

**Rockport Public Library
Summer Reading for Grown-Ups
Top Picks for Fiction and Non Fiction
2010**

The List is divided into two sections: one for fiction and one for non fiction. The Lists are arranged alphabetically by author. The fiction list has a note about type of book. **Genre Key: L – Literary H – History M&T – Mystery & Thriller P – Popular**

Copies of all the titles listed are available at Rockport Public Library and Toad Hall Bookstore.

Additional selections by noted critics can be found in **1001 Books You Must Read Before You Die** (ed. Peter Boxall, 011.73 ONE) with titles and summaries including graphics of authors' original artwork and book covers.

Contemporary Fiction

Author	Title	Genre
Alison, Rosie	The Very Thought of You	L
<p>England, 31st August 1939: the world is on the brink of war. As Hitler prepares to invade Poland, thousands of children are evacuated from London to escape the impending Blitz. Torn from her mother, eight-year-old Anna Sands is relocated with other children to a large Yorkshire estate which has been opened up to evacuees by Thomas and Elizabeth Ashton, an enigmatic childless couple. Soon Anna gets drawn into their unravelling relationship, seeing things that are not meant for her eyes - and finding herself part-witness and part-accomplice to a love affair, with unforeseen consequences. A story of longing, loss and complicated loyalties, combining a sweeping narrative with subtle psychological observation.</p>		
Bakker, Gerbrand	The Twin	L 2010 Dublin Prize Winner
<p>Henk was more popular and athletic than Helmer, his identical twin, while growing up on a small rural Netherlands farm. Henk was their father's favorite son. Naturally lovely Riet chooses to marry him instead of Helmer. After Henk dies in an auto accident a couple of months before the wedding, Helmer is forced to leave college and return to the family farm. With deep bitterness, he spends days mucking the stalls and milking cows. Now, 37 years later, Helmer moves his invalid father upstairs to get him out of the way and slowly transforms the living space to be more suitable for a bachelor. After a few correspondences from recently widowed Riet, Helmer agrees to take in her teenage son. She feels that hard farm work will give him some direction. Colmer's superb translation allows the novel's authentic voice to be heard by American readers. Bakker captures Helmer's true feelings with excellent inner dialogue. His ongoing feud with his father instills an unusual bond between the two. Readers will appreciate the setting of farmland, canals, windmills, and green pastures, and see how family dynamics are ongoing and changing.</p>		
Belfer, Lauren	A Fierce Radiance	H
<p>Thirty-six-year-old Claire Shipley is a most modern woman in 1941. A gifted, focused photographer for LIFE magazine, a divorced single mother, and fearless in the pursuit of her career, she stumbles upon an enormous story when she is sent to cover the use of an experimental, hard-to-produce drug, penicillin, on infections. Having lost one child to septicemia, she is fiercely protective of her son. When her original story is killed, she is asked by the U.S. government to pursue it as a patriot, keeping an eye on the big pharmaceutical companies who are supposed to be mass-producing patent-free penicillin for use on the battlefield but are really working on the much more profitable cousin drugs. With an exquisite artist's eye for detail that puts readers right in the middle of New York City and the World War II fronts and incorporating all the elements of a hot, sprawling, page-turning romance-not to mention espionage, murder, crime-scene deceptions, big business intrigue, and family estrangements-Belfer once again blends fiction and facts with riveting results.</p>		
Bender, Aimee	The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake: A Novel	L
<p>Rose Edelstein is nearly nine when she first tastes her mother's feelings baked into a slice of birthday cake. Her "mouth was filling up with the taste of smallness of upset." Meals become an agony for Rose, and she subsists on</p>		

junk food from the school vending machine. When her mother begins an affair, Rose can taste that, too. Her brilliant older brother, Joseph, seems to have some type of autism spectrum disorder, though it is never named. Rose grows up and manages what she now considers her food skill, discerning not only the city of production but also the personality and temperament of the growers and pickers. She also draws closer to her father, finally understanding his prepossessions. This is an unusual family, even by California standards. Bender deconstructs one of our most pleasurable activities, eating, and gives it a whole new flavor. She smooths out the lumps and grittiness of life to reveal its zest.

Blake, Sarah

The Postmistress

L

Debut novelist Blake weaves together the story of three women before and during WWII. The story takes place in alternating locations in Cape Cod and war torn Europe in 1940. 40-year-old postmistress Iris James and young newlywed Emma Trask go about their daily lives in Franklin, MA on the Cape.

They follow American reporter Frankie Bard who works with Edward R. Morrow on the radio as she delivers powerful and personal accounts from the London Blitz and elsewhere in Europe. Trask waits for the return of her husband who is a volunteer doctor stationed in England. James comes across a letter with valuable information that she chooses to hide. Two different worlds are captured, a naïve nation in denial and across the ocean a continent wracked with terror. The story is told with a deft sense of character and plot, and delves into the complex question of the merits of truth and truth-telling in wartime.

Burke, James Lee

The Glass Rainbow

M&T

It takes an incredible writer to keep fresh an 18th novel featuring a character that refuses to change, but Burke does so with what may be one of the best in his Robicheaux series. Dave is trying only to serve his duty as a New Iberia, LA, deputy, but as usual his conscience and need to see justice through draw him into trouble. Investigating a series of murders involving young female victims, he discovers a link that involves a former criminal-turned-best-selling author, as well as a local socialite who is involved romantically with Dave's daughter. Dave's best friend and longtime partner, Clete Purcel, provides a helping hand, along with some always-welcome color. As with most of the Robicheaux titles, the story is one of good vs. evil, with little mystery beyond the motivation of individuals. Burke also continues to set the gold standard when it comes to setting, making his readers feel like they're in New Iberia with Dave and Clete. Another beautifully crafted effort by a multi-Edgar Award winner, this is an outstanding addition to one of America's best mystery series. Burke fans will not be disappointed.

Camillieri, Andrea

The Wings of the Sphinx

M&T, Inspector Montalbano Series

A tattoo of a sphinx moth on the left shoulder of the victim is the only lead Sicilian Inspector Salvo Montalbano has when the nude body of a young woman, shot in the face, is found in a dump. His investigation leads to the discovery of several other young women with the same tattoo, all from the same town in Russia and connected to the politically sensitive Benevolence, a Catholic association purportedly doing good deeds and saving souls. At the same time, the shrewish wife of a rich businessman is nagging Montalbano to find her husband, kidnapped from his home under strange circumstances. And the inspector himself is at a crossroads with his longtime lover, Livia. Montalbano, now 56, is still able to enjoy a good lunch at his favorite trattoria as he sniffs out deception and corruption. But he is increasingly bothered by violence, particularly toward the young, as he ponders what the future holds for him.

Carey, Peter

Parrot and Olivier in America

L, H

Olivier-Jean-Baptiste de Clarel de Garmont is French nobility, son of survivors of the French Revolution. Olivier has had every privilege and is acutely aware of his relative social position. Imagine his surprise and discomfort when he is banished, for his own safety, to newly emerging democratic America. Son of an itinerant English printer, with a colorful and varied past, Parrot proves an unlikely companion. Parrot is sent to accompany Olivier as his servant and secretary, with the secret mission of reporting Olivier's activities back to his mother in France. The story alternates between Parrot and Olivier, who narrate from their widely different points of view. Featuring well-developed and multifaceted characters (the novel was inspired by the life of Alexis de Tocqueville), this book is rife with humorous details and turns of phrase, and juxtaposed relationships.

Chiavarini, Jennifer

The Aloha Quilt

M&T

In this latest entry to the bestselling Elm Creek Quilts series, quilting queen Bonnie Markham explores Hawaii and learns about the islands' quilting traditions while setting up a tropical quilt camp. Weary from a difficult divorce battle, Bonnie leaves beloved Elm Creek Manor and takes up her friend's invitation to start the camp; once in Hawaii, she gets to work on hiring staff and making her version of a Hawaiian quilt. When her mean-spirited ex-husband-to-be

demands half her share in Elm Creek as part of the settlement, Bonnie takes drastic measures to protect the estate and her friends. Still, the big changes are hard to take, and Bonnie's not sure she can follow through. With homey details and a strong sense of the connections that bind women, friends, and families, Chiaverini lovingly crafts her tale about a woman stitching together a new life and a new project. Series fans will enjoy this latest entry, and those new to the quilting bee should have no problem finding their groove.

Cleve, Chris

Little Bee

L

Book clubs in search of the next "Kite Runner" need look no further than this astonishing, flawless novel about what happens when ordinary, mundane Western lives are thrown into stark contrast against the terrifying realities of war-torn Africa. Their marriage in crisis, Andrew and Sarah O'Rourke impulsively accept a junket to a Nigerian beach resort as a last-ditch attempt to reconcile. When machete-wielding soldiers appear out of the jungle and force them to determine the fate of two African girls, everyone's lives are irrevocably shattered. Two years later in a London suburb, one of the girls, now a refugee, reconnects with Sarah. Together they face wrenching tests of a friendship forged under extreme duress. Best-selling author Cleave effortlessly moves between alternating viewpoints with lucid, poignant prose and the occasional lighter note. A tension-filled dramatic ending and plenty of moral dilemmas.

Coban, Harlan

Caught

L

Teenager Haley McWaid doesn't come home one night, and when months go by without a word her parents assume the worst. Reporter Wendy Tynes conducts a sexual predator sting, working with the local police to capture men on camera and later televising the footage. Her latest suspect is community social worker Dan Mercer, and those who know him can't believe he's guilty. Tynes begins to question her instincts, but she carries on with her investigation, which reveals a shocking link between Mercer and the missing Haley, with aftershocks that will destroy a community. Coban is in top form exposing the dark underside of modern suburbia. The story will chill readers, especially parents of teenagers. Complex and intricate, this is his best book since "Promise Me".

Coontz, Deborah

Wanna Get Lucky?

M&T

Coontz, who lives in Las Vegas, takes full advantage of the mecca's naughty rep, giving it a comical twist or two that's occasionally laugh-out-loud funny. Thirtysomething casino exec Lucky O'Toole, the self-made daughter of a celebrated madame, is a tough, smart, wisecracking adrenaline junkie, whose energy matches the eye-popping glitz and frenetic pace of the casino business. Unfortunately, while she is exceptionally good at solving the casino's problems without judging the proclivities of its customers, she has a serious lack of personal life. Then murder, blackmail, and some business finagling give her the chance to use her mean right cross, and some tantalizing new opportunities for romance allow her to reevaluate her priorities and get her raging libido under control. Complete with designer duds, porn conventions, partner-swapping parties, and clever repartee, this is chick-lit gone wild and sexy, lightly wrapped in mystery and tied up with a brilliantly flashing neon bow. As the first in a series, Wanna Get Lucky? hits the proverbial jackpot.

Cronin, Justin

The Passage

M&T, SF

A human-created virus has infected humankind, mutating most into superstrong, near-immortal vampiric creatures. The "virals"-also called "jumpers" and "dracs" (after Dracula, of course)-can leap 20 feet through the air at a bound and split a human (or a horse, or a cow) in half with their bare hands. A small band of men and women embark on a cross-country trek, looking for a way to protect the few remaining uninfected humans from extinction. With them travels an enigmatic prepubescent girl who talks to the virals with her mind and seems to have been born 100 years before. The monsters in this compulsive nail biter are the scariest in fiction since Stephen King's vampires in Salem's Lot. Although the novel runs 700 pages, Cronin is a master at building tension, and he never wastes words. Shout it from the hills! This exceptional thriller should be one of the most popular novels this year and will draw in readers everywhere.

Doig, Ian

Work Song

L, M&T

Doig affectionately revisits Morris "Morrie" Morgan from the much-heralded "The Whistling Season". Now, 10 years later, in 1919, Morrie lands in Butte, Mont., beholding the area's natural beauty that "made a person look twice." Scoring a job is a top priority, as is getting more face time with Grace Faraday, the alluring widow who runs the boardinghouse where he stays. Things, naturally, are complicated, as the fiendishly bookish Morrie is on the run from Chicago gangsters who feel they've been duped after he scored a windfall from a fixed sports wager. The local "shysters" at the duplicitous Anaconda Copper Mining Company, meanwhile, find Morrie's sudden interest in Butte highly suspicious as they try to bully Grace into selling her property. Morrie lands what might be an ideal job working at the public library with ex-cattle rancher Samuel Sandison, though our sturdy narrator must choose sides

when the mining company ups the ante. Drama ebbs and flows as Morrie yields to the plight of union leader Jared Evans, and Morrie and Samuel come to terms with sins from their pasts. Charismatic dialogue and charming, homespun characterization make Doig's latest another surefire winner.

Doiron, Paul

The Poacher's Son

M&T

Mike Bowditch, 24, is a rookie game warden for the state of Maine. He's also the son of Jack Bowditch, legendary woodsman, brawler, womanizer, and poacher whom Mike has not seen in over two years. One hot summer night while Mike is out answering a call about a bear stealing a pig, Jack leaves Mike a cryptic message on his answering machine. The next morning, Mike learns that his father is wanted in the murders of a paper company representative and a sheriff's deputy. Through a long few days, Mike jeopardizes his dream job to help the father whose attention he could never get. A richly imagined portrait of the vanishing wilderness in New England's farthest reaches, Doiron's well-written debut is also a taut thriller and a thoughtful examination of the complicated relationship between father and son.

Drayson, Nicholas

A Guide to the Birds of East Africa L, M&T

Reserved, honourable Mr Malik. You wouldn't notice him in a Nairobi street - except, perhaps, to comment on his carefully sculpted comb over - but beneath his unprepossessing exterior lies a warm heart and a secret passion. Not even his friends at the Asadi Club know it, but Mr Malik is head-over-heels in love with the leader of the Tuesday morning bird walk of the East African Ornithological Society, Rose Mbikwa. While Mr Malik hesitantly plans how he will ask Rose to the annual Hunt Ball, flashy Harry Kahn arrives in town and makes it clear that he too has Rose in his sights. When Mr Malik blurts out his feelings at the Club a wager is set - whoever sees the most birds in a week will ask Rose to the ball. With boats, planes and guides to get him to the choicest bird-watching spots in Kenya, Harry Kahn's soon noting down everything from pearl-breasted swallows to spur-winged plovers. But Mr Malik's not so easily beaten and with unorthodox methods and far-flung adventures of his own, he's determined to stay in the game.

Egan, Jennifer

A Visit from the Goon Squad

L

Time changes both everything and nothing in this novel about former punk rocker-turned-music executive Bennie Salazar and Sasha, his indispensable secretary with an unhappy past. A host of characters from San Francisco's 1970s music scene collide in ways that are hard to summarize, with peripheral characters in one chapter more fully developed in others. These well-defined characters and the engaging narrative are hallmarks of Egan's earlier fiction. Here, we learn that power is transient, authenticity is not all it's cracked up to be, and friendships are often fragile, but the connections among people matter terribly. Often, we survive the self-destructive tendencies of youth only to realize that we've just exchanged one set of problems for another.

Flavely, Patricia

The Yellow House

L, H

For eight-year-old Eileen O'Neill, the gatherings of her father's friends to make music in the family's yellow house in Northern Ireland seem an idyllic time. But even in 1905, politics tinge their conversations, revealing distrust between Protestant and Catholic. Illness, betrayal, and violent death soon tear the family apart, but Eileen perseveres with the goal of reclaiming her heritage. Working in a textile mill owned by the wealthy Sheridans, she realizes that few opportunities exist for Catholics to advance. Yet she senses the sympathy of Owen Sheridan, whose unconventional actions dismay his Quaker family, especially after he enlists in the British army. When Eileen joins the underground fight for Irish independence, she is drawn to charismatic leader James Conlon and marries him, a decision that leads to further heartache. Although most readers will surmise that religious, class, and political differences will ultimately be overcome to bring Eileen and Owen together, Flavely tells a good story along the way. A host of interesting characters, surprising but plausible plot developments, and deftly incorporated details of the Irish struggle for independence.

Foden, Giles

Turbulence

H (Aug)

Author of "The Last King of Scotland", Foden centers on historical fiction about forecasting the weather for the D-day landings of World War II. The story is narrated through the diary of Henry Meadows, a brilliant young scientist assigned the difficult task of finding the reclusive Wallace Ryman, the originator of numerical weather forecasting. A crucial formula for forecasting the weather on the day of the invasion, the Ryman number defines the amount of turbulence in any given situation. With the clock ticking, Meadows must not only find Ryman but also understand his theory to ensure Allied success. A genuinely engaging character, Ryman is based on British scientist Lewis Fry Richardson, an ardent pacifist who applied mathematics to the systematic investigation of the causes of war. This work is lively, engaging, and readable, though readers unfamiliar with the principles of physics may find the detailed,

scientific language distracting to the pace of the novel. Fans of Foden's historical fiction will not be disappointed.

Foulds, Adam

The Quickening Maze

L, H

Foulds's erudite, Booker-shortlisted debut follows three men—Dr. Matthew Allen, mad peasant poet John Clare, and prodigious pipe-smoking poet Alfred Tennyson—as their fates intertwine at the High Beach mental institution outside of 1837 London. Worried over the cost of the wedding for his eldest daughter, Matthew invents a machine to mass-produce filigreed wood furniture. Ignoring the asylum for his business pursuits, Matthew seeks investors, including the Tennyson family, of whom Alfred's brother, Septimus, is a patient at High Beach. John, meanwhile, spirals into a fantasy world fueled by his obsession with a dead childhood sweetheart, Mary. Things become complicated when John deludes himself into thinking a fellow patient is his dead love. All the while, Alfred, who is at the asylum to be near his brother, is fruitlessly pursued by Matthew's adolescent daughter, Hannah. While Alfred, unfortunately, is the least convincing character, John's madness is richly imagined, and Matthew comes off as powerfully sympathetic as he grows ever more desperate to raise funds for his business gamble. There's a manneredness to the storytelling that devotees of 19th-century British literature will appreciate.

Lowcountry Summer: A Plantation

Frank, Dorothea Benton

Novel

P, Series

Here's one for the Southern gals as well as Yankees who appreciate Frank's signature mix of sass, sex, and gargantuan personalities. In this long-time-coming sequel to "Plantation", opinionated and family-centric Caroline Wimbly Levine has just turned 47, but she's less concerned with advancing middle age than she is with son Eric shacking up with an older single mom. She's also dealing with a drunk and disorderly sister-in-law, Frances Mae; four nieces from hell; grieving brother Tripp; a pig-farmer boyfriend with a weak heart; and a serious crush on the local sheriff. Then there's Caroline's dead-but-not-forgotten mother, Miss Lavinia, whose presence both guides and troubles Caroline as she tries to keep her unruly family intact and out of jail. With a sizable cast of minor characters with major attitude, Frank lovingly mixes a brew of personalities who deliver nonstop clashes, mysteries, meltdowns, and commentaries; below the always funny theatrics, however, is a compelling saga of loss and acceptance.

Franzen, Jonathan

Freedom

L (Aug)

A darkly comedic novel about family. Patty and Walter Berglund were the new pioneers of old St. Paul—the gentrifiers, the hands-on parents, the avant-garde of the Whole Foods generation. Patty was the ideal sort of neighbor, who could tell you where to recycle your batteries and how to get the local cops to actually do their job. She was an enviably perfect mother and the wife of Walter's dreams. Together with Walter—environmental lawyer, commuter cyclist, total family man—she was doing her small part to build a better world. But now, in the new millennium, the Berglunds have become a mystery. Why has their teenage son moved in with the aggressively Republican family next door? Why has Walter taken a job working with Big Coal? What exactly is Richard Katz—rocker and Walter's college best friend and rival—still doing in the picture? Most of all, what has happened to Patty? Why has the bright star of Barrier Street become "a very different kind of neighbor," an implacable Fury coming unhinged before the street's attentive eyes? In his first novel since "The Corrections", Jonathan Franzen has given us an epic of contemporary love and marriage. Freedom comically and tragically captures the temptations and burdens of liberty: the thrills of teenage lust, the shaken compromises of middle age, the wages of suburban sprawl, the heavy weight of empire. In charting the mistakes and joys of the book's intensely realized characters as they struggle to learn how to live in an ever more confusing world, Franzen has produced an indelible and deeply moving portrait of our time.

French, Tana

Faithful Place

M&T (July)

In 1985, Frank Mackey and Rosie Daly were 19, in love, and planning to run away together from Ireland to start a new life in England. When Rosie failed to meet him, Frank stayed in his hometown of Dublin, estranged from his dysfunctional family. But 22 years later, Frank, now on the Dublin Police Undercover Squad and boss of Det. Cassie Maddox, finds his history in upheaval when his colleagues unearth Rosie's remains in a dilapidated house in his old neighborhood, and he's pulled back into his family of four siblings and their alcoholic, wife-beating father. When his younger brother dies days later—accident, suicide, or murder?—in the yard of the same old house, Frank connives to stay in the loop of the investigation as he tries to put the pieces together and his nine-year-old daughter becomes a key player in the case. With French's masterly portrayal of family dynamics and responsibility and her adept depiction of young love and parental devotion, fans are unlikely to miss Maddox, the protagonist of her first two best sellers. Psychological suspense at its best.

Furst, Alan

Spies of the Balkans: A Novel

M&T

In his intense yet subtle way, Furst takes readers to the Greek city of Salonika in October 1940, just months before the Germans hoist their occupying flag on the Acropolis the following April. Senior police official Costa Zannis, calm yet passionate in his lusty body and loyal soul, has insinuating ways that lead him to deep and sensitive knowledge that others covet. Just as Fascist Italy starts its attack on Greece, Zannis begins working with confederates in other Balkan cities to shepherd escaping German Jews to safety in Turkey until time runs out for them all. With ten novels behind him, Furst has perfected a historical espionage genre that illuminates an ordinary man whom fate has picked for quiet heroism. Furst fans will argue about their favorite books, but the Balkan twists and turns in this masterly triumph of plotting, history, and character development will be a hit this summer.

Gabalton, Diana

An Echo in the Bone

P

The seventh installment of Gabalton's popular Outlander series will not disappoint her fans, who've been chomping at the bit since "A Breath of Snow and Ashes" (2005). Highlander Jamie Fraser and his time-traveling wife, Claire, find themselves in the midst of the American Revolution. Jamie is fighting on the winning side-but he fears facing in battle his illegitimate son, William, a lieutenant in the British army. Meanwhile, in the 20th century, daughter Brianna and family have settled at the Fraser ancestral home, where they face their own perils. Readers anticipating a lengthy visit with Jamie and Claire may be vexed to find that a goodly chunk of the story is devoted to William; but his adventures include all the thrilling elements Outlander addicts have come to crave. Relish this book-it might be a long stretch until the next fix.

George, Elizabeth

This Body of Death

M&T, Inspector Lynley Series

Isabelle Ardery is an ambitious detective with a habit of sneaking off to the ladies' room to down a miniature bottle of vodka or two. She has just been named acting superintendent of Thomas Lynley's former department when the body of a young woman is found in a London cemetery. Under pressure to find the killer quickly in order to prove herself, Ardery persuades Lynley to return from retirement to help her. The murder victim is Jemima Hastings, a young woman who, nine months before, abruptly left her thriving cupcake business and her boyfriend, roof-thatcher Gordon Jossie, in Hampshire and moved to London. Clues lead Ardery's team to Hampshire, where Jossie has a mysterious new girlfriend. Details about the craft of thatching and the care of the ponies that roam freely in Hampshire's New Forest, a former royal hunting ground, make this an informative as well as an entertaining novel. George's many fans will welcome Lynley's return to New Scotland Yard.

Goodman, Allegra

The Cookbook Collector

L

Crisp, accomplished Emily Markowitz is CEO of a data-storage startup in late 1990s California. Her sister, Jessica, is a messy, passionate graduate student in philosophy who's involved with the charismatic leader of Tree Savers and works in a rare-books store owned by the older, slightly grumpy George. George got rich off of Microsoft and now follows his first love, and he's impressed when Jess manages something brilliant with a woman who wants but doesn't want to part with an astonishing cookbook collection. Frantically different, the sisters are still bound by memories of the mother they lost as children; Emily strains to persuade Jess to invest in her startup even as Jess strains to see what Emily sees in her fiance, go-getter Jonathan, who has his own startup back East. Meanwhile, their father, who appreciates techie overachiever Emily more than wise Jess, is strangely resistant to the Bialystokers moving in next door. Alas, 9/11 brings not just family tragedy but the revelation of some uncomfortable truths and a realignment of relationships. Goodman is remarkably successful in creating rich, engaging characters and a complex story of love and identity.

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies:

The Classic Regency Romance

Now with Ultraviolet Zombie

Mayhem

P

Grahame-Smith, Seth

You'll either love or loathe the idea of this classic rewritten to include hordes of brain-seeking zombie "unmentionables" and a Shaolin-trained Elizabeth Bennett. It is silly, of course, and at times unnecessarily crude (Do we really need this many puns on the word balls?), but it's also a great deal of fun-particularly when Elizabeth dreams about beheading her wayward sister Lydia. As Grahame-Smith has retained 85 percent of the original text, Austen aficionados may enjoy seeing the familiar story through this new lens. Fans of satirical zombie films and horror-comedies like Shaun of the Dead and Army of Darkness will enjoy it, too.

Gregory, Philippa

The Red Queen

H (Aug)

Margaret Beaufort is certain of one thing from a very young age: God has destined her for something great. She

Hart, John**The Last Child****M&T (2010 Edgar Winner)**

When 12-year-old Alyssa Merrimon disappeared a year ago, her family fell apart. Her twin brother, Johnny, became obsessed with trying to find her, their father took off, not to be heard from again, and their mother sank into a world of drugs and booze, helped along by an abusive, wealthy boyfriend. Det. Clive Hunt is also obsessed, both with finding Alyssa and with her mother, and his preoccupation costs him his marriage and jeopardizes his job. But this is Johnny's story and his quest to find the sister he lost. Taking his mother's car while she's passed out and occasionally taking along his best friend, Jack, Johnny spies and keeps meticulous records on the townsfolk of small Raven County, NC. The world is a dark place when seen through his eyes, and Johnny is an unforgettable character in this finely drawn yet disturbing thriller. With his best novel yet, the Edgar Award-winning Hart firmly cements his place alongside the greats of the genre.

Harvey, John**Far Cry****M&T**

When Londoners Ruth and Simon Pierce's ten-year-old daughter Heather dies in an apparent fall while on a camping trip with a friend's family on the Cornish coast, they are devastated. Divorced, Ruth moves to Cambridge, remarries, and has another daughter, Beatrice, who at the age of ten disappears on the way home from a class. Meanwhile, a convicted pedophile is released in Cambridgeshire, and DI Will Grayson is convinced that he may have committed other crimes and even be threatening Will's own children. DS Helen Walker goes to Cornwall to investigate the death of Ruth's first daughter, while Will pulls out all stops in trying to find Beatrice. Harvey skillfully weaves these threads together to reach a wrenching conclusion that fully illustrates again his complete mastery of plot and character. Grayson and Walker first appeared in *Gone to Ground*, but Harvey's reputation was built on his Charlie Resnick series. Any reader seeking an excellent author with a long track record of the very best of contemporary mystery fiction must become familiar with Harvey's considerable body of work.

Hijuelos, Oscar**Beautiful Maria of My Soul****L**

Readers familiar with Hijuelos's Pulitzer Prize-winning blockbuster "The Mambo Kings Sing Songs of Love" (1989) will recognize this title: it's the name of the song that Nestor Castillo penned to his lost love, Maria. This latest novel explores that love in greater detail. Illiterate but beautiful Maria Garcia escapes from her peasant surroundings in western Cuba in the hopes of making it big in Havana. There she meets small-time gangster Ignacio but becomes involved with Nestor; Ignacio gets rid of his rival by paying for the Castillo brothers' passage to New York. Later, after hearing the song written for her, Maria travels to New York to see Nestor; their steamy lovemaking on the last night of her trip is the culmination of the novel's latent eroticism. After Nestor is killed in a car crash, the novel turns briefly pedestrian, updating us about events in Maria's life. The last section, titled "Oh Yes That Book" (referring to *Mambo Kings*), fuses reality and fiction; Hijuelos himself makes an appearance, and the characters in this novel talk about those in the earlier one as if they were real. In the end, this is every bit as good as *Mambo Kings*.

Hilderbrand, Elin**The Island****P**

Two generations of women come together off the coast of Nantucket as they spend the summer in the family beach cottage. They're all there for different reasons: Chess is trying to mend her broken heart after her ex-fiance dies in a tragic accident; her sister, Tate, is eager to escape boredom and figure out what she really wants from life; their mother, Birdie, is still coming to terms with her divorce; and Birdie's sister, India, is trying to help them all-while dealing with her own secret pain. For those looking for a slower-paced novel to savor, this latest by Hilderbrand will fit the bill.

Hoffman, Beth**Saving CeeCee Honeycutt****L**

In Hoffman's charming debut, Cecelia Rose (CeeCee) Honeycutt tells the story of her tragic life and the strong women who stepped in to save her. At age 12, CeeCee realizes her mother, flouncing around Willoughby, OH, in prom dresses and matching shoes, is crazy and the town's laughingstock. Her father is never home, and nothing is going to change so CeeCee buries herself in books as an escape. But her true liberation comes after her mother's tragic death when great-aunt Tootie sweeps CeeCee off to Savannah. There, a group of powerful, independent women offer the young girl love, laughter, and a new chance at life. Readers who enjoy strong female characters will appreciate CeeCee, a survivor despite her heartbreaking childhood, and Aunt Tootie and her friends, all of them steel magnolias. Exemplifying Southern storytelling at its best, this coming-of-age novel is sure to be a hit with the book clubs that adopted Sue Monk Kidd's "The Secret Life of Bees".

Isaacs, Susan**As Husbands Go****P**

Imagine being the smart and adored wife of a marvelous and successful man as well as the proud, if harried, mother of his darling four-year-old triplet boys in New York City. Then, one seemingly ordinary day, your thoroughly reliable

husband does not return home from work. Isaacs vividly conveys the initial panic and gut-wrenching fear that Susie Gersten feels in those first hours as she contacts family members, his colleagues, and the police. Days go by with no word, and Susie fears the worst. Nothing, however, could have prepared her for the news that her beloved husband, Dr. Jonah Gersten, was found murdered in a call girl's apartment. Susie can't accept it, and by asking questions and challenging assumptions, she fights for the memory of her good marriage. Issacs's latest novel depicts the hardship of a sudden death and the capacities of a clever and spirited woman to stay engaged in the world while struggling with grief. For all of its serious aspects, there are good measures of wit and fun here. All of Isaacs's novels have been New York Times best sellers-this one will be no exception.

Jackson, Joshilyn

Backseat Saints

M&T

On the surface, she's Ro Grandee, dutiful wife of a handsome Texan with ready fists. But underneath her flowery skirts and painful bruises lurks Rose Mae, a fierce Southern spitfire who's already escaped an abusive father. These days Rose seems resigned to taking punches, working in the Grandee family gun shop, and waltzing with the vacuum cleaner until an oddly familiar airport gypsy foretells a fortune that is murder-literally. Rose's husband is going to kill her, unless she manages to kill him first. Rose takes her dog, Gretel, and her Pawpy's old gun and runs for her life, blazing a harrowing trail from Texas to Alabama and on to California and exhuming a heap of family skeletons along the way. Jackson has crafted a riveting read that simply flies off the page with prose as luscious as sweet tea and spicy as Texas chili.

Jance, J.A.

Queen of the Night: A Novel of Suspense

M&T

Dedicated to the late Tony Hillerman, Jance's brilliant fourth suspense novel featuring former homicide detective Brandon Walker and his wife, novelist Diana Ladd, spans some 50 years, from a murder in 1959 in San Diego to a rash of killings in Thousand Oaks, Calif., and Tucson, Ariz., in 2009. Interwoven with these crimes are legends of the Tohono O'odham Indians (aka the Desert People) and the lives of such contemporary Native people as Lani Walker, Brandon and Diana's adopted daughter. Jance's masterful handling of a complex cast of characters makes it easy for the reader to appreciate the intricate web of relationships that bind them across generations. The title refers to the night-blooming Cereus, a desert plant that blooms once a year and is of great symbolic importance to the Tohono. Jance, perhaps best known for her J.P. Beaumont series, has crafted a mystery that Hillerman would be proud of and that her fans will love.

Jenkins, Elizabeth

The Tortoise and the Hare

L

"The Tortoise and the Hare" is a delicious tale of life in suburban London in the early 1950s. The heroine, Imogen Gresham, is married to an older man, a barrister, and life with him and her somewhat sullen child is a bit unpleasant. Imogen almost expects her husband to find comfort in a younger woman, the way she pines after an old beau, a doctor who married a woman far younger than she, but instead, her rival for his affection winds up being Blanche Silcox, an older woman prone to fishing and fast cars. The results are both sharp satire and poignant character study — just who exactly is the tortoise and who is the hare?

Jensen, Beverly

The Sisters from Hardscrabble Bay

L

This novel opens in remote New Brunswick in the early 20th century, at a farm situated along a seaside cliff. Idella and Avis Hillock live there with their parents and older brother, but when their lovely mother dies giving birth to baby sister Emma, the household becomes forlorn. Tended to by rough French-speaking girls from the country and shipped off to relatives in Maine when their sometimes violent father can't cope, they struggle to adulthood. The harsh life and times of the sisters is presented in sharp detail through their own eyes, with issues of class and gender revealed along the way. From their rocky beginnings through their father's death and their own old age in 1986, the sisters' tale remains compelling.

Kingsolver, Barbara

The Lacuna

H (2010 Orange Prize Winner)

Diego Rivera's mural in Mexico's Palacio Nazionale was only half complete the day young Harrison Shepherd stood transfixed before it, but he would be forever captive to the extraordinary power of the imagination. A solitary child, a devourer of books, left to his own devices by a mother chasing unattainable men and a father pencil pushing for the government back in the States, Harrison observes and he writes. When a quirk of fate lands him in the home of Communist sympathizers Rivera and Frida Kahlo, Rivera's wife, Harrison becomes enmeshed in the turbulent history that will inform his life and work. Through the distinctive voices of Harrison and his insightful amanuensis, Violet Brown, Kingsolver paints a verbal panorama spanning three decades and two countries. World War I veterans protesting for benefits denied, the unleashing of the atomic bomb, the McCarthy hearings, censorship of the arts,

and abuse by the press corps lend credence to the sentiment that the more things change, the more they remain the same. As in "The Poisonwood Bible", Kingsolver perfects the use of multiple points of view, even reprinting actual newspaper articles to blur the line between fact and fiction. This is her most ambitious, timely, and powerful novel yet.

Kostova, Elizabeth

The Swan Thieves

H

Psychiatrist Andrew Marlow, devoted to his profession and the painting hobby he loves, has a solitary but ordered life. When renowned painter Robert Oliver attacks a canvas in the National Gallery of Art and becomes his patient, Marlow finds that order destroyed. Desperate to understand the secret that torments the genius, he embarks on a journey that leads him into the lives of the women closest to Oliver and a tragedy at the heart of French Impressionism. Kostova's masterful new novel travels from American cities to the coast of Normandy, from the late 19th century to the late 20th, from young love to last love. The Swan Thieves is a story of obsession, history's losses, and the power of art to preserve human hope.

Kwok, Jean

Girl in Translation

L

Living in squalor among rats and roaches in a virtually abandoned unheated apartment building in Brooklyn, NY, 11-year-old Kimberly Chang narrates how, after recently immigrating from Hong Kong, she and her mother strive to eke out a life together working in an illegally run sweat shop. Though she was once the top-ranked pupil in her class in Hong Kong, Kimberly's English skills are so limited that she must struggle to keep up in school while still translating for her mother and attempting to hide the truth of her living situation from her well-to-do classmates and only true friend, Annette. Drawing on her own experiences as an immigrant from Hong Kong (though she herself went to Harvard and Columbia, while Kimberly earns a spot at Yale), Kwok adeptly captures the hardships of the immigrant experience and the strength of the human spirit to survive and even excel despite the odds.

Larsson, Steig

The Girl who Kicked the Hornet's Nest

M&T, Series (3rd in the Millennium Trilogy)

The exhilarating third book and conclusion to bestseller Larsson's Millennium trilogy (after *The Girl Who Played with Fire* and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*) finds Lisbeth Salander, the brilliant computer hacker who was shot in the head in the final pages of *Fire*, alive, though still the prime suspect in three murders in Stockholm. While she convalesces under armed guard, journalist Mikael Blomkvist works to unravel the decades-old coverup surrounding the man who shot Salander: her father, Alexander Zalachenko, a Soviet intelligence defector and longtime secret asset to Sapov, Sweden's security police. Estranged throughout *Fire*, Blomkvist and Salander communicate primarily online, but their lack of physical interaction in no way diminishes the intensity of their unconventional relationship. Though Larsson (1954-2004) tends toward narrative excess, his was an undeniably powerful voice in crime fiction that will be sorely missed.

Levy, Andrea

The Long Song

L

Author of "Small Island", Levy is a British writer of Jamaican descent and draws upon history to recall the island's slave rebellion of 1832. The unreliable narrator pretends to be telling the story of a woman called July, born as the result of a rape of a field slave, but it soon becomes obvious that the narrator is July herself. Taken as a house slave when she's eight years old, July is later seduced by the pretentiously moralistic English overseer after he marries the plantation's mistress; his clergyman father has assured him that "a married man might do as he pleases." Related in July's lilting patois, the narrative encompasses scenes of shocking brutality and mass carnage, but also humor, sometimes verging on farce. Levy's satiric eye registers the venomous racism of the white characters and is equally candid in relating the degrees of social snobbery around skin color among the blacks themselves, July included. Slavery destroys the humanity of everyone is Levy's subtext, while the cliffhanger ending suggests (one hopes) a sequel.

Madden, Deidre

Molly Fox's Birthday

L (Orange Prize Finalist)

This ruminative novel takes place over the course of a day, one of many a playwright spends in her actress friend's Dublin home over the course of a summer. The nameless narrator, an accomplished playwright to whom Irish actress Molly Fox has loaned her Dublin home, reflects on her 20-year-long friendship with Molly and the rise of both of their careers as she avoids the work of writing her next play. As she wanders through the house peeking at Molly's personal belongings, awards, and theater memorabilia, the narrator realizes that, in some ways, Molly is as much of an enigma to her now as when they first met. She also explores her relationships with a college friend, Andrew, and her older brother, Tom, a priest. There isn't much in the way of plot-it mostly consists of a series of flashbacks-but readers who enjoy this cerebral and meandering variety of first-person Euro-fiction will be enthralled

at Madden's unassuming yet moving story.

Mantel, Hilary

Wolf Hall

H (2009 Booker Prize Winner)

As Henry VIII's go-to man for his dirty work, Thomas Cromwell (1485-1540) isn't a likely candidate for a sympathetic portrait. He dirtied his hands too often. In the end, Henry dropped him just as he had Cromwell's mentor, Cardinal Wolsey, who counseled the king before him. But as Mantel reminds us, Cromwell was a man of many parts, admirable in many respects though disturbing in others. Above all, he got things done and was deeply loyal to his masters, first Wolsey and then the king. Nor was Henry always bloated and egomaniacal: well into his forties, when in good spirits, the king shone brighter than all those around him. 2009 Booker Prize winner, this is in all respects a superior work of fiction, peopled with appealing characters living through a period of tense high drama: Henry's abandonment of wife and church to marry Anne Boleyn. It should appeal to many readers, not just history buffs. And Mantel achieves this feat without violating the historical record.

Marlantes, Karl

**The Matterhorn: A Novel of the
Viet Nam War**

L

Even as the Vietnam War recedes into the past, the despair, confusion, and mythology it generated retains a grip on our culture. Debut novelist Marlantes offers a realistic, in-the-trenches look at that war. Matterhorn is a remote jungle base of operations held by the marines. We follow a young reserve lieutenant, Waino Mellas, as he nervously begins command of a squad ordered to take out a North Vietnamese machine gun nest; afterward, the squad is sent into the jungle for obscure reasons. This is the beginning of a long and murderous journey, with little food or water, constant rain, impassable terrain, and enemy ambushes. The soldiers bond with one another, but their faults and divisions are magnified, as racial tensions mount and cultural differences are revealed. The battle scenes, at which the author excels, are frequent, brutal, and viscerally energetic, and the skillfully rendered dialog reveals a bunch of strangers attempting to communicate in life-defeating circumstances. In the end, there are no real victors.

McCauley, Stephen

Insignificant Others

**L (RPL Meet the Author Program,
June 30)**

McCauley is the master of the modern comedy of manners and social satire. His writing is compared to Noel Coward with a tinge of Oscar Wilde. "Insignificant Others", his sixth novel, was recently selected by the *New York Times* as one of the notable books of the summer. Set in Boston at the end of Bush's economic boom years, it is the story of a well adjusted gay couple, Richard and Conrad. The narrator of the story is Richard who is becoming increasingly infatuated with his "insignificant other", Benjamin a married man. Richard's problems extend beyond his love life, he is coping with a variety of issues which include his exercise addiction, his suspicious sister, a client at work who may be going nuts, a friend who won't tell his wife about his health problems, and his own confused feelings about Conrad and Benjamin. The nature of relationships are explored and the question is raised about is there really such a thing as an insignificant other. It shows people's imperfections without making judgments and Richard regains his bearings and decides which part of his life are significant. The story is told with great heart and humor.

Meacham, Leila

Roses

P

It's been almost 30 years since the heyday of giant epics in the grand tradition of Edna Ferber and Barbara Taylor Bradford, but Meacham's debut might bring them back. This story of two founding families in a small East Texas town spans the 20th century. When Mary Toliver inherits her family's cotton plantation, Somerset, in 1916, it tears apart her family; her mother turns to alcohol, and her brother leaves. Mary's obsession with Somerset even causes her to lose the love of her life, timber magnate Percy Warwick. By the time she's 85, Mary is determined that the family curse will not continue and, despite her grandniece's love of Somerset, plans for the plantation to be sold after her death. Mary Toliver and Percy Warwick can't share anything more than friendship, but Mary's actions might allow Rachel to see past Somerset to the man who loves her. Readers who like an old-fashioned saga will devour this sprawling novel of passion and revenge.

Nemirovsky, Irene

Dimanche and Other Stories

L

Ten luminous and newly translated stories by Nemirovsky, who died at Auschwitz, expose the miseries that undermine happy families. Set mostly in France, where the author immigrated after the Russian revolution, these accomplished tales create worlds full of secrets and treacheries, such as in the title story, set on one typical Sunday at a bourgeois Parisian home where the middle-aged wife and mother, Agnes-once embittered by her husband's taking of a mistress, but now apathetic to his wanderings-remembers her own lost love. "Flesh and Blood" is a masterpiece of familial subterfuge revolving around an aged matriarch who falls ill and tries to keep peace among

her three self-absorbed sons and their grasping wives. In "The Spell," a young visitor to a messy Russian household gleams dark mysteries around a lovelorn aunt's romantic sorcery; several of the tales, such as "The Spectator" and "Monsieur Rose," capture aloof, prosperous gentlemen fleeing Paris in advance of the Nazis. In this superlative translation, Nemirovsky's characters emerge full-fleshed, and her voice remains timeless and relevant.

Nesbo, Jo

The Devil's Star

M&T, A Harry Hole Mystery

Devastated by his inability to convince his superiors that fellow detective Tom Waaler is both guilty of his former partner Ellen's murder (The Redbreast) and an arms dealer, Harry Hole goes on a four-week bender. Dragged back to work by his loyal boss, Harry is partnered with Waaler to investigate what quickly looks like a serial killer on the loose in Oslo who leaves star-shaped red diamonds with his victims. Upset by his inability to maintain a relationship with girlfriend Rakel and her son, Harry dries out and buries himself in the case, investigating with only the help of forensic tech Beate and determined not only to identify the killer but finally to get Waaler. Harry is one of the best lone-wolf cops for the 21st century, and Nesbo's third book is equally as good as The Redbreast and Nemesis. Scandinavian noir is alive and well, and Nesbo is one of its best authors. Highly recommended, especially for readers who like Henning Mankell's Kurt Wallander series (Faceless Killers) or Arnaldur Indridason's Inspector Erlendur series

Norman, Howard

What is Left the Daughter

L

Set on the Atlantic coast of Canada during WWII, Norman's latest is an expertly crafted tale of love during wartime. Wyatt Hillyer loses both his parents on the same day when they jump from different bridges in Halifax, Nova Scotia, after they discover they are both having affairs with the woman next door. Wyatt's aunt and uncle take him in, and Wyatt becomes his uncle's apprentice in his sled and toboggan business and, despite the circumstances, soon falls in love with his adopted cousin, Tilda. Yet he must resign himself to loving from a distance when Tilda brings home Hans Moehring, a German university student. The two begin a courtship harshly complicated by reports of U-boat attacks on Canadian ships, and Tilda's father becoming increasingly uneasy about this potential enemy in their midst. Norman's writing is effortless, and his plot is grand in scope but studded with moments of tenderness and intimacy that help crystallize the anxiety and weariness of life on the home front. That Norman is able to achieve so much in 250 pages is a testament to his mastery of the craft.

O'Farrell, Maggie

The Hand that First Held Mine

L

Lexie Sinclair moves from the Cornwall area to post-World War II London and begins a thrilling new life under the tutelage of her lover, Innes Kent, an editor and art collector. Even the eventual knowledge that he is legally married doesn't alter her allegiance to him, and she becomes the mother of his son, as well as a respected art critic. In between chapters about Lexie and Innes, readers meet contemporary London artist Elina, who lives with her boyfriend Ted. They have just had a son together, and Elina, who almost died in childbirth, is housebound during her recovery. Growing into his new role as a father, Ted suffers confusing flashbacks about his own childhood. Gradually, a trail of connection between these two nontraditional families is revealed. Devious acts have been committed, darkly affecting these innocent, decent, and well-developed characters. O'Farrell brings to mind Sue Miller but with a British and darker flavor; her sure hand for psychological suspense continues to be most impressive.

Orringer, Julie

The Invisible Bridge

L

In September 1937, Andras Levi leaves Budapest for Paris, where he will study at the Ecole Speciale on a scholarship. Before he leaves, he encounters Elza Hasz, who asks him to carry a letter to Paris addressed to C. Morgenstern. Andras posts the letter and begins his studies, getting help from a Hungarian professor, a desperately needed job from a theater director he met on the train, and an introduction to some friends from an actress at the theater. The daughter is sullen and disinterested, but the mother turns out to be Claire Morgenstern, recipient of the mysterious letter, and it is with Claire that Andras launches a tumultuous affair. Soon, a painful secret about Claire's past emerges-and then war comes to sweep everything aside. With historic detail, a complex cast of characters, and much coincidental crossing, this book has a big, saga-like feel.

Parker, Robert

Split Image

M&T, Jesse Stone series

Bestseller Parker's enjoyable ninth novel featuring Paradise, Mass., police chief Jesse Stone, focuses on Stone's deepening connection with PI Sunny Randall. Both Jesse and Sunny are still recovering from failed relationships, and Parker does a nice job of integrating their separate therapy sessions (in Sunny's case, with Susan Silverman, the significant other of Parker's best-known detective, Spenser) with two criminal investigations. The parents of 18-year-old Cheryl DeMarco ask Sunny for help in getting Cheryl out of a religious cult, while Stone probes the gunshot

murder of Petrov Ognowski, a mob soldier whose boss, Reggie Galen, is the next-door neighbor of another gangster. Neither case is particularly compelling on its own, but they effectively serve as plot devices for the main characters to understand more about themselves and each other.

Parkhurst, Carolyn

The Nobodies Album

L, M&T

The beautiful people face their personal demons in this truly novel novel about writing, motherhood, and second chances. Rock star Milo Frost stands accused of murdering his girlfriend. Olivia Frost drops everything, including her latest manuscript, to help clear her son's name. Words and deeds, however, prove more difficult to resolve in life than they do in Olivia's books. Parkhurst's brilliantly plotted chapters alternate between Olivia's attempts to solve the murder and excerpts from her novels, gradually revealing just how closely life and art can be connected. As the mystery unfolds, readers slowly come to understand the tragedy that precipitated Olivia's writing career and her subsequent estrangement from Milo. Fans of metafiction will enjoy the way Parkhurst gently pushes the envelope of story and questions the relationship between life and art. Mystery lovers, meanwhile, will savor the many twists and red herrings Parkhurst lobs at them on the way to solving the crime.

Patterson, James & Marklund,

Liza

Postcard Killers

M&T

Paris is stunning in the summer NYPD detective Jacob Kanon is on a tour of Europe's most gorgeous cities. But the sights aren't what draw him--he sees each museum, each cathedral, and each cafe through the eyes of his daughter's killer. The killing is simply marvelous Kanon's daughter, Kimmy, and her boyfriend were murdered while on vacation in Rome. Since then, young couples in Paris, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, and Stockholm have been found dead. Little connects the murders, other than a postcard to the local newspaper that precedes each new victim. Wish you were here. Now Kanon teams up with the Swedish reporter, Dessie Larsson, who has just received a postcard in Stockholm--and they think they know where the next victims will be. With relentless logic and unstoppable action, The Postcard Killers may be James Patterson's most vivid and compelling thriller yet.

Petterson, Per

I Curse the River of Time

L (Aug)

Petterson, author of "Out Stealing Horses" returns with the story of Arvid Jansen, who at 37, sees his world falling apart. His divorce is imminent, the Cold War is over, and the life choices he made to burnish his credibility with the Communist Party now seem sadly irrelevant. Eschewing the college education his parents toiled so hard to provide him, Arvid chose shift work in a factory, a decision that caused a rift with his mother, all the more untenable now that she's been diagnosed with cancer. Crippled by grief, guilt, and an unlovely excess of self-pity, Arvid tries to come to grips with the present by reexamining the past, in particular the effect of his younger brother's death on the family dynamic. The atmosphere is as gray as the stark Norwegian landscape. Melancholy permeates every character like a dense Oslo fog. Yet, this author's gift is his ability to convey so much emotion in such a spare prose style. Petterson's reputation and the litany of prizes awarded to this work after its release in Europe last year make it an essential read.

Pickard, Nancy

The Scent of Rain and Lightning

M&T

Pretty young schoolteacher Jody Linder doesn't stray too far from small-town Rose, KS, returning to teach at her own high school. Jody is emotionally fragile, yet she's stubborn enough to live in the same house where her father was murdered 23 years earlier--the same night her mother vanished, also presumed dead. Raised by her grandparents and her uncles, Jody's believed their side of the story all her life. Town drunk Billy Crosby was convicted--wrongfully perhaps--of the murder. The bombshell that Billy is being released from prison opens up Jody's personal floodgates. She suddenly realizes how little she knows about her town and her family's motives. New revelations begin a thaw in Jody's heart and unleash in her a new determination to find the real killer. Stylistically similar with flashbacks, a determined young heroine, and a snappy twist, this novel is a worthy successor to the author's much-acclaimed The Virgin of Small Plains. Pickard's superb storytelling transports the reader into the characters' world, making all too real their dilemmas, their choices, and their willingness to believe the unlikely.

Pomerantz, Sharon

Rich Boy

L (Aug)

Robert Vishniak is a striver--not a bad thing in America, land of opportunity and pulling oneself up by the bootstraps. Growing up working-class Jewish in northeast Philadelphia, he quickly realizes that there is more to life than the same old neighborhood, family, and friends. He's fortunate to be good-looking and hard-working, and he gets accepted at Tufts University. There he rooms with Sanford Trace, whose family is filthy rich and powerful. Trace can't be bothered to really attend classes--which is why he is at Tufts rather than Harvard with the rest of his friends. The combination of a successful college career and the right friends launches Robert on the proverbial path to riches, career climbing, and beautiful women. In this study of money, class, and love, debut novelist Pomerantz

includes a few twists on the usual poor-boy-meets-rich-girl tale, giving the reader a different look at life in America from the Sixties to the Eighties. This novel will appeal to fans of family sagas and coming-of-age stories and has echoes of Fitzgerald and Gatsby.

Rachman, Tom

The Imperfectionists

L

At the Caffè Greco in Rome, circa 1953, Atlanta financier Cyrus Ott makes an offer that can't be refused. He will establish an international English-language newspaper to be run in Italy by Betty, the woman he once loved, and her husband, Leo, a hack writer for a Chicago daily. Within the building's walls an entire history of the print news business plays out over a 50-year span as writers, editors, and accountants grow in professional stature, squander their reputations, and fade into obsolescence. A former editor for the Paris branch of the International Herald Tribune, Rachman makes outstanding use of his credentials to place readers in the center of a newsroom so palpable one can hear the typewriters clacking and feel the uncomfortable undercurrent of professional jealousy among the writers jockeying for position. Navigating the minefields of relationships, parenthood, loneliness, and failure, each realistically imperfect character, developed through intimate, candid detail, becomes a story unto himself (or herself). With its evocative Italian setting and its timely handling of an industry in flux, this polished, sophisticated debut can be relished in one sitting or read piecemeal as a satisfying series of vignettes linked by historical references to the Ott family empire.

Ross, Adam

Mr. Peanut

L

This highly creative first novel revolves around the troubled and overactive imagination of David Pepin, brilliant computer game designer and entrepreneur, and his relationship with his wife, Alice. David dreams of killing Alice but not committing the deed himself. Alice dies with a handful of peanuts in her mouth to which she is fatally allergic. David claims her death is a suicide, the Police think it is murder. The Police investigators are also having some marital woes and there is a flash back sequence. A circuitous plot and mystery puzzle unfolds. There is some shape shifting related to levels of reality combined with three or maybe four alternate endings to the book. Coupled with the mystery puzzle, the book honestly depicts the dual nature of marriage, being connected and unconnected, as well as the juxtaposition of violence and love. A highly creative novel recommended for ambitious readers.

Schine, Cathleen

The Three Weissmanns of Westport

P

Drawing on Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, Schine has written a witty update in which a late-life divorce exiles Betty Weissmann and her adult daughters, Annie and Miranda, from a luxurious life in New York to a shabby beach cottage in Westport, CT. Annie is the serious daughter and Miranda the drama queen. Both women find unexpected love, while Betty, a sweet, frivolous spendthrift, struggles with her newly impoverished state. What comfort the Weissmanns enjoy is owing to the generosity of Cousin Lou, a Holocaust survivor and real-estate mogul, whose goal in life is to rescue everyone, whether or not rescue is needed. While beautifully preserving the essence of the plot, Schine skillfully manages to parallel the original novel in clever 21st-century ways-the trip to London becomes a holiday in Palm Springs; the scoundrel Willoughby becomes a wannabe actor. Austen lovers and those who enjoyed updates like Paula Marantz Cohen's *Jane Austen in Boca* and *Jane Austen in Scarsdale* should appreciate this novel.

Schmidt, Heidi Jon

The House on Oyster Creek

P (Aug)

An only child with physical limitations, Henry Tradescome has always disliked his family summer home in Wellfleet, MA. But Henry's wife, Charlotte, is thrilled to raise their four-year-old daughter in the house he's just inherited. Founder/editor of an alternative New York newspaper, Henry is 20 years Charlotte's senior. She's never felt she was Henry's intellectual equal, but now, at 42, Charlotte accepts that it's long past time she stopped caring. The Tradescomes move to the Cape, where Charlotte runs afoul of the longtime residents, including the farmers who work the oyster claims along the beach. A "washashore," Charlotte is only slightly less despised than the tourists. Still, she discovers an inner strength and confidence, especially in the company of Darryl Stead, whose claim is behind her house. When Charlotte sells off part of the land to ensure her family's future, the repercussions serve only to illuminate her naivete. Schmidt conveys the unassailable bond of tradition in a tightly knit community along with the ins and outs of oyster culture. Her writing is nuanced and clever as it relays her characters' persistence in the face of life's obstacles. Superior literary fiction.

Silva, Daniel

The Rembrandt Affair

M&T, Gabriel Allon Series (July)

Having reached "the pinnacle of world-class spy thriller writing", Silva has produced his most extraordinary novel to date-a tale of greed, passion, and murder spanning more than half a century, centered on an object of haunting

beauty. Two families, one terrible secret, and a painting to die for. Determined to sever his ties with the Office, Gabriel Allon has retreated to the windswept cliffs of Cornwall with his beautiful Venetian-born wife Chiara. But once again his seclusion is interrupted by a visitor from his tangled past: the endearingly eccentric London art dealer, Julian Isherwood. As usual, Isherwood has a problem, one only Gabriel can solve. In the ancient English city of Glastonbury, an art restorer has been brutally murdered and a long-lost portrait by Rembrandt mysteriously stolen. Despite his reluctance, Gabriel is persuaded to use his unique skills to search for the painting and those responsible for the crime. But as he painstakingly follows a trail of clues leading from Amsterdam to Buenos Aires and, finally, to a villa on the graceful shores of Lake Geneva, Gabriel discovers there are deadly secrets connected to the painting. And evil men behind them. Filled with remarkable twists and turns of plot, and told with seductive prose, *The Rembrandt Affair* is more than just summer entertainment of the highest order. It is a timely reminder that there are men in the world who will do anything for money.

Simonson, Helen

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand

L

Sixty-eight-year-old Maj. Ernest Pettigrew has settled into a genteel life of quiet retirement in his beloved village of Edgcombe St. Mary. Refined, gentlemanly, unwaveringly proper in his sense of right vs. wrong, and bemused by most things modern, he has little interest in cavalier relationship mores, the Internet, and crass developments and is gently smitten by the widowed Mrs. Ali, the lovely Pakistani owner of the local shop where he buys his tea. After the unsettling death of his brother, Bertie, the Major finds his careful efforts to court Mrs. Ali (who shares his love of literature) constantly nudged off-course by his callow son, Roger; a handful of socialite ladies planning a dinner/dance at the Major's club; and the not-so-subtle racist attitudes his interest in Mrs. Ali engender. This irresistibly delightful, thoughtful, and utterly charming and surprising novel reads like the work of a seasoned pro. In fact, it is Simonson's debut. One cannot wait to see what she does next.

Smith, Alexander McCall

The Double Comfort Safari Club

M&T, The Ladies No. 1 Detective Agency Series

As in 2009's *Tea Time for the Traditionally Built*, the previous entry in this beguiling, bestselling series, a personal crisis for one of the leads, rather than a mystery, drives the plot of Smith's superb 12th novel set in Botswana featuring his infinitely understanding sleuth, Precious Ramotswe. When a delivery truck backs into Phuti Radiphuti, the fiance of Mma Ramotswe's prickly and insecure assistant, Grace Makutsi, and crushes his leg against a wall, Phuti's rude aunt won't allow Grace to visit her beloved in the hospital. Meanwhile, the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency tries to help the executor of an American woman, who wished to leave some money to a kind tour guide, but couldn't recall the guide's name. The resolution to the problem of another client, who was cheated out of his home by a gold-digger, might strike some as unduly fortuitous, but it makes sense within the framework of these books, which are more about humanity than logic.

Soli, Tatjana

The Lotus Eaters

L

Seen through the lens of young American freelance photographer Helen Adams, this evocative debut novel is a well researched exploration of Vietnam between 1963 and 1975, when the United States pulled out of the conflict. Helen, who has come to Vietnam partly to discover what really happened to her brother, is determined to see the real Vietnam, combat and all. The narrative focuses on Adams, Pulitzer Prize-winning combat photojournalist Sam Darrow, and his Vietnamese assistant, Linh, revealing their relationships, loyalties, and ambitions and the terrible toll the war takes on them all. As readers, we come to understand the characters' attraction to and ambivalence about the war, how love can survive and thrive under such extreme conditions (Helen and Linh have an affair), the courage needed to report under war conditions and the journalistic principles involved, and the fragile beauty of this war-torn country and its people.

Turow, Scott

Innocent

M&T

It took Turow more than 20 years to bring us the sequel to his best-selling first novel, *Presumed Innocent*, and it was worth the wait. Now 60 and long after being acquitted of murdering his mistress, Rusty Sabich has become chief judge of the Kindle County, IL, appellate court and is running for the state supreme court. When his wife dies in her sleep, Sabich waits 24 hours before calling his son or anyone else, setting off suspicions of foul play with his old nemesis, acting prosecutor Tommy Molto. The coroner determines she died of natural causes, but Molto and his chief deputy, Brand, quietly start building a case, convinced Sabich is trying to get away with murder again. This is a beautifully written book with finely drawn characters and an intricate plot seamlessly weaving a troubled family story with a murder. Draws in the reader and doesn't let go until the last page.

Udall, Brady

The Lonely Polygamist

L

Udall's long-awaited novel depicts a lively, humorous, and sometimes tragic picture of Golden Richards, his four demanding wives, and his 28 children. They are an unruly Mormon clan, scattered among three separate houses in rural Utah. Richards, a hapless graying contractor with a limp and a sinus condition, supports them with his less-than-successful construction business. To avoid bankruptcy, he takes a job in Nevada, a project he tells everyone is a senior citizens' home but in fact it is a bordello. That's only one of Golden's secrets. The sister wives hold weekly summits to schedule Golden's visits from wife to wife, house to house. He doesn't have a home of his own, so he frequently takes refuge in a playhouse built for a daughter who died in a tragic accident. In trying to help, he often makes things worse, but he valiantly makes one last effort to bring harmony to his fractious family. Udall observes with a keen eye for the ridiculous while showing compassion.

Vida, Vendela

The Lovers

L

Is it wise to return to the scene of your honeymoon after the sudden death of your spouse? That's what Yvonne, a seemingly sensible history teacher, decides to do in Vida's polished and unnerving third novel. Vida has created a brilliant, topsy-turvy, twenty-first-century variation on E. M. Forster's "Passage to India". Dodging her adult children, the mismatched twins glossy Matthew and rehab-veteran Aurelia, Yvonne, in deep shock, rents a fancy house on the coast of Turkey built by the landlord for his mistress. Yvonne is befriended by the landlord's aggressively inquisitive ex-wife, and becomes attached to Ahmet, a boy who collects and sells seashells. As she tries to adjust to widowhood while navigating perplexing social situations and painful memories, things go disastrously wrong. Vida creates an atmosphere at once molten and chilling as she deftly exposes the wounding reverberations of timeless conflicts between men and women, parents and children, East and West, appearance and truth.

Waldman, Ayelet

Red Hook Road

L

It's a beautiful summer day in Maine and perfect weather for the smiling young couple who just got married. Never mind that the groom's mother, Jane, doesn't really like John's marrying a "from awayer"-the name the locals give to people who just spend their summers in East Red Hook near the water. Jane is a Tetherly and, having lived her whole life in East Red Hook, considers her family real Mainers. The bride's mother, Iris Hewins Copaken, insists that she is native since her family's summer home was built in 1879, but since she and husband Daniel spend most of their time in New York City, Jane doesn't see it that way. Now, the guests are waiting for the young couple to show up, but when John's brother, Matt, arrives with two policemen, life as the Tetherlys and Copakens knew it ends. Over the course of four summers, they work through grief, new beginnings, and more loss. Waldman has written a tale of two families forced together through love and tragedy. Fans of Waldman's work and readers who enjoy family sagas will find this book a pleasure.

Walker, Martin

The Dark Vineyard: A Mystery of the French Country Side

M&T, sequel to Bruno, Chief of Police (July)

Age-old French traditions collide with global commerce in Walker's lyrical sequel to Bruno, Chief of Police. When vandals attack a secretive research station hidden in the hills near Saint-Denis, Bruno Courreges, the rural village's only municipal policeman, looks into the matter. Meanwhile, winemaker Francois Cresseil and the young man he has just adopted, Max Vannes, both die of mysterious causes. Max's seductive Canadian girlfriend; the scion of a rich American winery looking to buy up tracts of fertile land; protesting "ecolos"; representatives from a variety of government agencies; and a host of colorful locals all complicate what turns into a murder investigation, which calls on Bruno's tact as well as his shrewdness. Walker evokes his French community's celebrations of wine, food, love, and friendship with obvious affection but without sentimentality. His villagers are no more immune from modern times than the rest of us-they just drink better wine.

Wallace, Joseph

Diamond Ruby

L

As a girl, Ruby Thomas faces torment over her unusually long arms. After losing most of her family to the 1918 flu epidemic, a 13-year-old Ruby is determined to protect her two nieces. With little help from her older brother, now a broken man, Ruby uses those long arms, first to kill squirrels to feed the family and then to become part of a carnny show throwing fast balls as 17-year-old Diamond Ruby. It's a hard life, and it gets harder when rum runners and gamblers take over. Even as she makes a career for herself on a minor league team, Ruby is dogged by greed and corruption. Her determined love for her family, help from some unlikely friends, and a critical throw finally give her the break she has earned. Ruby is a keeper-a believable heroine living in a fully re-created New York world of baseball and Prohibition. There are echoes of Betty Smith's "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn", but this story holds its own, allowing Diamond Ruby her place as a literary gem. This debut novel by a baseball historian may also appeal to YA readers.

Wilson, Susan

One Good Dog

L

Readers of Wilson's other novels, mainly women's romantic fiction in the vein of Kristin Hannah, are in for a big surprise. Adam March is a rising star in the corporate world when he explodes and slaps his female assistant. His fall from a great height leaves him doing community service at a homeless shelter, with no job, no income, and almost no money after a divorce. Doing a favor for the shelter's head, he takes on a rescued pit bull that had once been used in dog fights. The last thing Adam wants is a dog, but Chance helps Adam learn what is truly important, and Adam rescues Chance from the brutally short life of a fighter. Narrated in two voices, Adam's and Chance's, this work will remind readers of Garth Stein's "The Art of Racing in the Rain" and should appeal to dog lovers and fans of Spencer Quinn's "Dog on It". It evokes both laughter and tears, but the ending assures you that humans and dogs are capable of redemption.

Winspear, Jacqueline

The Mapping of Love and Death

M&T, Maisie Dobbs series

Winspear's seventh Maisie Dobbs novel finds the detective employed by the parents of a soldier and cartographer, Michael Clifton, who fought during World War I. Missing for 16 years, the bodies of Clifton and his unit are discovered in France. The postmortem reveals that while the unit perished during a shelling attack, Clifton was already dead from a crushed skull. The only clues found with the body are Clifton's deteriorated journal and love letters to an unnamed nurse. There's also the dilemma of the California land purchase, potentially lucrative, that Clifton made just before he enlisted. With no deed of sale or will apparent, the land is mired in legal entanglements. This case has long grown cold, but Maisie is too relentless an investigator to let it prevent her from bringing a murderer to justice. An engaging plot coupled with captivating characters makes this the best Dobbs novel to date. Highly recommended for historical mystery aficionados who enjoy intriguing whodunits wrapped in a wartime love story.

**The Icarus Syndrome: A History
of American Hubris**

Beinart, Peter

A century of unwise American military adventures is probed in this perceptive study of foreign policy over-reach. Beinart highlights three examples of Washington's overconfidence: Woodrow Wilson's "hubris of reason": the belief that reason, not force, could govern the world; the Kennedy-Johnson administrations' "hubris of toughness" during the Vietnam War; and George W. Bush's "hubris of dominance" in launching the Iraq War. In each case, Beinart finds a dangerous confluence of misleading experience and untethered ideology; the Iraq War, he contends, was fostered both by a 12-year string of easy military triumphs from Panama to Afghanistan, and a belief that America can impose democracy by force. Beinart's analyses are consistently lucid and provocative-e.g., he calls Ronald Reagan "a dove in hawk's feathers," and his final conclusion is that "Obama will need to... decouple American optimism from the project of American global mastery." The book amounts to a brief for moderation, good sense, humility, and looking before leaping-virtues that merit Beinart's spirited, cogent defense.

**Here's Looking at Euclid: A
Surprising Excursion Through the
Astonishing World of Math**

Bellos, Alex

Bellos, a journalist with an undergraduate degree in mathematics, offers a lively romp through many different fields of mathematics as he incorporates ancient discoveries and modern developments alike. Topics include geometry, number theory, the development of sudoku, numerous aspects of pi and its calculation, statistics, probability and its application to gambling, and many other historical tidbits. In general, Bellos is cheerful, informative, and entertaining. All of the material will be within the reach of nearly all readers, including those whose formal math education ended in secondary school. The illustrations are clear and helpful.

Bird, Kai

Crossing Mandelbaum Gate

Bird, Pulitzer Prize-winning coauthor of "American Prometheus", offers a compelling hybrid of memoir and history, weaving together recollections of his childhood in Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt; the stories of his wife's Holocaust survivor parents; and rigorous scholarship on the region. The book's title-Mandelbaum Gate once separated Israeli-controlled Western Jerusalem from the Jordanian-controlled East-indicates a view on the conflict, and it's certainly that, but it's also much more: readers are given ringside seats to Cairo under Nasser, the author's American family's friends (including Osama bin Laden's elder brother), and Bird's years in India and the U.S. during the heyday of the antiwar movement of the '60s. Notable events and figures are given detailed treatment and their continuing resonance is made clear. Bird's brushes with history-his first girlfriend was held hostage on an airplane hijacked to win Khaled's release, for instance-brings home the deeply messy humanity of the stories he binds together in this kaleidoscopic and captivating book.

Bourdain, Anthony

Medium Raw

In the ten years since his classic "Kitchen Confidential" first alerted us to the idiosyncrasies and lurking perils of eating out, from Monday fish to the breadbasket conspiracy, much has changed for the subculture of chefs and cooks, for the restaurant business-and for Anthony Bourdain. Medium Raw explores these changes, moving back and forth from the author's bad old days to the present. Tracking his own strange and unexpected voyage from journeyman cook to globe-traveling professional eater and drinker, and even to fatherhood, Bourdain takes no prisoners as he dissects what he's seen, pausing along the way for a series of confessions, rants, investigations, and interrogations of some of the most controversial figures in food. And always he returns to the question "Why cook?" Or the more difficult "Why cook well?" Medium Raw is the deliciously funny and shockingly delectable journey to those answers, sure to delight philistines and gourmards alike.

**Brilliant: The Evolution of
Artificial Light**

Brox, Jane

NBCC Award finalist Brox examines our relationship with light, our attempts to harness it to brighten places we cannot see, and its impact on American psychology and culture. Her book dovetails beautifully with the social history of technology, as our relationship with light has encompassed the development of candles, lamps, light bulbs, and even far-reaching sociotechnical systems. Brox seems at her best exploring electrification's impact on early 20th-century rural America. Particularly engaging are her discussion of Franklin Roosevelt's establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority, its designers' hopes of engineering a better society, and the realities of its implementation. This well-written, well-researched, and thought-provoking book has much to offer. The general reader with an interest in the (social) history of technology will find it both a source of inspiration for considering technology's impact on our lives and a springboard to more scholarly works such as David Nye's Electrifying America.

**Something Incredibly Wonderful
Happens: Frank Oppenheimer
and the World He Made Up**

Cole, K.C.

Physicist Frank Oppenheimer has long been overshadowed by his controversial older brother, Robert, the "father of the atomic bomb," although his scientific career was also destroyed by the Red Scare of the 1950s. Cole was a close friend of Oppenheimer's and draws upon his papers, numerous interviews, and her personal experience to paint a picture of his life. Oppenheimer was deeply affected by working on the Manhattan Project. After being blacklisted during the McCarthy era, he ran a cattle ranch and taught high school physics before reemerging into public life in 1969 to create the Exploratorium, a revolutionary hands-on museum in San Francisco that combined art and science. Cole devotes the largest portion of her book to discussing this period of Oppenheimer's life, as it embodies his passion for teaching and fostering creativity. Indeed, it would be impossible to present the story of Oppenheimer's life without discussing the Exploratorium, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. In a thought-provoking and pleasant manner, Cole's much-welcomed book shines a new light on a remarkable man and scientist. Readers interested in good popular science biographies will enjoy this.

**How Did You Get This Number:
Essays**

Crosley, Sloane

Sometimes you read a book that rings so true to your own life that you can hardly put it down. This is the case with Crosley's second collection, after her best-selling "I Was Told There'd Be Cake". With wit, humor, and a sophistication that more experienced authors would envy, this compilation focuses on Crosley's late twenties. As Crosley writes about an impromptu trip to Lisbon that may (or may not) have been a freak-out response to turning 30 and explores the various trappings of being a grownup, readers will recognize their own life experiences, with Crosley's insights and excellent storytelling skills to guide them. Reading like the diary entries of a thirtysomething, Crosley's essays are brutally honest about her flaws as well as the flaws of others and, as a result, paint a realistic and hilarious portrait of what it's like to be an adult in today's world.

**Nine Lives: In Search of the
Sacred in Modern India**

Dalrymple, William

For the last 20 years, Scotsman Dalrymple has made the Indian subcontinent his bailiwick. In his introduction here, he describes "Nine Lives" as "a collection of non-fiction short stories," and he does portray the "pluralist religious and philosophic folk traditions" found in India in a way that is compelling and accessible to all readers. His subjects here are all people living on the margins: we meet a wandering Jain nun, a Tantric housewife whose abode is the cremation ground, a Sufi holy woman, a refugee from two countries, a blind Baul minstrel, and a Rajasthani bard who can recite from memory an epic of 626 pages, to name only a few. Dalrymple shows us the "lived experience" of the practitioners of these different religious paths and how their worlds have been impacted in a rapidly changing India. Dalrymple's book is highly recommended for all collections. Readers will sense the power of faith underlying the divergent religious paths, with stories that are enthralling and will keep them up late reading.

**Fur, Fortune, and Empire: The
Epic History of the Fur Trade in
America**

**RPL Meet the Author Program Oct
13**

Doran, Eric Jay

Dolan presents an inclusive overview of the American fur trade from Colonial times until the beginnings of the conservation movement of the late 19th century. Beaver, sea otter, and buffalo provided major economic motivation for extensive exploration and colonization of the East and West Coasts and interior waterways, plains, and mountains. Unlike most fur trade histories that focus on limited times or particular places, Dolan's narrative shows how the economic importance of furs and hides played a large role in determining Euro-American relations with American Indians and in shaping the course of empire for three centuries over what is now the United States and Canada. Celebrated participants covered here include Miles Standish, Peter Stuyvesant, John Jacob Astor, and Kit Carson, to mention a few. From the Iroquoian "Beaver Wars" of the mid-1600s to the brutal Russian domination of Alaskan native hunters, Dolan successfully shows how America's natural history is a vital part of our collective national history. Highly recommended for readers and researchers of American history and natural resources.

**The Man Who Left too Soon: Steig
Larsson**

Forshaw, Barry

His three novels are violent, terrifying, brilliantly written, and have sold millions of copies around the world, but Stieg Larsson was not able to witness their international success. Since he died in 2004 the author of the Millennium trilogy has received international fame with dizzying speed. But when one looks a little deeper at the man behind

these phenomenal novels, it is clear that his life would be remembered as truly extraordinary even had his trilogy never been published. Larsson was a workaholic: a political activist, photographer, graphic designer, a respected journalist, and the editor of numerous science fiction magazines. At night, to relax, he wrote crime novels. By the time of his death at the age of 50 he had completed "The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest", the third book featuring the hypnotic Lisbeth Salander. His relentless personality and political convictions did not make life easy. He famously took on some dangerous neo-Nazi opponents, making for much speculation that his enemies, who often told him that his days were numbered, may have a hand in his premature demise. This difficult man, brilliant and multifaceted, is the subject of a penetrating biography and a celebration of his remarkable life and books.

**Committed: A Skeptic Makes
Peace with Marriage**

Gilbert, Elizabeth

After her Brazilian boyfriend is denied re-entry at a border crossing, Gilbert must marry him if they want to continue living together in the United States. Despite her insistence in "Eat, Pray, Love" never to remarry, Gilbert comes to terms with the institution after several months of enforced exile abroad with her boyfriend. This well-researched, thought-provoking investigation into marriage in the Western world, interspersed with her own personal journey to the altar.

**Seaworthy: A Swordboat Captain
Returns to the Sea**

Greenlaw, Linda

After a 10-year hiatus from blue-water fishing, Greenlaw went cautiously to sea, seeking a payday and perspective on her life. Thanks to "The Perfect Storm" phenomenon (both book and film), she was celebrated as America's only female swordfish boat captain. She was now also a mother and an author who relished a new challenge, traveling 1,000 miles from her Maine home with an eager crew of four guys-three of them experienced sailing buddies-looking for swordfish on the 63-foot, six-and-a-half-knot steel boat Seahawk on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. It was a 52-day trip-and a sensational misadventure. Nearly everything that could go wrong, did, including her arrest for illegally fishing in Canadian waters. Greenlaw chronicles it all-a busted engine, a malfunctioning ice machine, squirrely technology-with an absorbing mix of nautical expertise and self-deprecation. After inspecting the Seahawk, Greenlaw calls it rough, but stable and capable. Then she writes, "Although I was referring to the boat, I couldn't help thinking the same could be said of her captain." From mishaps to fish tales, Greenlaw keeps her narrative suspenseful. Between bad luck and self-doubt, she moves from experience to wisdom, guiding both crew and readers on a voyage of self-affirmation.

**Winston's War: Churchill, 1940 -
1945**

Hastings, Max

Military historian Hastings adds to his illustrious reputation with this magnificent analysis of Winston Churchill's years of greatness. In 1938 Churchill seemed a man bypassed by history. By 1945 he had become the greatest war leader Britain ever knew and has since achieved mythic status, "standing higher than any other single human being at the head of the forces of light." During WWII Churchill wielded more power than any British prime minister in history but remained a democrat. He raised his nation far higher in the Grand Alliance than its material contributions justified. Hastings recognizes Churchill's strategic errors, his misplaced enthusiasms. Britain's military leaders and military systems often disappointed his soaring hopes. His understanding of the empire and its peoples was limited and unenlightened. His indifference to building a new society resulted in his being turned out of office as the guns fell silent. But "the outcome justified all," in his eyes. Churchill's strength of will, rhetoric, and personality enabled the British to understand the reasons for their sacrifices and made Britain's end as a great power a heroic one.

**Colossus: Hoover Dam and the
Making of the American Century**

Hiltzik, Michael

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Hiltzik details the creation of one of the largest public works projects in American history, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of its completion in 2011. He argues that some American attributes-such as a sense of community overtaking rugged individualism (considered a postwar American phenomenon)-in fact owe their origins to the dam, not to the war; likewise, for the Southwest becoming the fastest-growing part of the country. Hoover Dam was built during the Great Depression to make the flood-prone Colorado River an irrigation and water source for the Southwest, and those who built it wrote a dark labor history. Engineering science has both advanced and struggled with expensive dam repairs ever since. In the end, perhaps, there is remorse for the dam's impact, the new growing communities utterly dependent on its finite resource, and the seismic and environmental havoc it has caused. Hiltzik wonders if the dam could be built today, given what a Pandora's box it proved to be.

Hitch-22: Some Confessions and Contradictions; A Memoir

Hitchens, Christopher

Born on April 13, 1949, in Portsmouth, England, best-selling author Hitchens was past 40 when he learned of his Jewish blood through his matrilineal line; his mother's secret, unknown to his father. After university, Hitchens started to write articles, leading to a four-decade career at well-known magazines. Add to that books, essays, and pamphlets all written with an unerring eye for issues that raised his ire or his support. Hitchens casts a cold eye on such notables as Henry Kissinger, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush; puts under fire the Roman Catholic Church and the Vietnam War; and writes with affection about fellow literary peers. His coverage of Salman Rushdie's situation is an exercise in logic and idealism, while his views of British public education enlightens, as well as dismays. Of particular interest are his chapters on his mother and father, which are modestly deprecating and loving. Not only is the writing original and flowing, but this memoir is brimming with political and cultural insights. A reader may disagree with Hitchens's take on the world, but his writing wins the day.

In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan

Jones, Seth G.

Since 2001, RAND Corporation political scientist Jones has been observing the reinvigorated insurgency in Afghanistan and weighing the potency of its threat to the country's future and American interests in the region. Jones finds the roots of the re-emergence in the expected areas: the deterioration of security after the ousting of the Taliban regime in 2002, the U.S.'s focus on Iraq as its foreign policy priority and Pakistan's role as a haven for insurgents. He revisits Afghan history, specifically the invasions by the British in the mid- and late-19th century and the Russians in the late-20th to rue how little the U.S. has learned from these two previous wars. He sheds light on why Pakistan—a consistent supporter of the Taliban—continues to be a key player in the region's future. Jones makes important arguments for the inclusion of local leaders, particularly in rural regions, but his diligent panorama of the situation fails to consider whether the war in Afghanistan is already lost.

Junger, Sebastian

War

Embedded as a journalist in an infantry platoon of the U.S. 2d Battalion, Junger here tracks the unit's 15-month deployment at a desolate mountain outpost in eastern Afghanistan in 2007-08. Fighting is on foot, over rugged terrain, in a series of patrols and chaotic firefights interspersed with interminable periods of boredom. In a change from his earlier books, Junger here is an observer of the now, not simply a reporter of the past. Trying to capture in words the elements of combat, fear, and ennui through the eyes of the soldiers, he communicates with a level of objectivity that the soldiers cannot. Junger is there, in the moment, with them, but he can also of course pull back and give distance and perspective. Although ostensibly about combat in Afghanistan, "War" examines the raw, brutal reality of combat—period—and why men fight. More than anything else, soldiers fight for one another, and Junger paints them as humans, as heroes, as brothers. Highly recommended—not simply for those interested in military history but for all readers concerned with the human condition.

Furious Love: Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, and the Marriage of the Century

Kashner, Sam

When Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton starred together in Cleopatra in the early Sixties, they began a romance that shocked the world, and the public could not get enough of "le scandale" (as Burton coined it). Because they were married to other people and flaunted their relationship, they were denounced by the Vatican and some in the U.S. House of Representatives. They eventually wed, and for a quarter of a century their tempestuous on-again, off-again love affair continued to make headlines. Despite their occasionally over-the-top prose, biographers Kashner and Schoenberger have written a fascinating book that includes new research and interviews (Taylor shared Burton's love letters) and captures the glamour of a bygone era. This well-researched dual biography is juicy enough for any celebrity bio maven.

The Disappearing Spoon: And Other True Tales of Madness, Love, and the History of the World From the Periodic Table of the Elements

Kean, Sam

Kean, an award-winning freelance news and science writer, intertwines fascinating stories with biographical sketches about the scientists who contributed to the discovery of the 118 elements found in the current periodic table. From hydrogen to ununoctium, the filling out of Mendeleev's original 19th-century periodic table is a curious story of history, politics, etymology, alchemy, and mythology. Kean primarily concentrates on discoveries since the

dawn of the nuclear age and postulates on elements yet to be discovered. Aiming at a general audience with a cursory knowledge of science and chemistry, Kean writes in a whimsical yet easy-to-read style. Although he includes copious notes, his book complements rather than replaces Eric Scerri's excellent "The Periodic Table: Its Story and Its Significance".

Kilcullen, David

Counterinsurgency

David Kilcullen is one of the world's most influential experts on counterinsurgency and modern warfare. A Senior Counterinsurgency Advisor to General David Petraeus in Iraq, his vision of war powerfully influenced America's decision to rethink its military strategy in Iraq and implement "the Surge," now recognized as a dramatic success. In "Counterinsurgency", Kilcullen brings together his most salient writings on this key topic. At the heart of the book is his legendary "Twenty-Eight Articles." Reading this piece is like reading a modern-day Sun Tzu--an essential read for officers in the field, and not infrequently an excellent source of wisdom for readers of all stripes, military or civilian. In such pithy adages as "Rank is nothing: talent is everything" or "Train the squad leaders--then trust them," Kilcullen offers advice that any leader would be wise to consider. The other pieces in the book include Kilcullen's pioneering study of counterinsurgency in Indonesia, his ten-point plan for "the Surge" in Iraq, and his frank look at the problems in Afghanistan. He concludes with a new strategic approach to the War on Terrorism, arguing that counterinsurgency rather than traditional counterterrorism may offer the best approach to defeating global *jihad*. Filled with down-to-earth, common-sense insights, this book is indispensable for all those interested in making sense of our world in an age of terror.

**Operation Mincemeat: How a
Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan
Fooled the Nazis and Assured an
Allied Victory**

Macintyre, Ben

In Macintyre's new book, Operation Mincemeat, he tells an extraordinary story that will delight his legions of fans. In 1943, from a windowless basement office in London, two brilliant intelligence officers conceived a plan that was both simple and complicated- Operation Mincemeat. The purpose? To deceive the Nazis into thinking that Allied forces were planning to attack southern Europe by way of Greece or Sardinia, rather than Sicily, as the Nazis had assumed, and the Allies ultimately chose. Charles Cholmondeley of MI5 and the British naval intelligence officer Ewen Montagu could not have been more different. Cholmondeley was a dreamer seeking adventure. Montagu was an aristocratic, detail-oriented barrister. But together they were the perfect team and created an ingenious plan: Get a corpse, equip it with secret (but false and misleading) papers concerning the invasion, then drop it off the coast of Spain where German spies would, they hoped, take the bait. Winston Churchill believed it might ring true to the Axis and help bring victory to the Allies. Filled with spies, double agents, rogues, fearless heroes, and one very important corpse, the story of Operation Mincemeat reads like an international thriller. Unveiling never-before-released material, Macintyre brings the reader right into the minds of intelligence officers, their moles and spies, and the German agents who suffered the "twin frailties of wishfulness and yesmanship." He weaves together the eccentric personalities of Cholmondeley and Montagu and their near-impossible feats into a riveting adventure that not only saved thousands of lives but paved the way for a pivotal battle in Sicily and, ultimately, Allied success in the war.

McPhee, John

Silk Parachute

McPhee's first book on Sen. Bill Bradley was published in 1965; since then he has written 28 books that include essays and writings on Alaska, the Jersey Pine Barrens, the bark canoe, boats, trains, the Army Corp of Engineers, and, most important, geology. His individual and distinguished style, his subjects, knowledge, curiosity, humor, and interests have made him one of America's most enjoyable and intellectually wide-ranging writers. The ten essays here first appeared in The New Yorker, where McPhee has been a staff writer since 1965. He addresses his mother, his prep school headmaster, his photographer daughter Laura McPhee, canoes, lacrosse, strange foods, fact-checking, golf, and New Jersey. Especially fine is "Season on the Chalk," McPhee's description of the English downs and France's Champagne country. Ideal for McPhee fans as well as those interested in good writing and fascinating subjects.

Osborne, Frances

The Bolter

Osborne's lively narrative brings Lady Idina Sackville (an inspiration for Nancy Mitford's character the Bolter) boldly to life, with a black lapdog named Satan at her side and a cigarette in her hand. Osborne portrays a desperately lonely woman who shocked Edwardian high society with relentless affairs and drug-fueled orgies. Idina's story unfolds in an intimate tone thanks to the author, her great-granddaughter, who only accidentally discovered the kinship in her youth with the media serialization of James Fox's White Mischief. Osborne makes generous use of sources and private family photos to add immediacy and depth to the portrait of a woman most often remembered

as an amoral five-time divorcee. Still, Osborne unflinchingly exposes Idina's flaws-along with those of everyone else in the politely adulterous high society-while ably couching them in the context of the tumultuous times in which Idina resolved to find happiness in all the wrong places. The text, most lyrical when describing the landscapes around Idina's African residences, proves that an adventurous spirit continues to run in this fascinating family.

**The Last Stand: Custer, Sitting
Bull, and the Battle of Little
Bighorn**

Philbrick, Nathaniel

After 2006's eye-opening account of the fanatical Pilgrims in *Mayflower*, Philbrick tackles another American legend. Neither the golden-haired general nor the Indian chief here is the bloodthirsty warmonger often portrayed in other accounts. Both are top soldiers and natural leaders zealously looking out for their respective peoples' interests. There have been so many contrasting accounts from both sides over the years that it's difficult to get a truthful picture of what transpired on June 25, 1876, along the banks of the Little Bighorn River. Philbrick therefore incorporates multiple perspectives for a very round portrait of events. Custer's fatal errors were in divvying up his already meager lot of mostly inexperienced troops into smaller units for a multiangled attack and launching an assault without first appraising the behemoth enemy force. More than a detailed chronology of events-at which it excels-this book is an in-depth portrait of the two combatants-it's Sitting Bull's story as much as Custer's. Both shared tragic and triumphant lives indelibly woven into the fabric of American lore. Philbrick humanizes history, not only putting a recognizable face on the players in one of our nation's most notorious events but also providing insight into their hearts and minds.

**The Death and Life of the Great
American School System**

Ravitch, Diane

Ravitch (a professor of education at New York U. and a former Assistant Secretary of Education and member of the National Assessment Board) reverses her previous support of educational policies of testing, accountability, choice, charter schools, and markets as panaceas for the failures of the American educational system. Addressing a general audience, she reviews the recent experience with these policies at various levels, from the national on down, and details their failures, often echoing the arguments of longstanding critics of such policies. In her conclusion, she argues that the most important area of schooling that requires attention is the improvement of curricula, pointing to Japan and Finland as examples of excellence in this area (she remains critical of what she sees as left-wing and right-wing attempts to limit curricula for political reasons).

**The Healing of America: A Global
Quest for Better, Cheaper, and
Fairer Healthcare**

Reid, T.R.

Even though the United States spends more on health care than any other nation, 20,000 Americans die each year as a result of having little or no health insurance. Reid surveys European and Asian systems that range from single payer to pay-as-you-go, describing how the systems evolved and enumerating their pros and cons. Refuting standard myths about European health care, he demonstrates that there is no monolithic "socialized medicine": most countries provide a basic health package paid for through nonprofit insurance, with supplemental private coverage also available. Reid makes a forceful case that if the United States makes a commitment to universal health care, these countries offer invaluable blueprints. Reid's concise-and surprisingly humorous-study is recommended to anyone following the ongoing debate over health-care reform.

**The Bridge: The Life and Rise of
Barack Obama**

Remnick, David

Pulitzer Prize winner Remnick unveils how Barack Obama bridged America's racial chasm to become the first African American President. The book focuses on portraying the evolution of Obama's character and intellectual and emotional development and then goes on to demonstrate how the makeup of the man develops an analytical strategy that he applies to the formulation of his politics and policies. The enigma of Obama is demystified. The evolution of Obama is also viewed against the backdrop of his family and the social history of the time. Obama refers to himself as a member of the "Joshua generation," one who owes his successes to the heroes of the Civil Rights Movement and to other African American leaders. The book discusses his early years; his time in college, graduate school, and as a community organizer; his emergence as an official in Illinois politics; and his election as President. Among the best features are Remnick's illuminating appraisal of Obama's "Dreams of My Father", descriptions of Obama's bitter election fights for the state senate, Congress, and the U.S. Senate, and stories of the significant roles that family and political mentors played. No other book to date is better at revealing the roots and personality of Barack Obama. Remnick has set a lofty bar for future biographers.

**The Only Game in Town: Sports
Writing from the New Yorker**

Remnick, David

David Remnick never explains in his introduction what prompted him to pull together this dazzling collection of 32 sports pieces from the magazine, nor in the end does he need to. They justify themselves, dating from Ring Lardner's 1930 take on juiced-up baseballs to 2008 pieces by Anthony Lane and Haruki Murakami on the Beijing Olympics and running, respectively. There's a fine, multidimensional quality to these pieces, from Malcolm Gladwell's thoughtful reflection on the phenomenon of choking in sport (2000) to Henry Lewis Gates' shrewd study of Michael Jordan, athlete and marketing powerhouse (1998). Other articles include John Updike's iconic piece on Ted Williams' final home game (1960), Bill Barich's paean to horse racing (1980), and Susan Orlean's neat profile on Iditarod champion Susan Butcher (1987). Bonus: a liberal sprinkling of sports-related cartoons from the magazine.

Roach, Mary

Packing for Mars

(Aug)

Space is a world devoid of the things we need to live and thrive: air, gravity, hot showers, fresh produce, privacy, beer. Space exploration is in some ways an exploration of what it means to be human. How much can a person give up? How much weirdness can they take? What happens to you when you can't walk for a year? have sex? smell flowers? What happens if you vomit in your helmet during a space walk? Is it possible for the human body to survive a bailout at 17,000 miles per hour? To answer these questions, space agencies set up all manner of quizzical and startlingly bizarre space simulations. As Mary Roach discovers, it's possible to preview space without ever leaving Earth. From the space shuttle training toilet to a crash test of NASA's new space capsule (cadaver filling in for astronaut), Roach takes us on a surreally entertaining trip into the science of life in space and space on Earth.

**Roubini, Nouriel and Mihm,
Stephen**

**Crisis Economics: A Crash
Course in the Future of Finance**

Roubini, a professor of economics at NYU, was greeted with skepticism when he warned a 2006 meeting of the IMF that a deep recession was imminent. Along with economics historian Mihm, Roubini provides an in-depth analysis of the role of crises in capitalist economies from a historical perspective. With thumbnail sketches of nineteenth and twentieth century economic thought from Smith, Keynes, and others, they provide a context for understanding financial markets and the ways in which bankers and politicians relate to them. The authors also offer a theoretical context for understanding the current economic crisis and for using it as "an object lesson. [in how to foresee them], prevent them, weather them, and clean up after them." Dismissing the "quaint beliefs" that markets are "self-regulating," they take issue with the simplistic populist assumption that the present crisis was caused by greed or something "as inconsequential as subprime mortgages." They blame Alan Greenspan's refusal to use the power of the Fed to dampen unbridled speculation, choosing instead to pump "vast quantities of easy money into the economy and [keep] it there for too long." This will be a useful guide for readers attempting to get a handle on the present crisis.

Sandel, Michael

Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?

Harvard government professor Sandel dazzles in this sweeping survey of hot topics-the recent government bailouts, the draft, surrogate pregnancies, same-sex marriage, immigration reform and reparations for slavery-that situates various sides in the debates in the context of timeless philosophical questions and movements. Sandel takes utilitarianism, Kant's categorical imperative and Rawls's theory of justice out of the classroom, dusts them off and reveals how crucial these theories have been in the construction of Western societies-and how they inform almost every issue at the center of our modern-day polis. The content is dense but elegantly presented, and Sandel has a rare gift for making complex issues comprehensible, even entertaining, without compromising their gravity. With exegeses of Winnie the Pooh, transcripts of Bill Clinton's impeachment hearing and the works of almost every major political philosopher, Sandel reveals how even our most knee-jerk responses bespeak our personal conceptions of the rights and obligations of the individual and society at large. Erudite, conversational and deeply humane, this is truly transformative reading.

**Too Big to Fail: The Inside Story
of How Wall Street and
Washington Fought to Save the
Financial System---and
Themselves**

Sorkin, Andrew Ross

A real-life thriller about the most tumultuous period in America's financial history by Andrew Ross Sorkin delivers the first true behind-the-scenes, moment-by-moment account of how the greatest financial crisis since the Great

Depression developed into a global tsunami. From inside the corner office at Lehman Brothers to secret meetings in South Korea, and the corridors of Washington, "Too Big to Fail" is the definitive story of the most powerful men and women in finance and politics grappling with success and failure, ego and greed, and, ultimately, the fate of the world's economy. Through unprecedented access to the players involved, "Too Big to Fail" re-creates all the drama and turmoil, revealing never disclosed details and elucidating how decisions made on Wall Street over the past decade sowed the seeds of the debacle. This true story is not just a look at banks that were "too big to fail," it is a real-life thriller with a cast of bold-faced names who themselves thought they were too big to fail.

The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of

Stiles, T.J.

Cornelius Vanderbilt

2010 Pulitzer Prize for Biography

Stiles presents a thoroughly researched, annotated, and illustrated account of the rise of the visionary Cornelius Vanderbilt (1794-1877) from boatman to railroad entrepreneur, revealing his difficult personal and family life, struggle to attain a place in New York society, and role in establishing the arguably individualistic, lightly regulated financial system that America has today. Stiles shows that as America moved from a communal, rural society to a competitive, industrial one, framed by the antebellum conflicts between laissez-faire Jacksonian and controlled-market Whig ideas, Vanderbilt came to exemplify the contradictions of the masters of competition who stifled rivals by later enacting monopolies similar to the kind they had first opposed. Stiles meticulously separates myths from facts in a book that compares favorably with David Nasaw's Andrew Carnegie. By unearthing and carefully cross-checking information and dispassionately revising our portrait of Vanderbilt, Stiles has produced a work highly recommended for readers interested in biography, popular business, New York State history, and transportation.

**Blind Descent: The Quest to
Discover the Deepest Place on
Earth**

Tabor, James M.

Journalist Tabor presents a gripping and well-written account of the treacherous world of deep cave exploration. Focusing on a lengthy and all-consuming competition among teams of cave explorers and cave divers seeking to claim the prize of reaching the deepest point in any cave in the world, Tabor chronicles the sometimes deadly expeditions of the hard-charging American team leader William "Bill" Stone in Oaxaca, Mexico, and the more teamwork-oriented Ukrainian Alexander Klimchouk in the Abkhazia region of the Republic of Georgia. Tabor brings to gritty and frightening life a little-known and fascinating niche of extreme exploration by examining the lives, motivations, and vastly differing personalities of Stone and Klimchouk; his smoothly paced narrative builds suspense as it adroitly describes the many trials of their almost unimaginably arduous expeditions.

**The Hawk and the Dove: Paul
Nitze, George Kennan, and the
History of the Cold War**

Thompson, Nicholas

Thompson has crafted an impressive dual biography of two of the most prominent participants in the 50-year-long Cold War. The author is the grandson of Paul Nitze; he became aware of a great deal of primary material that Nitze had filed away in storage cabinets unknown to other historians. George Kennan, the Dove of the title, a longtime State Department official famous as the author of containment as an approach to dealing with the Soviets, was often opposed intellectually by Nitze, who favored a more aggressive approach. Thompson weaves an impressive narrative that alternatively discusses what each man was doing and thinking over the decades between 1945 and about 1990; the two maintained a personal friendship in spite of their different personalities and politics. Thompson writes exceedingly well, and his book not only provides new information on Nitze and his friendship with Kennan, but will introduce a new generation of readers to these two significant architects of American Cold War policy.

Urrea, Luis Alberto

The Devil's Highway

This is a book about death and dying along the Mexico-Arizona border-the Devil's Highway. It is not a simple book but instead a powerful account of 26 men from Veracruz, Mexico, who tried to enter the United States illegally in May 2001; 14 died in the Southwest desert as a consequence. Urrea tells the story in the vernacular, adding to the impact of a tragedy that could have been averted. All of the men fell victim to the scalding sun and to dehydration, but the real culprits were the "coyotes" (or middle men) who recruited the Mexicans, taking their money with a promise of jobs in Los Estados Unidos, and the runners who led the crossing. Twelve of the men survived, providing Urrea with testimony of what has been a serious problem in Mexican-U.S. relations-exacerbated by the events of 9/11.

**Fifth Avenue, 5 A.M.: Audrey
Hepburn, Breakfast at Tiffany's,
and the Dawn of the Modern
Woman**

Wasson, Sam

Wasson, who wrote on the career of writer-director Blake Edwards in "A Splurch in the Kisser", tightens his focus for a closeup of Edwards's memorable *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, which received five Oscar nominations (with two wins). Interviewing Edwards and others, he skillfully interweaves key events during the making of this cinema classic. He begins (and ends) with Truman Capote, whose novel was initially regarded as unadaptable by the producers, since they hadn't the faintest idea how the hell they were going to take a novel with no second act, a nameless gay protagonist, a motiveless drama, and an unhappy ending and turn it into a Hollywood movie. The flow of Wasson's words carries the reader from pre-production to on-set feuds and conflicts, while also noting Hepburn's impact on fashion, Hollywood glamour, sexual politics, and the new morality. Always stingy with praise, Capote dismissed the finished film as a mawkish valentine to New York City, but one feels he would have been entranced by Wasson's prismatic approach as he walks a perilous path between the analytic interpretation and the imaginative one. The result deserves Capote's nonfiction novel label. Recapturing an era, this evocative factual re-creation reads like carefully crafted fiction.