotes of Carthage</u> | Wright, Steven | **** | <u>5/5/20</u> | <p>Dark. A small town election in South Carolina provides the backdrop for Steven Wright's debut novel titled, <u>The Coyotes of Carthage</u>. Protagonist Dre Ross has been sent by his firm with dark money to manipulate politics in the interest of a mining company client. Wright offers complex characters, a fast-paced plot, and a glimpse inside local politics and the ways in which outsiders can swing votes for hidden causes.</p> |  |
| <u>Billion Dollar Whale: The Man Who Fooled Wall Street, Hollywood, and the World</u> | Wright, Tom and Bradley Hope | ***** | <u>1/9/19</u> | <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>Dwelling Places</u> | Wright, Vinita Hampton | *** | <u>June 06</u> | <p>Attachments. Novel about the precarious attachment of an Iowa farm family to the land and to each other. Reminiscent of, but not as poetic as the work of Wendell Berry.</p> |  |

The Story of
Edgar Sawtelle

Wroblewski,
David

Sep 08

Shakespearean. A boy, his dogs, his family, and rural Wisconsin combine into a Hamlet-like tragedy. Among the best novels of the year, a major feat for a debut.



The Curse of
Bigness:
Antitrust in the
New Gilded Age

Wu, Tim

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.

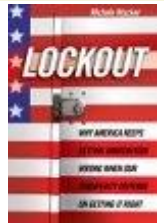


Lockout

Wucker, Michele

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

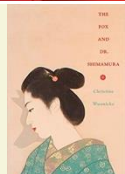


The Fox and Dr.
Shimamura

Wunnicke,
Christine

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2019.



Be Very Afraid:
The Cultural
Response to
Terror,
Pandemics,
Environmental
Devastation,
Nuclear
Annihilation,
and Other
Threats

Wuthnow,
Robert

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2011

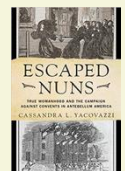



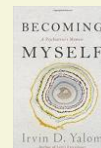

Escaped Nuns:
True
Womanhood
and the
Campaign

Yacovazzi,
Cassandra L.

Unread

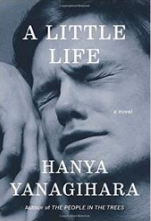
Shelf of Ennui 2019.

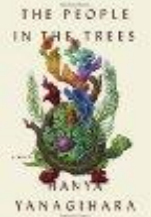


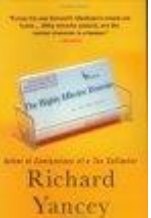
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|---|-----------------|-------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Against Convents in Antebellum America</u> | | | | | |
| <u>Never Die Easy: The Autobiography of Walter Peyton</u> | Yaeger, Don | *** | | We defy you to get through this book without your eyes watering. A great story of an amazing person's life. |  |
| <u>Becoming Myself: A Psychiatrist's Memoir</u> | Yalom, Irvin D. | **** | <u>7/24/18</u> | Introspective. If a psychiatrist isn't introspective, who is? Irvin D. Yalom's memoir titled, <u>Becoming Myself: A Psychiatrist's Memoir</u> , tells stories about himself, his family, his work, his patients and his writing. This master storyteller has found many different ways to engage every reader into this personal story. Yalom's life has been well lived, and the joy that comes through on these pages will bring pleasure to readers. I was delighted from beginning to end. |  |
| <u>Creatures of a Day: And Other Tales of Psychotherapy</u> | Yalom, Irvin D. | ***** | <u>9/15/15</u> | Wisdom. Almost every person spends part of each day figuring out how to live, and eventually spends part of each day figuring out how to die. Psychiatrist Irvin D. Yalom tells the stories of ten of his patients in a book titled, <u>Creatures of a Day: And Other Tales of Psychotherapy</u> . The result is insight into therapy; an intimate view of the relationship between one doctor and some of his patients; and great wisdom about the meaning of life and how to live well and die well. I was enthralled by this book, and Yalom's openness. Readers with any connection to psychotherapy will especially enjoy reading this book, but I think the appeal extends to anyone who thinks about the meaning of life. |  |

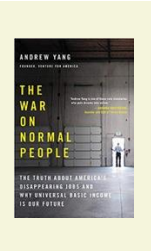
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| <u>Momma and the Meaning of Life</u> | Yalom, Irvin D. | *** | | Some years ago, a friend recommended <u>When Nietzsche Wept</u> to us, and that was our introduction to Yalom, a psychotherapist and a fine writer. Momma lets us enter the therapeutic process and learn. |  |
| The Schopenhauer Cure | Yalom, Irvin D. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>The Spinoza Problem</u> | Yalom, Irvin D. | *** | <u>4/19/12</u> | Reason. It's rare to find a historical novel that links two time periods effectively, while retaining the complexity and depth of each. Such a rare find is Irvin Yalom's latest novel, <u>The Spinoza Problem</u> . There are two protagonists: philosopher Bento Spinoza in 17 th century Holland, and Alfred Rosenberg in Nazi Germany. The Spinoza problem is raised out of Rosenberg's anti-Semitic perspective: how could this Jew from Amsterdam have written works revered by Goethe, the greatest of German thinkers? Yalom uses the fictional Rosenberg to illuminate the philosophy of Spinoza and provide an entertaining way of learning to those readers who enjoy historical fiction. |  |
| Birth of the chess queen: a history | Yalom, Marilyn | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| <u>Frog</u> | Yan, Mo | **** | <u>6/10/15</u> | Control. I added Mo Yan's novel, <u>Frog</u> , to my reading queue because I knew he won the Nobel Prize in Literature, and I had not read anything by him. I now understand why the Nobel committee recognized and rewarded his writing. The subject of this novel is China's one child policy, and Yan's |  |

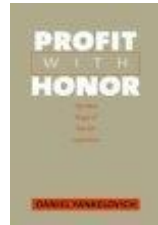

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| | | | | treatment reveals the ways in which this policy has devastating consequences for many people. He approaches the issue during different time periods and concludes with a play written by the protagonist, Tadpole. I found this to be an unusual and disturbing novel, packed with the strong emotions of individuals struggling to live as best they can in a society exerting strong control over their lives. Readers who have not read much fiction from Asia will find this novel helpful in understanding another culture. | |
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| A Little Life | Yanagihara, Hanya | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |
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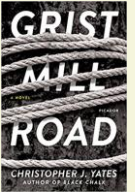
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| <u>The People in the Trees</u> | Yanagihara, Hanya | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2014. |  |
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|--------------------------------|-----------------|----|--|-------------------------|--|
| The Highly Effective Detective | Yancey, Richard | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
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|---|--------------|--------|--|----------------------|---|
| <u>The War on Normal People: The Truth About America's Disappearing Jobs and Why Universal Basic Income Is Our Future</u> | Yang, Andrew | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
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| | | | | | |
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| <u>Income Is Our Future</u> | | | | | |
| <u>Profit with Honor</u> | Yankelovich, Daniel | ***** | <u>Nov 06</u> | <p>Stewardship. Sound and practical recommendations on how to have both a free market and a civil society. Part of the Future of American Democracy Series from Yale University Press</p> |  |
| <u>Your Heart Is a Muscle the Size of a Fist</u> | Yapa, Sunil | ***** | <u>7/1/16</u> | <p>Riot. The debut novel titled, <u>Your Heart Is a Muscle the Size of a Fist</u>, by Sunil Yapa, pummels readers with a riot of words and a display of a wide range of thoughts and feelings. Set on one day in 1990 in Seattle at the gathering of delegates and protestors for the World Trade Organization conference, the novel sweeps readers into the sights and sounds of the street protests and riot. So much of what we do as humans does not turn out the way we planned, and we do things based on either thoughts or feelings that cause our reactions in a moment to display what values direct us, whether we admit to them or not. Yapa's energetic prose, and shifting perspectives by multiple characters can be a challenge to absorb. I found his dynamic writing to be exciting and a pleasure to read.</p> |  |
| <u>The Realm of Last Chances</u> | Yarbrough, Steve | ***** | <u>3/25/14</u> | <p>Guilt. Leave the past behind and make a fresh start. Can life provide us with second chances? That's the theme Steve Yarbrough explores in his finely written novel, <u>The Realm of Last Chances</u>. Kristen and Cal have relocated from California to New England. Kristen lost her administrator job at a good California college and gets another chance at a lesser school north of Boston. There's a lot of mutual detachment, distance and privacy in the relationship between Kristen and Cal. The action in the novel presents behavior by all characters that can lead to the recognition of guilt. From our common condition of being guilty for our own</p> |  |

behavior, how will we judge and relate to others? Will we give and get second chances? I found Yarbrough's characters to be well developed, and the story to be one that offered insight into human behavior.

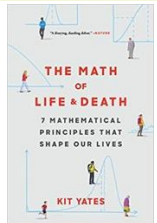
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|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Grist Mill Road | Yates, Christopher J. | ***** | 2/22/18 | <p>Truth. Readers who enjoy intricate plots will love the novel by Christopher Yates titled, Grist Mill Road. Yates offers the perspective of a trio of characters, Matthew, Patrick and Hannah, about events in 1982 and in 2008. As Matthew says on p.184, "Truth is seldom a lens, truth is a kaleidoscope, and I have my truth also." The construct Yates creates draws readers into one perspective of the truth, and then shifts views on the puzzle in this story to lead us to question what is true. The ties that bind these characters include the ropes that appear on the book jacket. Does that make you curious?</p> |  |
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[The Math of Life and Death: 7 Mathematical Principles That Shape Our Lives](#)

Yates, Kit

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



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|----------------------|----------------|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| A Woman in Jerusalem | Yehoshua, A.B. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2007 |  |
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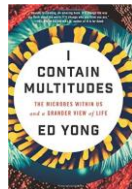
[Prefecture D](#)

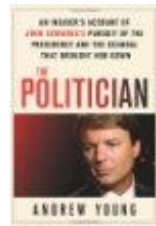
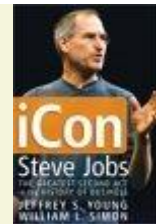
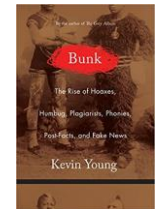
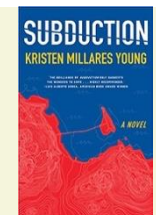
Yokoyama, Hideo

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2020.



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|--|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>Seventeen</u> | Yokoyama, Hideo | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>Six Four</u> | Yokoyama, Hideo | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>When Fish Fly</u> | Yokoyama, John | ***** | <u>Feb 05</u> | School. Inspirational story of the transformation of the author's retail fish business, using solid psychological principles, and creating a vision and a culture that can be emulated to produce remarkable success. |  |
| <u>I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grander View of Life</u> | Yong, Ed | ***** | <u>6/27/17</u> | Guts. I pay very little attention to science journalism, so occasionally I like to read a book that will explain something about science to me. Timing can be everything in life, so it was with some irony that I read Ed Yong's book titled, <u>I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grander View of Life</u> , while I was preparing for a routine colonoscopy. While I flushed away many of the microbes in my body, I learned lots of new things about them, and couldn't wait for the procedure to end, so I could rebuild my personal microbiome. Whether your gut is filling or emptying, consider filling your mind with some of the latest scientific insight into the invisible world of microbes. |  |
| <u>Frankly in Love</u> | Yoon, David | ***** | <u>2/21/20</u> | Senior. David Yoon's debut novel titled, <u>Frankly in Love</u> , pulls readers back to high school where senior Frank Li is dating Brit Means. Frank's Korean name is Sung-Min Li, but no one uses it, and growing up in Southern California, he doesn't speak much Korean. Yoon describes the tension between the expectations of parents to maintain heritage and an individual's exploration of one's identity. Yoon's characters are relatable to all |  |

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|---|-------------------------|--------|--------|---|---|
| | | | | <p>readers, the prose often witty, and the situations typical to all of us during our formative years.</p> <p>Parasitic. You couldn't make this up. Andrew Young's account of his life and work with John Edwards is titled <u>The Politician: An Insider's Account of John Edwards's Pursuit of the Presidency and the Scandal That Brought Him Down</u>. What began as a symbiotic working relationship turned into a damaged and parasitic state of affairs and scandal that has been covered comprehensively in the press in recent years. Young's version of what happened may represent just one part of the story, but this part is believable and has yet to be rebutted. Any reader interested in politics will be engaged by this story. Any employee who has accepted a boss's request to do something extraordinary will understand why Young did what he did.</p> | |
| <u>The Politician: An Insider's Account of John Edwards's Pursuit of the Presidency and the Scandal That Brought Him Down</u> | Young, Andrew | *** | 3/5/11 | |  |
| iCon Steve Jobs | Young, Jeffrey S. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2006 |  |
| <u>Bunk: The Rise of Hoaxes, Humbug, Plagiarists, Phonies, Post-Facts and Fake News</u> | Young, Kevin | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| <u>Subduction</u> | Young, Kristen Millares | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2020. |  |

[How to Live
Safely in a
Science
Fictional
Universe](#)

Yu, Charles

[5/19/11](#)

Patience. Reading Charles Yu's debut novel, [How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe](#), requires more patience than I have. While I completed it, and believe I understood many of Yu's references, and even found myself laughing at times, I closed the book thinking that this book is just too strange for my taste, and probably that of most readers. I find that after watching some Doctor Who episodes, I am as bewildered at what happened as I was from this novel. Perhaps my mind isn't structured to accept either time travel or science fiction with enough openness to lead to pleasure. Perhaps those readers who love science fiction will find more pleasure on these pages. Yu's writing often soars, and readers who want to take a chance on a new author, and have some patience, may be rewarded by this unusual novel.

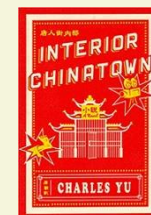


[Interior
Chinatown](#)

Yu, Charles

[9/19/20](#)

Roles. Charles Yu's playful, satirical and insightful novel titled, [Interior Chinatown](#), explores many dimensions of the roles we play and those to which we aspire. Sometimes the role we want to play fails to meet our expectations. Other times, we are defined by others because of roles or stereotyping. Protagonist Willie Wu performs the everyman role in this novel, aspiring to be Kung Fu Guy, but usually relegated to Generic Asian Guy. Readers who enjoy creative and imaginative fiction are those most likely to enjoy this novel.



[Sorry Please
Thank You](#)

Yu, Charles

[11/23/12](#)

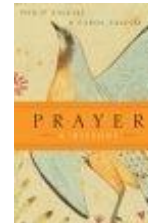
Zany. Readers looking for some laughs should consider Charles Yu's story collection titled, [Sorry Please Thank You](#). Yu's blend of science fiction and reality can provide settings that are ripe for laughter. Yu's voice is unusual and might be an acquired taste for some readers. Sample a selection to see if this will be entertaining for you. I found these stories to be funny and creative. I enjoyed each one.



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|--|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>The Book of Joan</u> | Yuknavitch, Lidia | *** | <u>6/9/17</u> | <p>Skin. Fans of dystopian post-apocalyptic fiction are those readers most likely to enjoy reading Lidia Yuknavitch's novel titled, <u>The Book of Joan</u>. Set in 2049, most of Earth has been destroyed, and a wealthy cohort lives in a complex orbiting the planet and trying to steward resources to adapt and survive. Body modification involves odd skin grafts and telling stories on skin, one of which is an updated story of Joan of Dark, who fought against Jean de Men. Yuknavitch's prose shows off her literary skills and fans of literary fiction will appreciate her well-chosen words and phrases.</p> |  |
| <u>Verge</u> | Yuknavitch, Lidia | *** | <u>7/6/20</u> | <p>Resilience. There are twenty short stories in the collection by Lidia Yuknavitch titled, <u>Verge</u>. The characters in these stories live on the margins. In lives that are battered from so many sources, there is truth and beauty if one looks in the right places, and an untraveled path out of a current setback can be found. Yuknavitch writes prose that sings in celebration of the resilience of the characters she creates.</p> |  |
| A Year in a Vegetarian Kitchen : Easy Seasonal Dishes for Family and Friends | Yung, Richard | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
| The Night Counter | Yunis, Alia | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |

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|---|--------------------|--------|----------|---|---|
| <u>The Angel's Game</u> | Zafon, Carlos Ruiz | *** | 5/25/10 | <p>Dense. Carlos Ruiz Zafon's latest novel, <u>The Angel's Game</u>, presents a writer as protagonist, David Martin, influenced by a mentor, then commissioned by a mysterious publisher to write a special book. Gothic Barcelona takes form almost as a character in this novel, and the depths and mysteries of people and places, past and present, flow past the reader. It seems as if the process of writing can be like falling under a spell, enlightened by divine inspiration or bedeviled by dark forces. Martin finds himself in a high-stakes game, a suspect in murders, and obsessed. This is a dense novel that requires a patient reader, willing to place oneself in the writer's hands and wait to see where it all ends up.</p> |  |
| <u>The Labyrinth of the Spirits</u> | Zafon, Carlos Ruiz | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2019. |  |
| <u>The Prisoner of Heaven</u> | Zafon, Carlos Ruiz | *** | 12/18/12 | <p>Atmospheric. Having enjoyed <i>The Angel's Game</i>, I readily picked up Carlos Ruiz Zafon's novel, <u>The Prisoner of Heaven</u>, another part of his series of an uncertain number of books set in Barcelona involving the <i>Cemetery of Forgotten Books</i>. Zafon's prose is highly descriptive, and for readers of the earlier novels, the characters are immediately familiar and recalled. Zafon sets this novel in two time periods, 1939 and 1958, and he develops more fully the characters of Fermín Romero de Torres, David Martin and Daniel Sempere. When I finished this novel, I considered reading the earlier novels again, expecting even more pleasure from them all. Readers who like novels in which the setting and time period come alive and descriptive language dominates in creating a realistic atmosphere, are</p> |  |

those most likely to enjoy this novel and the others in the series.



Prayer

Zaleski, Philip

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2006

Multiple Choice

Zambra, Alejandro

2/3/17

Aptitude. Whatever you do, don't give a copy of Alejandro Zambra's novel titled, Multiple Choice, to anyone in your life preparing to take a standardized examination. Zambra structured this book after the aptitude test he took as a young man in Chile in 1993. The result is a disarmingly creative book that reflects aspects of the Chilean dictatorship of that era, and how so much of the educational experience can involve repetition and avoid thinking. This novel can be read quickly or pondered gradually through re-reading. It is among the strangest books I've read in recent months, and one of the most interesting and creative works.

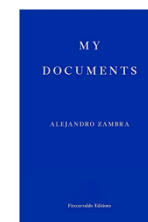


My Documents

Zambra, Alejandro

12/20/16

Voice. The eleven short stories in the collection by Alejandro Zambra titled, My Documents, display a wide range of writing skills and exploration of our human condition. Some are funny, others grave, some hopeful, and others full of disillusionment. This Chilean writer has great skill and a unique voice. Any reader who enjoys short stories and has not read his work should consider reading this fine collection.



The Believer

Zander, Joakim

3/23/17

Suspense. I expected to read an escapist thriller when I opened Joakim Zander's novel titled, The Believer. Instead of escaping from the daily headlines, I found myself reading about characters dealing with global current events in ways both individual and communal. Zander offers the



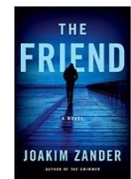
The Friend

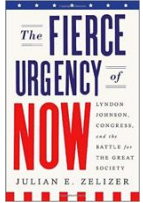
Zander, Joakim

3/26/20


perspective of three main characters. Fadi is a young Swede who became radicalized and joins the Isis forces in Syria. His sister, Yasmine, works in New York for a company that helps spot trends and exploit them for clients. Zander reprises Kara Waldeen from an earlier novel. She now works as a researcher for a human rights organization. Zander draws us into the current and backstories of these characters and pulls us into a world in which manipulators are nudging consequential actions. I enjoyed the suspense and the ways in which Zander brings topics of terror and manipulation into human relationships. Readers who like thrillers are those most likely to enjoy reading this novel.

Terrorism. Readers who enjoy thrillers with interesting and complex characters are those most likely to appreciate the novel titled, The Friend, by Joakim Zander. What would you be willing to do for a friend? How well do you know a friend? Can someone surprise us when they unexpectedly help us out of jam? Zander gives us two plot lines that develop slowly and then merge as tension rises. Jacob Seger is a young Swede who arrives at his country's embassy in Beirut to start an internship. On his first night in Lebanon, he meets a man named Yassim at a party and falls head over heels in love. Is Yassim the photographer he claims to be or is he a terrorist? Friends Klara and Gabriella notice that they are being watched, and after Gabi is arrested under suspicion of terrorism, Klara enlists George, an acquaintance from her past, to help her clear Gabi's name. There are Russian spies in the mix, and lots of close calls as the full cast of characters face life or death decisions. I was thoroughly entertained by this novel.



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|---|--------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <u>The Swimmer</u> | Zander, Joakim | **** | <u>10/20/16</u> | Secrets. Joakim Zander's ambitious debut novel titled, <u>The Swimmer</u> , lays out a whole series of plot lines and time lines that seem to be glimpses and unlikely to be connected. Before a reader knows what has happened, the threads begin to come together and by the end all the connections have been made, and those readers who buckled down for a turbulent ride were richly rewarded. |  |
| Paying the Price: Ending the Great Recession and Beginning a New American Century | Zandi, Mark | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2013. |  |
| <u>The Lost Book of Adana Moreau</u> | Zapata, Michael | **** | <u>4/16/20</u> | Structure. I enjoyed reading Michael Zapata's debut novel titled, <u>The Lost Book of Adana Moreau</u> , for several key reasons. I'm a sucker for great storytelling, and the multiple stories and time periods that Zapata connects in this novel kept me fully engaged. The scope of this work could have led some writers to bloat the prose, but Zapata uses great discipline throughout this novel and his finely written prose included no wasted words. The overall structure of the novel is complex enough to challenge the closest reader, and Zapata seems to build the universes he creates with ease. Fans of literary fiction are those readers most likely to appreciate this finely written novel. |  |
| The Fierce Urgency of Now: Lyndon Johnson, Congress, and the Battle for the Great Society | Zelizer, Julian E. | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2015. |  |

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|--|---------------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Am I Being Too Subtle?: Straight Talk From a Business Rebel</u> | Zell, Sam | **** | <u>1/28/18</u> | <p>Authentic. My list of the most successful business leaders of the past fifty years would certainly include Sam Zell. In his book titled, <u>Am I Being Too Subtle?: Straight Talk From a Business Rebel</u>, he tells about his life and his consistent approach to business. Zell is the real deal and he speaks bluntly, making the title humorous. Zell talks directly about what brings him joy, and the importance of reputation. He explains why he doesn't take himself too seriously but works hard and analyzes deals deeply. Any reader looking for insight about leading a good business life should consider reading this book and emulating Zell's approach.</p> |  |
| <u>Sour Heart</u> | Zhang, Jenny | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2018. |  |
| Piece of Work | Zigman, Laura | ** | | Read, but not reviewed. |  |
| <u>Mislaid</u> | Zink, Nell | **** | <u>9/23/15</u> | <p>Operatic. Readers who like wacky humor, especially comic opera, are those most likely to enjoy reading Nell Zink's novel titled, <u>Mislaid</u>. I was thoroughly entertained by this southern soap opera and its riffs on race, gender, sexual identity and class. Zink's characters are memorable, and she develops them in a way that they seem both familiar and odd at the same time. She offers an American family that seems like no other we may know, and yet seems exactly like every family we know.</p> |  |

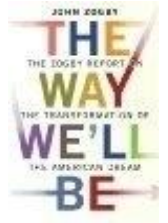
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|--|----------------------------|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Nicotine | Zink, Nell | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| Private Novelist | Zink, Nell | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2017. |  |
| The Wallcreeper | Zink, Nell | **** | 1/23/15 | <p>Birds. Nell Zink's debut novel, The Wallcreeper, is good on so many levels. The title refers to a rare bird whose habitat is Central Europe. Protagonists Tiffany and Stephen are rare birds as well: Americans living in Central Europe, unsure of whether the new habitat is suitable. There's humor and good writing inside the covers of this novel, but like other rare birds, this will not satisfy readers who prefer chicken over other exotic fowl. I'm sure I'm not hip enough to "get" this novel, but I enjoyed the birdwatching experience, thanks mostly to Zink's writing skill.</p> |  |
| The Battle for Peace | Zinni, Tony | ** | Sept 06 | <p>Empire. Retired general reflects on the ways in which the United States has created an empire that ignores working with others, but his prescriptions for change are hard to interpret.</p> |  |
| Leading the Charge: Leadership Lessons from the Battlefield to the Boardroom | Zinni, Tony and Tony Klotz | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2010 |  |

The Way We'll Be: The Zogby Report on the Transformation of the American Dream

Zogby, John

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2009. I was transformed as far as page 36, and then returned to normal.

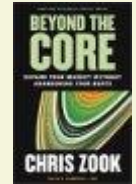


Beyond the Core: Expand Your Market Without Abandoning Your Roots

Zook, Chris

Oct 04

Repeatability. Case studies, data, advice, and CEO lessons learned in implementing growth strategies, based on a decade of research about 2,000 companies.

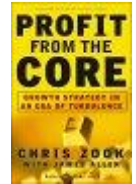


Profit From the Core: Growth Strategy in an Era of Turbulence

Zook, Chris

06/01

Back to basic approach can jump-start your corporate planning activities. Dozens of good questions for you to answer.



Barren Island

Zoref, Carol

6/2/18

Losses. One of my fondest childhood memories was driving from our apartment in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn to our bungalow in Roxbury on the Rockaway peninsula. I remember looking to the west from Flatbush Avenue before reaching Floyd Bennett Field and seeing a farmer plowing a field: an unusual site for Brooklyn in the 1950s. So when I read Carol Zoref's novel titled, Barren Island, and learned about an island in the salt marches off Floyd Bennett Field, I wondered if I should have been looking to the east, especially while crossing the bridge. This finely written novel is full of losses of all sorts from the monumental to the minor. An isolated group of people live and work in the stench of a factory that renders dead horses and other animals into glue and fertilizer. The narrator, Marta Eisenstein, describes at age eighty her memories of these desolate places that have long since been demolished. Life between the world wars of the twentieth century were



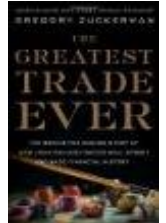
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| | | | | dominated by the losses of the depression. For Marta, the losses are as real in her memory as they were when they first occurred. | |
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The Greatest Trade Ever: The Behind-the-Scenes Story of How John Paulson Defied Wall Street and Made Financial History

Zuckerman, Gregory

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2010



Ponzi's Scheme: The True Story of a Financial Legend

Zuckhoff, Mitchell

Unread

Shelf of Ennui 2005

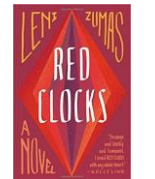


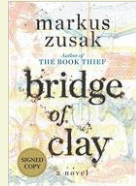

[Red Clocks](#)

Zumas, Leni

[2/2/18](#)

Choices. Abortion is one of the most contentious issues in America and those with divergent views are solidly convinced that their position is clearly the right one and the other side is absolutely wrong. In her novel titled, [Red Clocks](#), Leni Zumas offers readers a vision of a future in which a personhood amendment has outlawed abortion in all fifty states. Another law, “every child needs two,” is about to prevent adoptions by single people. Zumas structures the novel by alternating the perspectives of five different women and their choices. The writing is superb, the characters compelling, and the structure intriguing. Book club members will spend more time than usual talking about this book.



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|--|---------------|--------|------------------------|---|---|
| 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. |  |
| Renovate before you innovate: why doing the new thing might not be the right thing | Zyman, Sergio | Unread | | Shelf of Ennui 2005 |  |
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Key to Ratings 1999-2012

Outstanding book-read it
now

Highly recommended

Recommended

Mildly recommended

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Read if your interest is
strong

*

Do Not Read: Take a Pass

DNR

Key to Ratings: 2013 and after

I love it

I like it

It's OK

I don't like it

I hate it

