

North Shore Country Day

Upper School

2021

Summer Reading and Assignments

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AP Studio Art, 2D

Below are suggestions for 2D summer assignments. If you are in AP you must complete at least 4 pieces over the summer. If you are in AOS 1 semester, complete 1 assignment; 2 semesters, complete 2 assignments. Those pieces will be due the 2nd day of class, during which we will review your work in a group critique. If you are unsure which portfolio you will complete, you may choose from the Drawing, 3D or 2D lists. If you plan on using Photography, you must do assignments from the 2D Design portfolio, but you may choose from the Mixed Media or Photo lists.

Photo-Based/Assignments

Document everything

Documentation must be high quality, lighting must be good/clear

Look up any vocabulary in this list that you do not know. These include essential visual art terms.

- Sew fragments of two or more of your photographs together.
- Create a double negative in Photoshop.
- Try out three different Photo editing applications. Make something in each.
- Try out three different digital drawing applications. Make something in each.
- Take 100 pictures of the same subject (ex. 100 post offices, 100 pairs of hands).
- Melt something onto a photograph, mount the final photograph of something else.
- Take 10 pictures of people working from different angles.
- Take 10 pictures of fragments of walls.
- Take a panorama photograph of the same scene at 3 different times of day/night.
- Set up a still life that looks like it is from the 1700s.
- Find old color photographs, dissolve them in water and document the photos at different points of dissolution (make sure the lighting and photo quality of the documentation is clear).
- Find a way to print a photograph onto cloth. Paint, dye, or spill something on the cloth.
- Take a photograph of parts of something, print them out, put the photographs together. Take a photograph of the combined fragments.
- Take 20 images of different kinds of curves.
- Take a photograph of someone, print the photograph, have them hold the printed photograph, take another photograph, print the photograph, have them hold the photograph, take another photograph, print the photograph.
- Show the history of a person, animal, or object through a series of photographs.
- Create a family tree using photography.
- Take photographs of things people love, print the photographs, give the photographs to those people, take a picture of the person with the photograph of the thing they love.
- Take 20 photographs of strangers from the eye level of a child.
- Look at Cindy Sherman, create a piece inspired by her work.
- Take 20 photographs of strangers from a bird's eye view.
- Find 10 ugly/ dirty/ moldy/gross things and photograph them with beautiful lighting.
- Find 10 beautiful things, make them look scary.
- Organize objects by color and take photographs of those objects neatly organized.
- Take a photo that challenges figure-ground relationships.

Mixed Media Portfolio/Assignments

- Come up with your own fashion line. Make illustrations/collages of your designs.
- Create a collage that incorporates photography and drawing.

- Come up with new packaging and/or branding for a product that already exists.
- Create an album cover/ album artwork for your favorite musical artist
- Design a book cover for a book that you had to read this past year.
- Create a comic or graphic novel page.
- Design an infographic for something mundane.
- Take a flash photo of under your bed and the beds of other people.
- Create a poster of shadows.
- Design a character and an environment for that character.
- Create a dynamic website. Take screenshots of it.
- Create an animation.
- Create a piece of sequential art or time lapse piece.
- Project an image and use your body to break up the projection. Document it.
- Create a fake business. Create an ad for your fake business.
- Make a flyer about your day.
- Create a piece of cartography, challenge what a map could be.
- Create a visually compelling list of the qualities of an ideal friend/mate.
- Use graphic design to comment on education. It can be yours, someone else's, or the public in general.
- Design visual directions to do a simple task, such as buttering bread.
- If you know how to play music, find a way to incorporate musical information into a digital piece.
- Destroy something. Document it. Create a new visual identity for it.
- Make a documentary video.
- Take a portrait of people who look like they are related together.
- Design a building or other structure.
- Take a portrait of two different families.
- Make a video of someone dancing. Photograph the video stills.
- Edit a photo album page (the old kind of photo albums).

If these ideas do not work for you, please email [Mr. Dupont](#) with your list of other ideas.

AP Studio Art, 3D

Below are suggestions for 3D summer assignments. If you are in AP you must complete at least 4 pieces over the summer. If you are in AOS 1 semester, complete 1 assignment; 2 semesters, complete 2 assignments. Those pieces will be due the 2nd day of class, during which we will review your work in a group critique. If you are unsure which portfolio you will complete, you may choose from the Drawing, 3D or 2D lists. Documentation is everything- make sure you take GREAT photos of your work.

3D Portfolio/Assignments

Document everything

Documentation must be high quality, lighting must be good/clear

Look up any vocabulary in this list that you do not know. These include essential visual art terms

- Create an Assemblage: A sculpture out of found objects
- Look through your trash or recycling bin, find different textures and combine them in 3 different ways.
- Make a sculpture using your hands as inspiration.
- Make a wearable piece, it can fit on any part of the body.
- Make an inflatable. Look at instructables.com for easy instructions- all you need is packing tape, plastic bags, and a fan.
- Bury something, document the process.
- Make an encouraging banner. Hang it somewhere.
- Reorganize someone else's room, document the reorganization process.
- Make a temporary sculpture by using only your chair, clothes, and body.
- Find someone with long hair, arrange it with objects to make a temporary sculpture.
- Take a walk in an urban environment, make things out of what you find on your walk.
- Go into the woods, use found natural objects to make a temporary structure, document it.
- Sculpt a bust of someone.
- Make a protest sign and protest. Document the experience and signage.
- Create and perform the saddest song you can. Document the experience, the music, and the lighting.
- Make a public memorial.
- Make a thing from nature look unnatural, document it.
- Recreate an object from someone's past.
- Make a sculpture that casts an interesting shadow, document the sculpture with its shadow.
- Get lost, document the process of finding your way back. Collect things you found along the way. Document these things. Write a note about your experience. Document the note.
- Create an architectural model.
- Create work about gender or body representation in 3D. The work can also be an installation.
- Create an installation using packing tape as your main material.
- Create a sculpture made of wire that explores small and large shapes.
- Create a sculpture or installation that hangs from the ceiling.
- Create weaving of traditional and nontraditional materials.
- Wrap an object with string, cloth, or other objects until it becomes unrecognizable.
- Change the function of a common object.
- Build a maze, document it.
- Make a paper replica of your bed and bedroom.

- Start a lecture series. Document yourself lecturing and your audience. Include a slideshow of what you lecture about.
- Carve into something, take a photograph.
- Curate an art show in a public place. Document it from multiple angles.
Make a kinetic sculpture.
Make a sculpture that can float. Put it in a pool, a lake, or the ocean.

Remember, document everything!

If these ideas do not work for you, please email [Mr. Dupont](#) with your list of other ideas.

AP Studio Art, Drawing

Below are suggestions for 2D summer assignments. If you are in AP you must complete at least 4 pieces over the summer. If you are in AOS 1 semester, complete 1 assignment; 2 semesters, complete 2 assignments. Those pieces will be due the 2nd day of class, during which we will review your work in a group critique. If you are unsure which portfolio you will complete, you may choose from the Drawing, 3D or 2D list. If you plan on using Photography, you must do assignments from the 2D Design portfolio list, but you may choose from the Mixed Media or Photo lists.

- Drawing/Assignments
- Document everything
- Documentation must be high quality, lighting must be good/clear
- Look up any vocabulary in this list that you do not know. These include essential visual art terms
- Draw the same thing everyday for 14 days. Document each drawing.
- Make a very large drawing using only charcoal and/or water.
- Make a Zentangle in black and white. Work on it one time a day for one week.
- Choose three famous artworks and combine them into one drawing or painting.
- Go to a public place and draw everyone you see there.
- Create a monochromatic (1 color) image. Use painting or drawing or both.
- Choose a photo, make a drawing that comes out of all of the sides of the photo.
- Draw/Paint an uncommon landscape.
- Make a comic strip or graphic novel page.
- Create a drawing using only your peripheral vision.
- Set up a still life with as many reflective surfaces as possible. Draw it as accurately as possible.
- Choose two photographs you have taken. Combine them will trying to draw as accurately as possible.
- Pile a bunch of old or dirty clothes on the floor. Draw them or paint them. Try to give the impression they are old and dirty.
- Make a creepy cute drawing or painting.
- Draw or paint something very tiny very big.
- Draw or paint only the negative space of an interior, such as the wall of your bedroom or the kitchen.
- Do a self portrait using your bathroom mirror.
- Make a drawing or painting on a surface other than paper or canvas. Work with the textures and layers of the surface you choose. Examples: cardboard, patterned fabric, wire mesh, the lawn.
- Make a sketch every morning for a week of the dreams you had the night before. Write about them.
- Draw a picture of your friend's friend. You should not know or see a picture of them.
- Go on public transportation. Find a way to draw the people around you while capturing the movement of the train, bus, or subway.
- Paint a ground (a base color). Make a drawing with your feet, then layer it with a drawing made with your left hand, then layer that with a drawing made with your right hand.
- Make a subtractive drawing/painting. Meaning, start with a layer of something and then remove it to create the drawing/painting.
- Make a painting in the dark, then paint it again in the light, then add to it in the dark, then paint it again in the light.
- Make a painting or drawing of items that represent you. Avoid making a painting/drawing of your shoes.
- Draw the news.
- Draw your ideal government.
- Paint or draw a section of the body that is not easily recognizable. Avoid painting or drawing tears coming out of eyes or eyes in general.
- Make graphic poetry by combining a few words and fast drawings.

- Write your life story in less than a day. Make a drawing using the words.
- Draw from a nude statue in a museum.
- Draw a scene from a movie that made you cry.
- Draw 5 events from 2001.

If these ideas don't work for you, let [Mr. Dupont](#) know and send him your plans.

AP Human Geography

Required Reading

[Behind the Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo](#)

(National Book Award Winner 2012)

National Book Foundation Citation:

In her prose as well as her purpose, Katherine Boo calls Dickens and Zola to mind—and yet her account of the teenaged Abdul Hakim Husain and his kinetic web of contacts in Annawadi, his slum in the shadow of the Mumbai airport, is nonfiction. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* is an interview-based narrative in which the interviewer never appears, a murder mystery, an intricately-plotted reflection of everyday life, and a reminder that sometimes the writer's most valuable organ is the ear.

About the Book

Annawadi is a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport, and as India starts to prosper, Annawadians are electric with hope. Abdul, a reflective and enterprising Muslim teenager, sees “a fortune beyond counting” in the recyclable garbage that richer people throw away. Asha, a woman of formidable wit and deep scars from a childhood in rural poverty, has identified an alternate route to the middle class: political corruption. With a little luck, her sensitive, beautiful daughter will soon become its first female college graduate. But then Abdul the garbage sorter is falsely accused in a shocking tragedy; terror and a global recession rock the city; and suppressed tensions over religion, caste, sex, power and economic envy turn brutal. As the tenderest individual hopes intersect with the greatest global truths, the true contours of a competitive age are revealed. And so, too, are the imaginations and courage of the people of Annawadi.

Your Assignment

In addition to reading the book, you must complete the following assignment on Google Docs and share it with me by the first day of class. (Note: you will be able to polish your response before our discussion of the book during Cycle 2).

Prepare a short response to ONE of the following prompts from the Behind the Beautiful Forevers website. Your response should be approximately 1-1.5 pages (double-spaced). Be sure to support your assertions with specific examples pulled directly from the text.

1. Barbara Ehrenreich calls *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* “one of the most powerful indictments of economic inequality I’ve ever read.” Yet the book shows the world of the Indian rich—lavish Bollywood parties, an increasingly glamorous new airport—almost exclusively through the eyes of the Annawadians. Are they resentful? Are they envious? How does the wealth that surrounds the slum dwellers shape their own expectations and hopes?
2. As Abdul works day and night with garbage, keeping his head down, trying to support his large family, some other city dwellers think of him as garbage, too. How does Abdul react to how other people view him? How would you react? How do Abdul and his sort-of friend, Sunil, try to protect themselves and sustain self-esteem in the face of other people's contempt?
3. The lives of ordinary women—their working lives, domestic lives, and inner lives—are an important part of *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*. The author has noted elsewhere that she'd felt a shortage of such accounts in nonfiction about urban India. Do women like Zehrunisa and Asha have more freedom in an urban slum than they would have

had in the villages where they were born? What is Meena, a Dalit, spared by living in the city? What freedoms do Meena, Asha, and Zehrunisa still lack, in your view?

4. Asha grew up in rural poverty, and the teenaged marriage arranged by her family was to a man who drank more than he worked. In Annawadi, she takes a series of calculated risks to give her daughter Manju a life far more hopeful than that of other young women such as Meena. What does Asha lose by her efforts to improve her daughter's life chances? What does she gain? Were Asha's choices understandable to you, in the end?

5. The author has said elsewhere that while the book brings to light serious injustices, she believes there is also hope on almost every single page: in the imaginations, intelligence and courage of the people she writes about. What are the qualities of a child like Sunil that might flourish in a society that did a better job of recognizing his capacities?

6. When we think of corruption, the examples tend to be drawn from big business or top levels of government. The kind of corruption *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* show us is often described as "petty". Do you agree with that characterization of the corruption Annawadians encounter in their daily lives? Why might such corruption be on the increase as India grows wealthier as a nation?

7. Does Asha have a point when she argues that something isn't wrong if the powerful people say that it's right? How does constant exposure to corruption change a person's internal understanding of right and wrong?

8. Shortly before Abdul is sent to juvenile jail, a major newspaper runs a story about the facility headlined: "Dongri Home is a Living Hell." Abdul's experience of Dongri is more complex, though. How does being wrenched away from his work responsibilities at Annawadi change his understanding of the hardships of other people? Are terms like liberty and freedom understood differently by people who live in different conditions?

9. Fatima's neighbors view her whorling rages, like her bright lipsticks, as free comic entertainments. How has her personality been shaped by the fact that she has been defined since birth by her disability—very literally named by it? Zehrunisa waivers between sympathy for and disapproval of her difficult neighbor. In the end, did you?

10. Zehrunisa remembers a time when every slum dweller was roughly equal in his or her misery, and competition between neighbors didn't get so out of hand. Abdul doesn't know whether or not to believe her account of a gentler past. Do you believe it? Might increased hopes for a better life have a dark as well as a bright side?

11. Many Annawadians—Hindu, Muslim, and Christian—spend less time in religious observance than they did when they were younger, and a pink temple on the edge of the sewage lake goes largely unused. In a time of relative hope and constant improvisation for the slum dwellers, why might religious practice be diminishing? What role does religious faith still play in the slum dwellers' lives?

12. Who do you think had the best life in the book, and why?

13. In the Author's Note Katherine Boo emphasizes the volatility of an age in which capital moves quickly around the planet, government supports decline, and temporary work proliferates. Had the author followed the families of Annawadi for only a few weeks or months, would you have come away with a different understanding of the effects of that volatility? Does uncertainty about their homes and incomes change how Annawadians view their neighbors? Does economic uncertainty affect relationships where you live?

14. At one point in the book, Abdul takes to heart the moral of a Hindu myth related by The Master: Allow your flesh to be eaten by the eagles of the world. Suffer nobly, and you'll be rewarded in the end. What is the connection between suffering and redemption in this book? What connections between suffering and redemption do you see in your own life? Are the sufferers ennobled? Are the good rewarded in the end?

Enrichment

Since ours is a class that considers the “why of where” (how historical and geographic contexts shape today’s global realities), listening to NPR “Morning Edition” and “All Things Considered” whenever you happen to be in the car is a great way to ready yourself for the year ahead. This is not just a summer suggestion, it relates to your drives to and from school during the academic year and beyond.

Optional Reading

If you’re looking for something more to read this summer, may I suggest [The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga](#)—it is very entertaining and acts as a superb companion piece to the required reading.

White Tiger review from The New Yorker:

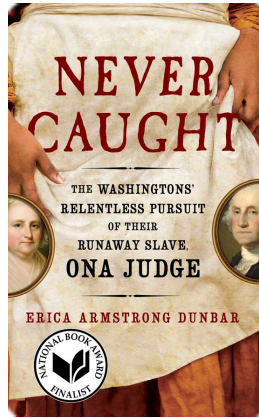
In this darkly comic debut novel set in India, Balram, a chauffeur, murders his employer, justifying his crime as the act of a "social entrepreneur." In a series of letters to the Premier of China, in anticipation of the leader’s upcoming visit to Balram’s homeland, the chauffeur recounts his transformation from an honest, hardworking boy growing up in "the Darkness" —those areas of rural India where education and electricity are equally scarce, and where villagers banter about local elections "like eunuchs discussing the Kama Sutra" —to a determined killer. He places the blame for his rage squarely on the avarice of the Indian élite, among whom bribes are commonplace, and who perpetuate a system in which many are sacrificed to the whims of a few. Adiga’s message isn’t subtle or novel, but Balram’s appealingly sardonic voice and acute observations of the social order are both winning and unsettling.

AP United States History

WELCOME! I am thrilled to have you all in the class and look forward to building up our weirdly intense knowledge of US History in the Fall!

To get us started on the right foot, I am going to have you read a book over the summer. But not just any book - a **CONTROVERSIAL** book that helps us understand that historians often question dominant narratives of US History, and that the study of history is all about debate and interpretation!

The Book You Should Check Out from the Library/Buy/Listen to:



["Never Caught" by Ona Judge](#)

NOTE: **DO NOT** read the Young Readers version, but rather the original full length version.

ANOTHER NOTE: If you do check out the book or read an e-book or audio version and cannot bring it to class, please take notes and bring those notes into class the first day. If you have the hard copy, bring that in to class the first day.

The Assignment

DUE ON DAY 1!

PART I

For EACH CHAPTER (there are 13), do these two following things:

1. Write a question you have - something the chapter didn't answer or you would like to know more about.
2. Write a discussion question - an open ended question that can launch a discussion of the content of the book.
Look at the section "[Types of Effective Questions](#)" on this site to generate ideas

PART II

Write a short book review, no longer than 500 words. You can write this in first or third person, and feel free to include your opinion on the book. We will read these together in class. The one we deem the strongest review will be collectively edited and published in either the Acorn or the Diller Street Journal - or both!

Have a great summer,

Mr. Mercer

AP French Language and Culture

Bonjour à tous!

Je sais que c'est l'été et qu'on a même pas encore tout à fait fini l'année ... mais je vous souhaite dès maintenant la bienvenue à tous dans notre cours AP de Culture et Langue Française. Cette année, nous allons explorer les thèmes du cours AP à travers le cinéma, entre autres. Pour vous familiariser avec cette manière de travailler, vous allez regarder et présenter un film parmi une liste que je vous propose.

Note importante: pendant notre cours AP, c'est vous qui serez responsable de trouver le moyen de regarder les films que je vous demande de regarder "hors classe". En général, ils sont disponibles sur Netflix ou sur Amazon Prime ou Hulu, et de toute manière dans les bibliothèques publiques (Evanston/Wilmette/Highland Park etc) au moyen du système d'inter-library loans. C'est à vous de vous procurer ces films et de les visionner de manière indépendante. Si cela présente un problème, vous devez me le signaler tout de suite.

But du travail d'été

- Regarder un film Français que vous choisissiez et partager avec nous des informations sur ce film.
- Faire des recherches sur un des thèmes développés dans le film, et partager avec nous ces informations.
- Présenter le film, ses thèmes, et votre recherche. Générer une discussion/activité en classe.
- Utiliser le travail écrit pour travailler sur la grammaire.

Lisez bien tout ce document pour comprendre ce que vous devez faire

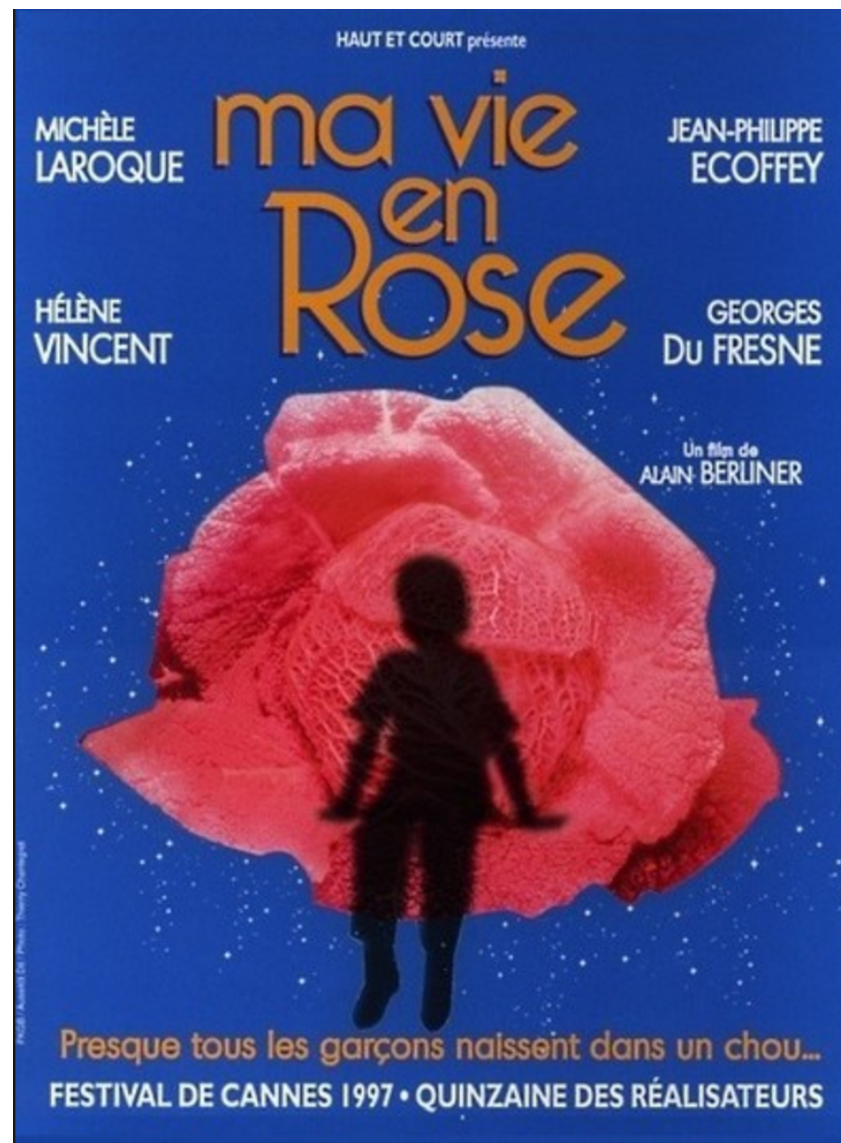
1. Choisissez le film sur lequel vous voulez travailler. Vous faites ça directement sur ce document, dans le tableau p. 2 (mettez votre nom à côté du film - le premier venu est le premier servi). **Date due: Lundi 9 Août (ou avant)**
2. Réfléchissez aux thèmes qui sont contenus dans le film. Choisissez un thème qui vous intéresse plus particulièrement, et faites des recherches sur ce thème en utilisant les liens que je vous fournis en dernière page de ce document (pages 11 et 12)
3. Sélectionnez deux sources d'information en Français pour les partager avec le reste de la classe. Vous faites ça directement sur ce document, dans le tableau p. 2. **Date due: Lundi 23 Août (ou avant)**

Ces sources d'information peuvent être un article, une baladodiffusion (podcast ou document audio) ou une vidéo et ils doivent pouvoir donner lieu à une bonne discussion en classe (ils doivent donc contenir des arguments tangibles) sur le thème que vous avez sélectionné. Mettez les liens à ces 2 sources dans la colonne "Lien à un article/une baladodiffusion/une vidéo relié à l'un des thèmes traités dans le film". Attention, utilisez le format habituel: vous créez un lien interactif avec le titre de la source, le type de source, et le nom de la publication. Voici un exemple de lien interactif au bon format: [La négation de l'Holocauste doit-elle être interdite? - Article - Eurotopics](#)

4. Préparez votre travail écrit et votre présentation. Ce que votre présentation doit contenir, votre travail écrit et le calendrier des présentations sont dans les pages 10 et 11 de ce document.

Tableau des choix de films et liens aux sources d'information

[Cliquez ici pour accéder à la fiche d'inscription.](#)



Ma Vie en Rose

Alain Berliner

Drame

Cours AP Français - Vos premières présentations

Date due: La deuxième semaine d'école (voir calendrier du début de l'année p. 11)

A. Contenu de la présentation orale (100 points)

- Voici ce que votre première présentation doit contenir. Notez que vous devrez nous présenter des morceaux du film
 1. La bande annonce du film
 - 1.1. Nous la regarderons ensemble. Donnez des informations sur le réalisateur et les acteurs, le type et le contexte du film.
 2. L'histoire (travail oral uniquement)
 - 2.1. Vous devez nous donner un résumé de l'histoire (le contenu). Vous pouvez en profiter pour nous donner le vocabulaire essentiel dont nous aurons besoin pour discuter du film (soyez prêts à écrire les termes au tableau - correctement! - et à les expliquer oralement uniquement).
 3. Le thème (travail oral et écrit)
 - 3.1. Vous devez extraire l'un des thèmes qui vous intéresse dans le film et expliquer comment ce thème est développé (un paragraphe de votre travail écrit). Vous devez nous faire regarder une scène dans laquelle ce thème est présent. Expliquez oralement, sans lire, pourquoi vous avez choisi cette scène.
 4. La discussion en classe (travail oral et écrit)
 - 4.1. Vous avez déjà partagé les liens aux articles que vos camarades de classe auront lu. Vous devez créer 4 questions de discussion sur le thème que vous avez choisi d'explorer. Utilisez les informations contenues dans les articles que vous avez choisi pour créer des questions qui vont générer une bonne discussion. Ce sont donc des questions d'analyse et d'opinion (pas des questions de compréhension de l'article). Vous serez notés sur votre capacité à générer des questions pertinentes (et formulées correctement), desquelles nous pourrions bien débattre ensemble. Vos articles doivent avoir été choisis pour nous fournir des arguments de réponse à vos questions. Bien réfléchir à la pertinence de vos questions est très important, car ce sont vos questions qui font le lien entre le film, les sources d'information sur le thème choisi et une discussion de classe éclairante.

B. Contenu de votre travail écrit (100 points) - **Date due: Lundi 23 Août (ou avant)**

Vous travaillez sur un Google doc, mais notez que les éléments écrits doivent m'être rendus imprimés et rendus à notre toute première classe. Vous pouvez utiliser Wordreference.com mais ABSOLUMENT JAMAIS de traducteur. N'oubliez pas de sauter une ligne!

Votre travail écrit doit contenir:

1. Le titre (c'est le titre du film)
2. Le vocabulaire utile (8 à 10 mots, traduits)
3. Un paragraphe qui explique le thème que vous avez sélectionné et comment il est présent dans la scène que vous avez choisie.
4. Les 4 questions de discussion à propos des sources d'information que vous avez fournies.

III. Calendrier des présentations et devoirs

Lundi 9 Août (ou avant)

- Sélection du film dans ce Google doc.

Lundi 23 Août (ou avant)

- Les liens aux sources d'information sélectionnées sont mis dans ce Google doc.
- Le travail écrit imprimé est mis sur mon bureau.

Calendrier du début de l'année avec présentations:

- Semaine 1: Début de l'année - introduction au cours, aux attentes, révision de grammaire etc.
- Semaine 2: Les présentations commencent (par ordre alphabétique du nom de famille)

Notez les devoirs à faire pour chaque jour où vous ne présentez pas:

1. Lecture: Vous devez avoir lu et compris les sources d'information de la personne qui présente.
2. Travail écrit (à la main pas à l'ordinateur):
 1. Relevez 6 mots de vocabulaire dont vous avez dû chercher la traduction - écrivez-cette traduction.
 2. Choisissez 2 des 4 questions de la personne qui va présenter. Répondez à ces questions par écrit, en faisant référence aux sources d'information.

Cette unité inclura un contrôle de vocabulaire sur le vocabulaire que nous aurons étudié.

Liens aux sites à utiliser pour faire vos recherches:

L'actualité (current events)

- TV5 Monde - Actualité du monde francophone, langue et divertissement <http://www.tv5.org/>
- 1 Jour 1 Actu - L'information des juniors <http://www.lesclesjunior.com/>
- L'actualité - Magazine québécois de l'actualité <http://www.lactualite.com/>
- Eurotopics - Magazine spécialisé Europe <https://www.eurotopics.net/fr/3/debats#>
- L'internaute - Actualité et divertissement <http://www.linternaute.com/actualite/>
- L'internaute Junior - Actualité et divertissement pour les juniors <http://www.linternaute.com/junior/>
- Ça vous regarde - Débats sur l'actualité organisés par thèmes <https://www.lcp.fr/collection/episodes/2365>
- Atlantico - L'actualité niveau avancé <http://www.atlantico.fr/>
- France 24 - L'actualité niveau avancé <http://www.france24.com/fr/>
- Le Monde - Actualité niveau avancé - <http://www.lemonde.fr/>
- Arrêt sur image - Actualité organisée par thème - niveau avancé <http://www.arretsurimages.net/index.php>
- France diplomatie - Actualité des pays francophones - Dossiers par pays <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/>
- Le Journal du Net - Information du monde économique <http://www.journaldunet.com/>
- Radio France Internationale - Articles, podcast, actualité radio <http://www.rfi.fr>
- Radio France - Articles, podcasts, musique <http://www.radiofrance.fr/>
- Site de l'INSEE - Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques?debut=0&theme=84&idfacette=1>

Films, documentaires, courts-métrages

- Site de l'INA (Institut National de L'Audiovisuel) - Archives en ligne <http://www.ina.fr/video/3078704001025#>
- National Film Board of Canada <http://www.nfb.ca/>
- Institut Français du cinéma <http://ifcinema.institutfrancais.com/>
- UTube Channel of French movies with English subtitles <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5357F089480D091F>
- Allô ciné - site consacré au cinéma français <http://www.allocine.fr/>
- Liste de films sur Buzzfeed <http://www.buzzfeed.com/laurastudarus/travel-without-leaving-home-17-feel-good-french-f-j8z2#2ay3txk>

Sources audio

- Sources audio sur sujets divers <http://www.audio-lingua.eu/spip.php?rubrique1&lang=fr>
- Exercices d'écoute avec sujets d'actualité http://www1.rfi.fr/lffr/pages/001/accueil_exercice_ecoute.asp
- L'actualité francophone - 10 minutes par jour <https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/l-actu-francophone-l-accent-des-autres>

AP Spanish Language and Culture

Queridos/as estudiantes:

Espero que ya estén disfrutando del verano y que estén pasando un tiempo maravilloso con sus familias y amigos/as. Como es tradición en NSCD, el verano inmediatamente anterior a la clase de *AP Spanish Language and Culture* los/as estudiantes que van a tomar el curso se preparan con algunas lecturas y audios. Es una forma de practicar lo que ya han aprendido y de prepararse para la clase. A continuación, van a encontrar algunas opciones que pueden llevar a cabo a su propio ritmo durante los próximos dos meses y medio antes de retomar sus clases en el otoño. El trabajo me lo tienen que entregar el primer día de clase. Estos ejercicios van a tener una calificación.

- 1. Leer y escribir.** Lean **5 artículos** de periódico de unas 2 páginas cada uno. Pueden consultar los periódicos “online” elpais.com, o elmundo.com. Por favor, lean artículos de **diferentes secciones**: internacional, cultura, deportes, política, tecnología, medio ambiente, etc. Después de leer cada artículo, por favor escriban un comentario con un **resumen** de un párrafo (6 a 8 líneas) y su **opinión** sobre el artículo en un segundo párrafo (3 a 4 líneas más). Al final tendrán que tener dos párrafos por cada artículo para un total de 10 párrafos y cinco comentarios. Al final de cada composición por favor copien y peguen el enlace del artículo para que yo lo pueda leer. Destinen una semana por artículo/composición.
- 2. Escuchar y hablar.** Escojan **un capítulo** de *Andes Mágicos* o *Street Food Latin America* en Netflix. Para escoger un solo capítulo, por favor vean por lo menos dos capítulos de cada una de las series para que se aseguren de escoger uno que les guste. Después, graben un comentario sobre el capítulo que escogieron **resumiéndolo** y dando su **opinión**. La grabación debe durar entre cuarenta y cinco segundos y un minuto. Destinen una semana por capítulo y una semana para grabar el audio.
- 3. Gramática.** Impriman este documento de pdf. Lean las explicaciones gramaticales y completen todos los ejercicios de cada unidad gramatical. Son trece unidades, así que destinen dos unidades por semana.

Gracias y feliz verano,
Dra. Rincón-Bisbey

Click on the image to access
the .pdf of Tiempo Apéndice A

apéndice **A**

Gramática

419

TIEMPO PRESENTE: **SER Y ESTAR**

▲ Tanto el **presente simple** como el **presente continuo** narran y describen eventos, pero la manera como cada uno de estos tiempos verbales se usa es diferente. Observa cómo se usan en las siguientes oraciones.

Los lentos **son** caros. *(descripción simple)*

Los diseñadores **influyen** mucho en las tendencias de los jóvenes. *(descripción de acciones y estados habituales)*

Estamos diseñando una nueva colección. *(narración de una acción que se realiza en el presente)*

El presente simple

PRINCIPALES USOS DEL PRESENTE SIMPLE	
describir cualidades y estados permanentes	Las cosas tienen vida propia —pregonaba el gitano con áspero acento. En Chile, las vacaciones de verano duran de mediados de diciembre a mediados de marzo.
narrar eventos presentes	Un señor toma el tramvía después de comprar el diario.
narrar eventos en el futuro cercano	Media hora más tarde desciende con el mismo diario...
el presente histórico	Julio Cortázar (1914-1984) nace en Bruselas, de padres argentinos.
narrar eventos pasados de manera más inmediata	Ayer salía clase cuando, de repente, ¡me encuentro con un grupo de <i>hipsters</i> !

▲ El último ejemplo corresponde algunas veces al uso informal del tiempo presente en inglés para relatar un evento pasado:
So yesterday, I'm **walking** past the library and I **see** Tyler. He **says** to me...

El presente continuo

▲ Para formar el presente continuo, combina una forma del tiempo presente de **estar** con el gerundio (la terminación **-ando, -iendo**) de otro verbo.

PRINCIPALES USOS DEL PRESENTE CONTINUO	
narrar una acción en progreso	Están preparando una encuesta sobre las marcas de moda.
expresar un evento que se considera inusual, pasajero o sorprendente	Patricia siempre compra su ropa en tiendas, pero hoy está comprando en línea.
expresar un hecho que se repite constantemente	Los jóvenes siempre están cambiando y renovando sus estilos.

¡ATENCIÓN!
En español se utiliza más el presente simple que el presente continuo. A diferencia del inglés, el presente continuo no se usa para describir estados o condiciones.
El niño **lleva** una chaqueta roja.
The boy is wearing a red jacket.

▲ Algunos verbos cambian su grafía en el gerundio: los verbos terminados en **-ir** cuya raíz cambia (**durmiendo, pidiendo, diciendo**) y verbos como **creer, traer, construir** y **oír** (**creyendo, trayendo, construyendo, oyendo**).

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AP Spanish Literature

Queridísimos estudiantes de AP Spanish Lit:

Espero que estéis pasando un verano estupendo y que estéis disfrutando de vuestro tiempo libre. Para que podáis empezar a avanzar con las lecturas de la clase de AP Spanish Lit tenéis que leer una serie de cuentos que os señalo a continuación.

Algunos habéis leído ya algunos de estos cuentos en el pasado, pero no todos. No importa, tenéis que leerlos de nuevo. Podéis encontrar todos estos cuentos en internet. La mayoría están en esta página <https://ciudadseva.com/biblioteca/indice-autor-cuentos/>

Estos son los cuentos:

1. “Mi caballo Mago” de Sabine Ulibarri
2. “No oyes ladrar a los perros” de Juan Rulfo
3. “La siesta del martes” de García Márquez
4. “Las medias rojas” de Emilia Pardo Bazán
5. “El sur” de Jorge Luis Borges
6. “Chac Mool” de Carlos Fuentes
7. “El ahogado más hermoso del mundo” de García Márquez

IMPORTANTE: Después de leer cada cuento, tenéis que escribir un comentario de unas 6 a 8 líneas sobre el cuento. Debe ser un comentario personal con tu opinión. Para entender mejor cada cuento sería bueno que buscarais información sobre el autor y sobre el cuento en la red.

Este ejercicio cuenta un 5 % de la nota del primer semestre. Si hacéis bien estas lecturas, tendréis una parte importante del curso hecha. La fecha de entrega final es el 15 de agosto.

NO LO DEJÉIS PARA EL FINAL!!!!

Os voy a echar mucho de menos.

¡FELIZ VERANO!
Profe

AP Music Theory

Dear Students,

In preparation for AP Music Theory this fall, please complete the following assignment over the summer:

1. Read and complete the exercises in Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory Workbook (which can be found here as three .PDF documents). ***Please note: the beginning sections of Book 1 will likely be too elementary for you, so feel free to choose an appropriate starting point that is most suitable for you.
2. In addition to the PDFs of the workbook, there are also 2 compilations of audio tracks for the ear-training lessons. The folder contains two sub-folders with those tracks.
3. Once you've completed the entire workbook, create a list of terms/topics/exercises that you would personally like to review in August before we continue into the official coursework for AP Music Theory.

Please feel free to email me at tmah@nscds.org with any questions you might have and I'll do my best to respond in a timely manner.

Thanks and enjoy your summer!

[Mr. Mah](#)

AP English

Dear AP English Students:

Congratulations on completing your junior year! I hope that you are enjoying your summer and that, even while embracing all that summer has to offer, you are looking forward to your senior year at North Shore.

For your AP English summer reading, please read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez (Perennial Classics ISBN 978-0060883287). While you read, think about the questions that the novel raises for you and the central issues that this novel encourages us to consider. I urge you to be an active reader who reads with a pen in hand. Mark up your text. This will help you when you return to our class discussions in the fall.

As you read *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, please write a critical reading journal entry that is at least two typed pages (double spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font) after every 100 pages of reading. I have attached a handout on critical reading journals. I strongly discourage you from procrastinating with this summer reading assignment.

Please send me your critical reading journals via email (dgrossman@nscds.org) no later than Monday, August 23, 2021 so that I can reflect on your responses as I plan for our work with the text. If you have any questions about this summer reading assignment, please feel free to reach out to me via email.

Please bring *One Hundred Years of Solitude* with you on the first day of school.

I hope that you enjoy the novel and that you have a terrific summer. I'm looking forward to seeing you in the fall!

Mr. Grossman

Critical Reading Journals

Critical reading journals are designed to help you to become a more careful and reflective reader. The writing you will do in your journal is a tool for learning and discovering what you notice, think, and understand. I hope that you will speculate, question, observe and explore in your journal. Do not summarize the plot or simply retell the story. Please remember to put the page numbers of the section you have just read at the top of each entry. As you write, refer to specific page numbers or lines of a poem.

ASSESSMENT: Your critical reading journal entries need to be at least two typed pages, double spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font. At the end of your response, please list two questions about the reading that you would like to discuss with the class. These should be open-ended, interpretive questions rather than factual questions.

- Two key criteria of a strong reading journal are thoroughness and thoughtfulness. I need to be able to tell that you have done the reading. Do not simply discuss one or two passages at great length or launch into a discussion of something outside of the text. However, please be certain to reference and respond to specific passages in the text. In addition, I am looking to see how deeply you are thinking about the text. It's okay if you don't understand some things, but you should be working at understanding them. Are you reading carefully, noticing things, asking questions, attempting to answer them and responding to what you have read? Are you referring to the text and providing evidence for your thoughts? Remember that you will not receive credit if you simply retell the plot in a summary.
- Here are questions that you might consider as you prepare your critical reading journal:

1. From whose viewpoint are we seeing or reading this material? From what angle or perspective? What is its context? What is its purpose?
2. How do we know what we know? What counts as evidence or logical support, and how reliable is this evidence or support?
3. What patterns and connections do you see? How are things, events, ideas, or people in the material connected to each other?
4. What words, images, phrases, or details strike you? Why? What do they add to text? How do they make you look again?
5. When are you surprised or puzzled? What doesn't seem to fit or make sense?
6. When does your reading change because: you see something you didn't see before; you recognize a pattern; you discover that you were misreading; the writer introduces a new context or perspective; or the story suddenly seems to be about something different from what you had thought?
7. What do you notice about the style and rhetorical devices? How do they enhance the meaning?
8. How might things have been different?
9. How did the piece make you speculate about life (your own life or life more generally) or a connection to another text or academic discipline?
10. How did it feel to read the work — in the heart, in the spirit, in the mind, on the senses? Why? What windows or doors did it open for you? Why? Did it close anything down? What makes this work unique, quite unlike any other?
11. What important philosophical issues does the work encourage readers to consider — questions about goodness, truth, beauty, justice, love, family, friendship, loyalty, life, death, fate, free will, or religion (God)? What does it say about these issues?
12. What is your impression of the beginning? Of the ending? What begins, and what ends?

*Some of these questions have been adapted by Judith Lightfoot from the Coalition of Essential Schools newsletter. Some others are from Cathy D'Agostino.

As you are preparing your critical reading journal, I encourage you to reflect on an idea that Toni Morrison presented in her Nobel Address, which she delivered in 1993 after being awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature: "The vitality of language lies in its ability to limn the actual, imagined and possible lives of its speakers, readers, writers. Although its poise is sometimes in displacing experience, it is not a substitute for it. It arcs toward the place where meaning may lie." Think about what Toni Morrison means in this quotation and how it might connect to the text. (If you're not certain what the word "limn" means, look it up!!) You should consider identifying and discussing passages in the text where the language seems "to limn the actual, imagined and possible lives of its speakers, readers, writers."

When writing in your journal, use full sentences instead of phrases. Please focus on organizing your ideas logically and expressing your ideas clearly. I am eager to understand your key points!

The journal will seem less of an intrusion in your reading if you follow the natural rhythms of reading. Sometimes we get carried along by the flow of a story, but the things I've asked you to note are all signs that it's time to pause and reflect. What piece of literature is designed to be read straight through at uniform speed? Only machines work that way! The journal is a device to help you make more of those moments of reflection and to preserve them for later consideration.

You will regularly draw on your journals in class discussion.

AP US Government & Politics

In preparation for the AP US Government & Politics course, I want you to read the following book:

[The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution. Hachette Books, 2015.](#)

The Words We Live By provides a detailed analysis of the US Constitution, the document that defines how our government functions and the rights guaranteed to its citizens and residents. The Constitution is also the foundation for the vast majority of what we will study in AP US Government & Politics. A careful reading of this book will give you a solid understanding of the Constitution and will be of tremendous help as you navigate through the curriculum.

Once you begin reading it, you will discover that The Words We Live By is written more like a reference book than a traditional narrative. Even so, the author, Linda Monk, includes interesting vignettes as she explores the intricacies of the US Constitution. After you read the book this summer, I encourage you to keep it handy throughout the school year as a reference.

In addition to reading the book, you will be required to turn in a written reflection of 500-750 words that addresses a central theme, concept, or idea in the US Constitution. This can include but is not limited to..

- Federalism - the sharing of power between state and national governments
- The many imperfections in the document, like allowing the institution of slavery, the denial of voting rights to large segments of the population, and the unequal protection of civil rights
- The separation of powers between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches
- The Electoral College - an antiquated system?
- How best to interpret the Constitution - loose construction vs strict construction
- How the Constitution guarantees equal protection and equal opportunity under the law
- The system of checks and balances
- The legislative process - how a bill becomes a law
- Majority rule vs minority rights
- The separation of church and state
- The right to privacy - how does the Constitution protect us from unreasonable intrusions from the government?
- Due process of law - is it applied fairly?
- ?? Choose a theme or topic of your own. Feel free to reach out to Mr. Curren for ideas. ??

Your essay should be formatted into three paragraphs that address the following areas:

- The first paragraph should serve as an introduction that shares the theme you chose, explains why it is significant, and identifies where in the US Constitution it is defined. Be specific..don't just tell me which article it's in. Maybe it's addressed in multiple sections!
- The second paragraph should address any US Supreme Court cases or other supporting documents that are relevant to your topic. No outside research is needed because these should all come from The Words We Live By. They can include the brief vignettes that are throughout the book, like the section on page 71, "Your Vote Does Not Count" by John Lewis. How do these supporting documents and US Supreme Court cases impact the interpretation of the central idea that you chose?
- For the third and final paragraph, find a story in the news that relates to your central idea and analyze its significance. For example, if you focused on the legislative process (how a bill becomes a law), you could connect it to this article from The New York Times about attempts by Democrats to end the practice of the

filibuster: “[Dreams of Ending the Filibuster Dashed, Democrats Rethink Strategy](#).” How does the news story you chose reflect current interpretations and applications of the central idea you chose?

- Make sure to double space your work and proofread it carefully for mechanical and syntax errors!

Please share your work with [Mr. Curren](#) by the first full day of class.

Feel free to reach out to [Mr. Curren](#) if you have any questions..HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

English 9

Dear Incoming Ninth Grade Students,

Welcome to ninth grade English! We are very excited to meet you in the fall.

For your English 9 summer reading, please read Richard Blanco's memoir *For All of Us, One Today*. The ISBN number of the memoir is 978-0807033807.

When you are finished reading *For All of Us, One Today*, please write a letter to us in which you talk about the book. You may send the letter by regular mail or email to us by **Friday, August 27, 2021** (addresses below), or you can bring it with you on the first day of school. In your letter, please do not summarize the experiences that Richard Blanco discusses in the book. Instead, please tell us what you think about the book. You might consider writing about (1) whether or not you liked the book (with reasons for your like/dislike), (2) whether or not you related to Richard Blanco's experiences (with reasons for your response), (3) whether or not you would recommend the book to someone else (with reasons for your evaluation), (4) how Richard Blanco's narrative might have provided a window for you into different experiences or provided a mirror for you that reflected your own experiences, or (5) anything else you would like to write about. You do not need to talk about all of these possibilities. In your letter, please specify one page in the book that stands out for you in some way—perhaps the page is especially memorable, raises questions for you, or evokes strong emotions such as excitement, humor, sadness, or joy—and briefly explain why you selected that page.

This is a chance for us to start to get to know you a little, so feel free to be yourself in your writing. This is not an essay, and grammar does not count (although please do write so that everyone can understand what you are saying). Your letter must be at least one page long and may be typed (double spaced) or handwritten, as long as your handwriting is legible.

We hope you enjoy reading *For All of Us, One Today*, and we look forward to seeing you this fall!

Ms. Diorio and **Ms. Margiotta**

North Shore Country Day School
310 Green Bay Road
Winnetka, IL 60093

English 10

Summer reading for English 10 is *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak (ISBN 978-0375842207).

The summer reading assignment has three parts (reading, writing, and quotations). Please create one Google Doc that includes both your Reading Response and your Quotation Log and share it with your teacher by **August 23rd, 2021**.

Part 1

Read *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak. Be sure to be an active reader who reads with pen or pencil in hand. Your book should have annotations to show this active reading.

Part 2

Please write an open-ended Reading Response to the novel. A Reading Response is designed to help you to become a more careful and reflective reader. The writing you will do is a tool for learning and discovering what you think and feel. Do not summarize the plot or simply retell the story. This writing does not have to be formal, but we are looking to see that you are thinking beyond the novel and the conversation. We are looking to see how deeply you are thinking about the text. It's okay if you don't understand some things. You do need, however, to be working at understanding them. Are you reading carefully, noticing things, asking questions, attempting to answer them and responding to what you have read? Remember that you will not receive credit if you simply retell the plot in a summary. Your reading response should be two full pages, double spaced.

You may consider:

- Your emotional reaction(s) to the content: How does the text make me feel? Where / Why? Do my emotional reactions change throughout?
- Your intellectual reaction(s) to the content: What does the text force me to think about, consider, or question? How / Why?
- Your ethical or moral reaction(s) to the content: What moral dilemmas or issues come up for me in the text? Where / Why?
- Questions to the characters or to the author
- Notable themes or big ideas
- Symbols that recur throughout the text
- Particularly striking literary passages or narrative structures
- Notes on the setting, time period, or history
- Etc. ...

Part 3

Create a Quotation Log. You should record ten passages from the novel which you would like to discuss in class. Please accurately type out the whole passage and cite the page number. Then briefly please explain what it is that made you want to discuss this passage: Why did it capture your attention? What about it seemed significant? Was it thought-provoking? Confusing? Especially relevant to our world today? Etc....

Have a wonderful summer!

Ms. Margiotta and Ms. Diorio

English 11

Dear Juniors,

For your English 11 summer reading, I would like you to select a book from this list. Take the time to browse through these titles and descriptions and look for something that truly sounds interesting to you. The list is long and varied because I hope each one of you will discover a book here that you find to be moving, thought-provoking, intriguing, informative, and/or inspiring and that you may even come to love. Once you have selected your book, please email me (kmchugh@nscds.org) the title no later than June 30. As you read this summer, I urge you to have a pen in hand and to mark up your text. After you have read the book, I would like you to write a letter to me in which you tell me about the ways in which the book speaks to you. I'm interested in what the book makes you think, feel, understand, and question. Explain the reasons why it does this. Please do not summarize; I am your audience here and I have read the books. Explore your reactions to and interactions with what you read. What ideas from the book really intrigue you? What do you think about them? Why? Be sure to address the key issues that the book explores. Your letter should be typed and be at least three double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman font. This is a formal writing assignment. That means that your writing should be polished. It does not mean that you are not allowed to use the word I. Please arrange your thoughts into organized paragraphs and proofread carefully. You must include quotes with page numbers from the text and an MLA Works Cited entry for your book so that I know which edition you read.

Please compose your letter in a Google Doc that you share with me and be sure to give me editing privileges. Your letter needs to be completed by August 20.

Feel free to email me if you have any questions (kmchugh@nscds.org). I hope that you enjoy your book and that you have a terrific summer. I am looking forward to meeting you in the fall.

Mrs. McHugh

English 11 Book Options

The descriptions of these books come from amazon.com.

Across Boundaries by Mamphela Ramphele

In this important autobiography, a black South African physician writes with dramatic immediacy about her struggle for personal and political independence. She begins with her rural childhood and years in medical school; describes her time as political activist with her lover, Steve Biko; and finally talks about her present position as vice-chancellor at the University of Cape Town. While Biko was tortured and finally murdered in prison in the 1970s, she was bearing his child in a wilderness area where she had been banished by government decree. She talks frankly about her passionate, stormy relationship with Biko, and she attacks the reverential "Gandhi" view of him promulgated in the movie *Cry Freedom*. What gives her story special power is not only the political freedom story, but her honesty about her failures and her fury and her survivor guilt. There's deep commitment here, but no martyrdom, no preening. Women everywhere will recognize her conflicts about her roles as mother, academic, political activist, lover, and friend.

Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim by Eboo Patel

Patel, a former Rhodes scholar with a doctorate in the sociology of religion from Oxford, is the founder of the Interfaith Youth Core, an organization that unites young people of different religions to perform community service and explore their common values. Patel argues that such work is essential, manifesting the faith line that will define the 21st century. Patel's own story is more powerful than the exhaustive examples he provides of how mainstream faith failed to reach young people like Osama bin Laden and Yigal Amir, the assassin of Yitzhak

Rabin. With honesty, Patel relates how he suffered the racist taunts of fellow youth and, in response, alternately rebelled against and absorbed the religion of his parents—Islam—but in his own way. Meanwhile, he continued to pursue interfaith work with vigor, not quite knowing his end goal but always feeling in his gut that interfaith understanding was the key. This autobiography of a young activist captures how an angry youth can be transformed—by faith, by the community and, most of all, by himself—into a profound leader for the cause of peace.

After the Last Border: Two Families and the Story of Refuge in America by Jessica Goudeau

The welcoming and acceptance of immigrants and refugees have been central to America's identity for centuries--yet America has periodically turned its back in times of the greatest humanitarian need. *After the Last Border* is an intimate look at the lives of two women as they struggle for the twenty-first century American dream, having won the "golden ticket" to settle as refugees in Austin, Texas. Mu Naw, a Christian from Myanmar struggling to put down roots with her family, was accepted after decades in a refugee camp at a time when America was at its most open to displaced families; and Hasna, a Muslim from Syria, agrees to relocate as a last resort for the safety of her family--only to be cruelly separated from her children by a sudden ban on refugees from Muslim countries. Writer and activist Jessica Goudeau tracks the human impacts of America's ever-shifting refugee policy as both women narrowly escape from their home countries and begin the arduous but lifesaving process of resettling in Austin--a city that would show them the best and worst of what America has to offer. *After the Last Border* situates a dramatic, character-driven story within a larger history--the evolution of modern refugee resettlement in the United States, beginning with World War II and ending with current closed-door policies--revealing not just how America's changing attitudes toward refugees have influenced policies and laws, but also the profound effect on human lives.

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

From abroad, we often see China as a caricature: a nation of pragmatic plutocrats and ruthlessly dedicated students destined to rule the global economy--or an addled Goliath, riddled with corruption and on the edge of stagnation. What we don't see is how both powerful and ordinary people are remaking their lives as their country dramatically changes. As the Beijing correspondent for *The New Yorker*, Evan Osnos was on the ground in China for years, witness to profound political, economic, and cultural upheaval. In *Age of Ambition*, he describes the greatest collision taking place in that country: the clash between the rise of the individual and the Communist Party's struggle to retain control. He asks probing questions: Why does a government with more success lifting people from poverty than any civilization in history choose to put strict restraints on freedom of expression? Why do millions of young Chinese professionals--fluent in English and devoted to Western pop culture--consider themselves "angry youth," dedicated to resisting the West's influence? How are Chinese from all strata finding meaning after two decades of the relentless pursuit of wealth? Writing with great narrative verve and a keen sense of irony, Osnos follows the moving stories of everyday people and reveals life in the new China to be a battleground between aspiration and authoritarianism, in which only one can prevail.

The Age of Innocence by Edith Wharton

The Age of Innocence is Edith Wharton's Pulitzer-Prize-winning novel, which depicts the bygone era of 1870s New York upper class society. The novel is the story of Newland Archer, a lawyer and heir to one of New York's most prominent families. Newland is planning to marry the young, beautiful and sheltered May Welland; however, when May's exotic thirty-year-old cousin, the Countess Ellen Olenska, appears on the scene he begins to question these plans. A classic and romantic story, The Age of Innocence depicts the demands of upper-class society to maintain outward appearances and the reputation of the family, sometimes with tragic consequences.

All the King's Men by Robert Penn Warren

This landmark book is a loosely fictionalized account of Governor Huey Long of Louisiana, one of the nation's most astounding politicians. All the King's Men tells the story of Willie Stark, a southern-fried politician who builds support by appealing to the common man and playing dirty politics with the best of the back-room deal-makers. Though Stark quickly sheds his idealism, his right-hand man, Jack Burden -- who narrates the story -- retains it and proves to be a thorn in the new governor's side. Stark becomes a successful leader, but at a very high price,

one that eventually costs him his life. The award-winning book is a play of politics, society and personal affairs, all wrapped in the cloak of history.

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

A novel to live in, learn from, and feel bereft over when the last page is turned, Doerr's magnificently drawn story seems at once spacious and tightly composed. It rests, historically, during the occupation of France during WWII, but brief chapters told in alternating voices give the overall—and long—narrative a swift movement through time and events. We have two main characters, each one on opposite sides in the conflagration that is destroying Europe. Marie-Louise is a sightless girl who lived with her father in Paris before the occupation; he was a master locksmith for the Museum of Natural History. When German forces necessitate abandonment of the city, Marie-Louise's father, taking with him the museum's greatest treasure, removes himself and his daughter and eventually arrives at his uncle's house in the coastal city of Saint-Malo. Young German soldier Werner is sent to Saint-Malo to track Resistance activity there, and eventually, and inevitably, Marie-Louise's and Werner's paths cross. It is through their individual and intertwined tales that Doerr masterfully and knowledgeably re-creates the deprived civilian conditions of war-torn France and the strictly controlled lives of the military occupiers.

The American by Henry James

During a trip to Europe, Christopher Newman, a wealthy American businessman, asks the charming Claire de Cintré to be his wife. To his dismay, he receives an icy reception from the heads of her family, who find Newman to be a vulgar example of the American privileged class. Brilliantly combining elements of comedy, tragedy, romance and melodrama, this tale of thwarted desire vividly contrasts nineteenth-century American and European manners.

An American Summer: Love and Death in Chicago by Alex Kotlowitz

The numbers are staggering: over the past twenty years in Chicago, 14,033 people have been killed and another roughly 60,000 wounded by gunfire. What does that do to the spirit of individuals and community? Drawing on his decades of experience, Alex Kotlowitz set out to chronicle one summer in the city, writing about individuals who have emerged from the violence and whose stories capture the capacity--and the breaking point--of the human heart and soul. The result is a spellbinding collection of deeply intimate profiles that upend what we think we know about gun violence in America. Among others, we meet a man who as a teenager killed a rival gang member and twenty years later is still trying to come to terms with what he's done; a devoted school social worker struggling with her favorite student, who refuses to give evidence in the shooting death of his best friend; the witness to a wrongful police shooting who can't shake what he has seen; and an aging former gang leader who builds a place of refuge for himself and his friends. Applying the close-up, empathic reporting that made *There Are No Children Here* a modern classic, Kotlowitz offers a piercingly honest portrait of a city in turmoil. These sketches of those left standing will get into your bones. This one summer will stay with you.

Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

To the women in the hair-braiding salon, Ifemelu seems to have everything a Nigerian immigrant in America could desire, but the culture shock, hardships, and racism she's endured have left her feeling like she has "cement in her soul." Smart, irreverent, and outspoken, she reluctantly left Nigeria on a college scholarship. Her aunty Uju, the pampered mistress of a general in Lagos, is now struggling on her own in the U.S., trying to secure her medical license. Ifemelu's discouraging job search brings on desperation and depression until a babysitting gig leads to a cashmere-and-champagne romance with a wealthy white man. Astonished at the labyrinthine racial strictures she's confronted with, Ifemelu, defining herself as a "Non-American Black," launches an audacious, provocative, and instantly popular blog in which she explores what she calls Racial Disorder Syndrome. Meanwhile, her abandoned true love, Obinze, is suffering his own cold miseries as an unwanted African in London.

And A Voice to Sing With: A Memoir by Joan Baez

Young rock-and-rollers at the Live Aid concert, where folksinger Joan Baez opened the festivities, told her that they were raised on her music, that their parents owned all of her albums, and that meeting her was an honor. Many will also consider reading her autobiography such an honor. Her memories of singing for Martin Luther King,

for Lech Walesa and his family, at the first Newport Festival, at Woodstock, and for innumerable human rights causes are gathered together here in colorful array. Readers will gain first hand glimpses of the musical and political scenes of the '60s, '70s, and '80s. This deftly written self-portrayal will also satisfy those seeking revelations about the lives and loves of the singer. Ostracized in junior high school because of her Mexican name and dark skin, Baez developed compassion for the outcast. Likewise, her Quaker upbringing was the source of her deep pacifist beliefs. So when she attained sudden fame at age 18 during the 1960s folk music revival, she didn't hesitate to mix politics and music. Her memoir describes both concert tours and political and social events that took her from Greenwich Village and Woodstock to Vietnam and Cambodia. It concludes with a backstage glimpse at the Live Aid concert. But this is also a very personal memoir with stories of parents, siblings, and friends as well as rock musicians and movie stars; it is well written and, at times, moving.

And Still We Rise: The Trials and Triumphs of Twelve Gifted Inner-City Students by Miles Corwin

The typical image of South-Central Los Angeles doesn't lend itself to peaceful and productive high schools. But as *Los Angeles Times* reporter Miles Corwin chronicles in this troubling yet uplifting book, the ills of the inner city have not completely defeated Toni Little's advanced-placement students at Crenshaw High School, with whom Corwin spent the 1996-1997 academic year as a silent observer. Having grown weary of writing about gang violence, drive-by shootings, and drug arrests, Corwin wanted "to find a way to write about the other children of South-Central, the students who avoid the temptations of the street, who strive for success, who, against all odds, in one of America's most impoverished, crime-ridden neighborhoods, manage to endure, to prevail, to succeed." He also wanted to show "how truly slanted the playing field remains, how inequality is built into a system touted as a meritocracy." Though 98 percent of the students in the gifted program go on to attend college, it takes a near superhuman effort for them to reach graduation day. In *And Still We Rise*, Corwin details exactly why. Corwin's poignant portraits of the students and his sensitive evocation of the effort it requires for them to pursue their education are among the many strengths of the book. There's Olivia, the abused former runaway, ward of the county, and gifted student; Sadikifu, the promising Muslim rapper who constantly fights the gritty allure of gang life; and Toya, who lost her own mom to domestic violence and who struggles to balance schoolwork and motherhood. Corwin further explores the intricate intersections of affirmative action, educational expectations, urban neglect, and racism. By turns shocking and inspiring, this is journalistic work that gets to the core of its subject to reveal students who "value education, sacrifice much to further their educations, and overcome many obstacles—including even their own teachers—in order to obtain their educations." It shouldn't be so hard.

And the Mountains Echoed by Khaled Hosseini

Khaled Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed* begins simply enough, with a father recounting a folktale to his two young children. The tale is about a young boy who is taken by a *div* (a sort of ogre), and how that fate might not be as terrible as it first seems—a brilliant device that firmly sets the tone for the rest of this sweeping, heartbreaking, and ultimately uplifting novel. A day after he tells the tale of the *div*, the father gives away his own daughter to a wealthy man in Kabul. What follows is a series of stories within the story, told through multiple viewpoints, spanning more than half a century, and shifting across continents. The novel moves through war, separation, birth, death, deceit, and love, illustrating again and again how people's actions, even the seemingly selfless ones, are shrouded in ambiguity. This is a masterwork by a master storyteller.

Angle of Repose by Wallace Stegner

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize when it was first published in 1971, *Angle of Repose* has also been selected by the editorial board of the Modern Library as one of the hundred best novels of the twentieth century. Wallace Stegner's uniquely American classic centers on Lyman Ward, a noted historian who relates a fictionalized biography of his pioneer grandparents at a time when he has become estranged from his own family. Through a combination of research, memory, and exaggeration, Ward voices ideas concerning the relationship between history and the present, art and life, parents and children, husbands and wives. Set in many parts of the West, *Angle of Repose* is a story of discovery—personal, historical, and geographical—that endures as Wallace Stegner's masterwork: an illumination of yesterday's reality that speaks to today's. "Angle of Repose is a long, intricate, deeply rewarding novel," wrote William Abrahams in the *Atlantic Monthly*. "[It] is neither the predictable historical-regional Western epic, nor the equally predictable four-decker family saga, the Forsytes in California, so

to speak. . . . For all [its] breadth and sweep, *Angle of Repose* achieves an effect of intimacy, hence of immediacy, and, though much of the material is 'historical,' an effect of discovery also, of experience newly minted rather than a pageantlike re-creation.... Wallace Stegner has written a superb novel, with an amplitude of scale and richness of detail altogether uncommon in contemporary fiction."

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life by Barbara Kingsolver

Pollan is the crack investigator and graceful narrator of the ecology of local food and the toxic logic of industrial agriculture. Now he has a peer. Novelist Kingsolver recounts a year spent eating home-grown food and, if not that, local. Accomplished gardeners, the Kingsolver clan grow a large garden in southern Appalachia and spend summers "putting food by," as the classic kitchen title goes. They make pickles, chutney and mozzarella; they jar tomatoes, braid garlic and stuff turkey sausage. Nine-year-old Lily runs a heritage poultry business, selling eggs and meat. What they don't raise (lamb, beef, apples) comes from local farms. Come winter, they feast on root crops and canned goods, menus slouching toward asparagus. Along the way, the Kingsolver family, having given up industrial meat years before, abandons its vegetarian ways and discovers the pleasures of conscientious carnivory. This field—local food and sustainable agriculture—is crowded with books in increasingly predictable flavors: the earnest manual, diary of an epicure, the environmental battle cry, the accidental gardener. *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* is all of these, and much smarter. Kingsolver takes the genre to a new literary level; a well-paced narrative and the apparent ease of the beautiful prose makes the pages fly. Her tale is both classy and disarming, substantive and entertaining, earnest and funny. Kingsolver is a moralist ("the conspicuous consumption of limited resources has yet to be accepted widely as a spiritual error, or even bad manners"), but more often wry than pious. Another hazard of the genre is snobbery. You won't find it here. Seldom do paeans to heirloom tomatoes (which I grew up selling at farmers' markets) include equal respect for outstanding modern hybrids like Early Girl. Kingsolver has the ear of a journalist and the accuracy of a naturalist. She makes short, neat work of complex topics: what's risky about the vegan diet, why animals belong on ecologically sound farms, why bitterness in lettuce is good. Kingsolver's clue to help greenhorns remember what's in season is the best I've seen. You trace the harvest by botanical development, from buds to fruits to roots. Kingsolver is not the first to note our national "eating disorder" and the injuries industrial agriculture wreaks, yet this practical vision of how we might eat instead is as fresh as just-picked sweet corn. The narrative is peppered with useful sidebars on industrial agriculture and ecology (by husband Steven Hopp) and recipes (by daughter Camille), as if to show that local food—in the growing, buying, cooking, eating and the telling—demands teamwork.

Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy

Vladimir Nabokov called Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* "one of the greatest love stories in world literature." Matthew Arnold claimed it was not so much a work of art as "a piece of life." Set in imperial Russia, *Anna Karenina* is a rich and complex meditation on passionate love and disastrous infidelity. Married to a powerful government minister, Anna Karenina is a beautiful woman who falls deeply in love with a wealthy army officer, the elegant Count Vronsky. Desperate to find truth and meaning in her life, she rashly defies the conventions of Russian society and leaves her husband and son to live with her lover. Condemned and ostracized by her peers and prone to fits of jealousy that alienate Vronsky, Anna finds herself unable to escape an increasingly hopeless situation. Set against this tragic affair is the story of Konstantin Levin, a melancholy landowner whom Tolstoy based largely on himself. While Anna looks for happiness through love, Levin embarks on his own search for spiritual fulfillment through marriage, family, and hard work. Surrounding these two central plot threads are dozens of characters whom Tolstoy seamlessly weaves together, creating a breathtaking tapestry of nineteenth-century Russian society. From its famous opening sentence—"Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way"—to its stunningly tragic conclusion, this enduring tale of marriage and adultery plumbs the very depths of the human soul.

Anya: A Novel by Susan Fromberg Schaeffer

Anya Savikin lived among well-to-do Russian Jews in Poland, in a world more like Tolstoy's than our own, until the first bombing of Warsaw and the chaos that ensued. Her story incarnates the strength and love of eastern European Jewry, before and after their decimation.

Apeirogon by Colum McCann

Bassam Aramin is Palestinian. Rami Elhanan is Israeli. They inhabit a world of conflict that colors every aspect of their lives, from the roads they are allowed to drive on to the schools their children attend to the checkpoints, both physical and emotional, they must negotiate. But their lives, however circumscribed, are upended one after the other: first, Rami's thirteen-year-old daughter, Smadar, becomes the victim of suicide bombers; a decade later, Bassam's ten-year-old daughter, Abir, is killed by a rubber bullet. Rami and Bassam had been raised to hate one another. And yet, when they learn of each other's stories, they recognize the loss that connects them. Together they attempt to use their grief as a weapon for peace—and with their one small act, start to permeate what has for generations seemed an impermeable conflict. This extraordinary novel is the fruit of a seed planted when the novelist Colum McCann met the real Bassam and Rami on a trip with the non-profit organization Narrative 4. McCann was moved by their willingness to share their stories with the world, by their hope that if they could see themselves in one another, perhaps others could too. With their blessing, and unprecedented access to their families, lives, and personal recollections, McCann began to craft *Apeirogon*, which uses their real-life stories to begin another—one that crosses centuries and continents, stitching together time, art, history, nature, and politics in a tale both heartbreaking and hopeful. The result is an ambitious novel, crafted out of a universe of fictional and nonfictional material, with these fathers' moving story at its heart.

Arctic Dreams by Barry Lopez

This is one of the finest books ever written about the Far North, warmly appreciative and understanding of the natural forces that shape life in an austere landscape. The prize-winning author (*Of Wolves and Men*) spent four years in Arctic regions: traveling between Davis Strait in the east and Bering Strait in the west, hunting with Eskimos and accompanying archeologists, biologists and geologists in the field. Lopez became enthralled by the power of the Arctic, a power he observes derives from "the tension between its beauty and its capacity to take life." This is a story of light, darkness and ice; of animal migrations and Eskimos; of the specter of development and the cultural perception of a region. Examining the literature of 19th century exploration, Lopez finds a disassociation from the actual landscape; explorers have tended to see the Arctic as an adversary. Peary and Stefansson left as a troubling legacy the attitude that the landscape could be labeled, then manipulated. Today, he contends, an imaginative, emotional approach to the Arctic is as important as a rational, scientific one. Lopez has written a wonderful, compelling defense of the Arctic wilderness.

The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream by Barack Obama

Senator Barack Obama reflects on the American ideals that led him into politics. Barack Obama has been hailed by voters of all stripes as a man of uncommon gifts and far-reaching vision. In *The Audacity of Hope*, he draws on his personal experience as a senator and lawyer, professor and father, Christian and skeptic, and finds a shared language about our nation's values. At the same time, he explores the gap between our American ideals and the ruthless imperatives of today's politics.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley by Malcolm X

Malcolm X's searing memoir belongs on the small shelf of great autobiographies. The reasons are many: the blistering honesty with which he recounts his transformation from a bitter, self-destructive petty criminal into an articulate political activist, the continued relevance of his militant analysis of white racism, and his emphasis on self-respect and self-help for African Americans. And there's the vividness with which he depicts black popular culture--try as he might to criticize those lindy hops at Boston's Roseland dance hall from the perspective of his Muslim faith, he can't help but make them sound pretty wonderful. These are but a few examples. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* limns an archetypal journey from ignorance and despair to knowledge and spiritual awakening. When Malcolm tells coauthor Alex Haley, "People don't realize how a man's whole life can be changed by one book," he voices the central belief underpinning every attempt to set down a personal story as an example for others. Although many believe his ethic was directly opposed to Martin Luther King Jr.'s during the civil rights struggle of the '60s, the two were not so different. Malcolm may have displayed a most un-Christian distaste for loving his enemies, but he understood with King that love of God and love of self are the necessary first steps on the road to freedom.

Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman by Ernest Gaines

Miss Jane Pittman. She is one of the most unforgettable heroines in American fiction, a woman whose life has come to symbolize the struggle for freedom, dignity, and justice. Ernest J. Gaines's now-classic novel—written as an autobiography—spans one hundred years of Miss Jane's remarkable life, from her childhood as a slave on a Louisiana plantation to the Civil Rights era of the 1960s. It is a story of courage and survival, history, bigotry, and hope—as seen through the eyes of a woman who lived through it all. A historical tour de force, a triumph of fiction, Miss Jane's eloquent narrative brings to life an important story of race in America—and stands as a landmark work for our time.

Banker To the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty by Muhammad Yunus

It began with a simple \$27 loan. After witnessing the cycle of poverty that kept many poor women enslaved to high-interest loan sharks in Bangladesh, Dr. Muhammad Yunus lent money to 42 women so they could purchase bamboo to make and sell stools. In a short time, the women were able to repay the loans while continuing to support themselves and their families. With that initial eye-opening success, the seeds of the Grameen Bank, and the concept of microcredit, were planted. After earning a Ph.D. in economics at Vanderbilt University, Dr. Yunus returned to Bangladesh to settle into a life as a professor. But a famine in 1974 ravaged the country, leading Dr. Yunus to alter his thinking and his life profoundly: "What good were all my complex theories when people were dying of starvation on the sidewalks and porches across from my lecture hall?.... Nothing in the economic theories I taught reflected the life around me." Armed with little more than a lofty dream to end the suffering around him, he started an experimental microcredit enterprise in 1977; by 1983 the Grameen Bank was officially formed. The idea behind the Grameen Bank is ingeniously simple: extend credit to poor people and they will help themselves. This concept strikes at the root of poverty by specifically targeting the poorest of the poor, providing small loans (usually less than \$300) to those unable to obtain credit from traditional banks. At Grameen, loans are administered to groups of five people, with only two receiving their money up front. As soon as these two make a few regular payments, loans are gradually extended to the rest of the group. In this way, the program builds a sense of community as well as individual self-reliance. Most of the Grameen Bank's loans are to women, and since its inception, there has been an astonishing loan repayment rate of over 98 percent. *Banker to the Poor* is an inspiring memoir of the birth of microcredit, written in a conversational tone that makes it both moving and enjoyable to read. The Grameen Bank is now a \$2.5 billion banking enterprise in Bangladesh, while the microcredit model has spread to over 50 countries worldwide, from the U.S. to Papua New Guinea, Norway to Nepal. Ever optimistic, Yunus travels the globe spreading the belief that poverty can be eliminated: "...the poor, once economically empowered, are the most determined fighters in the battle to solve the population problem; end illiteracy; and live healthier, better lives. When policy makers finally realize that the poor are their partners, rather than bystanders or enemies, we will progress much faster than we do today." Dr. Yunus's efforts prove that hope is a global currency.

The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears by Dinaw Mengestu

Seventeen years ago, Sepha Stephanos fled the Ethiopian Revolution for a new start in the United States. Now he finds himself running a failing grocery store in a poor African-American section of Washington, D.C., his only companions two fellow African immigrants who share his bitter nostalgia and longing for his home continent. Years ago and worlds away Sepha could never have imagined a life of such isolation. As his environment begins to change, hope comes in the form of a friendship with new neighbors Judith and Naomi, a white woman and her biracial daughter. But when a series of racial incidents disturbs the community, Sepha may lose everything all over again.

Becoming by Michelle Obama

In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle Obama has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America—the first African American to serve in that role—she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world, dramatically changing the ways that families pursue healthier and more active lives, and standing with her husband as he led America through some of its most harrowing moments. Along the way, she showed us a few dance moves, crushed Carpool Karaoke, and raised two down-to-earth daughters under an unforgiving media glare. In her memoir, a

work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it—in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same.

Behold the Dreamers by Imbolo Mbue

Jende Jonga, a Cameroonian immigrant living in Harlem, has come to the United States to provide a better life for himself, his wife, Neni, and their six-year-old son. In the fall of 2007, Jende can hardly believe his luck when he lands a job as a chauffeur for Clark Edwards, a senior executive at Lehman Brothers. Clark demands punctuality, discretion, and loyalty—and Jende is eager to please. Clark's wife, Cindy, even offers Neni temporary work at the Edwardses' summer home in the Hamptons. With these opportunities, Jende and Neni can at last gain a foothold in America and imagine a brighter future. However, the world of great power and privilege conceals troubling secrets, and soon Jende and Neni notice cracks in their employers' façades. When the financial world is rocked by the collapse of Lehman Brothers, the Jongas are desperate to keep Jende's job—even as their marriage threatens to fall apart. As all four lives are dramatically upended, Jende and Neni are forced to make an impossible choice.

Beloved by Toni Morrison

Mixed with the lyric beauty of the writing, the fury in Morrison's (Song of Solomon) latest book is almost palpable. Set in rural Ohio several years after the Civil War, this haunting chronicle of slavery and its aftermath traces the life of a young woman, Sethe, who has kept a terrible memory at bay only by shutting down part of her mind. Juxtaposed with searing descriptions of brutality, gradually revealed in flashbacks, are equally harrowing scenes in which fantasy takes flesh, a device Morrison handles with consummate skill. The narrative concerns Sethe's former life as a slave on Sweet Home Farm, her escape with her children to what seems a safe haven and the tragic events that ensue. The death of Sethe's infant daughter Beloved is the incident on which the plot hinges, and it is obvious to the reader that the sensuous young woman who mysteriously appears one day is Beloved's spirit, come back to claim Sethe's love. Sethe's surviving daughter, Denver, immediately grasps the significance of Beloved's return and so does Paul D, another escapee from Sweet Home; but Sethe herself resists comprehension, and, as a result, a certain loss of tension affects the latter part of the narrative. But this is a small flaw in a novel full of insights, both piercing and tender, with distinctive, memorable characters, flowing prose that conveys speech patterns with musical intensity and a brilliantly conceived story. As a record of white brutality mitigated by rare acts of decency and compassion, and as a testament to the courageous lives of a tormented people, this novel is a milestone in the chronicling of the black experience in America. It is Morrison writing at the height of her considerable powers, and it should not be missed.

Big Citizenship: How Pragmatic Idealism Can Bring Out the Best in America by Alan Khazei

As a young Harvard law graduate, Khazei resolved to serve his country by creating an urban organization in the style of the Peace Corps called City Year. Based in Boston, City Year has grown from a few volunteers into a massive operation with branches in 20 cities filled with young people eager to serve where they live. Khazei offers a touching memoir of what young entrepreneurs with vision can do to change not just communities but the world. Much of the book is dedicated to the pursuit of this ideal, with reference to Khazei's past efforts, Save AmeriCorps and Be the Change, allowing him to offer words of wisdom to other civically-minded would-be entrepreneurs.

Biting At the Grave: The Irish Hunger Strikes and the Politics of Despair by Pádraig Ó'Malley

It would seem impossible for O'Malley to match the depth and insight of his first book on Northern Ireland, *Uncivil Wars*, but he's done it in this book on the 1981 hunger strike in the Maze prison. He balances the stories of the hunger strike, the strikers, their families, leaders, goals, and strategies against the larger picture of the bitter politics of Northern Ireland. It is this context that is the strength of this work, and the book complements the more detailed study of the strikers' positions outlined in David Beresford's *Ten Men Dead*. O'Malley's analysis of the

power of myth and tradition enslaving the politics of the whole island, dooming it to tragic repetitions of violence, exposes the very core of the conflict.

Black Ice by Lorene Cary

A streetwise kid from West Philly, Cary was the first African-American female to attend St. Paul's, a prestigious New England prep school. With tremendous drive, she set out to achieve self-imposed academic, athletic, and social goals. Although she believed she owed it to the school that accepted her on scholarship, to her family who encouraged and sacrificed, and to those who will come after, she found that the price was great. The emotional distance from her family widened with the geographic separation, and their deep love and pride could not make up for their blindness to her discomfort. While Cary achieved most of her aims, thus justifying the experience to herself, perceptive readers will be pained at her need to do so. Broader in scope than most coming-of-age memoirs, this candid account is sure to strike a sympathetic chord.

Bless Me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya

Stories filled with wonder and the haunting beauty of his culture have helped make Rudolfo Anaya the father of Chicano literature in English, and his tales fairly shimmer with the lyric richness of his prose. Acclaimed in both Spanish and English, Anaya is perhaps best loved for his classic bestseller ... Antonio Marez is six years old when Ultima comes to stay with his family in New Mexico. She is a curandera, one who cures with herbs and magic. Under her wise wing, Tony will test the bonds that tie him to his people, and discover himself in the pagan past, in his father's wisdom, and in his mother's Catholicism. And at each life turn there is Ultima, who delivered Tony into the world-and will nurture the birth of his soul.

Blood and Thunder: The Epic Story of Kit Carson and the Conquest of the American West by Hampton Sides
Although delivering little in the way of new information, Sides, an *Outside* magazine editor-at-large and bestselling author (*Ghost Soldiers*), eloquently paints the landscape and history of the 19th-century Southwest, combining Larry McMurtry's lyricism with the historian's attachment to facts. Inevitably, Sides's main focus is the virtual decimation of the Navajo nation from the 1820s to the late 1860s. Sides depicts the complex role of whites in the subjugation of the Navajos through his portrait of Kit Carson—an illiterate trapper, soldier and scout who knew the Native Americans intimately, married two of them and, without blinking, participated in the Indians' slaughter. Books about Carson have been numerous, but Sides is better than most Carson biographers in setting his exploits against a larger backdrop: the unstoppable idea of manifest destiny. Of course, as counterpoint to the progress of Carson and other whites, Sides details the fierce but doomed defense mounted by the Navajos over long decades. This culminated in their final, desperate "stand" during 1863 at Canyon de Chelly, more than a decade after a contingent of federal troops—operating under a commander whose last name of "Washington" seems ironic in this context—killed their great leader, Narbona.

The Book of My Lives by Aleksandar Hemon

Aleksandar Hemon's lives begin in Sarajevo, where boyhood is consumed by street soccer and sibling rivalry, and a young man's life is about American music, bad poetry, and slightly better journalism. At the age of twenty-seven, Hemon journeyed to Chicago—a trip that would mark the beginning of another life, this time in the United States. There, he watched from afar as war broke out in Bosnia, his parents and sister fleeing, and Hemon himself unable to return. Yet this, his first book of nonfiction, is much more than a memoir of these experiences. At once a love song to two cities and a paean to the bonds of family, *The Book of My Lives* is a singular work of passion, built on fierce intelligence, unspeakable tragedies, and sharp insight. Like the best narratives, it is a book that will leave you a different reader when you finish—and a different person, with a new way of looking at the world.

A Border Passage: From Cairo to America--A Woman's Journey by Leila Ahmed

Ahmed, a professor of women's studies at Amherst and the author of such scholarly works as *Women and Gender in Islam* (Yale Univ., 1993), writes a personal memoir of her childhood in 1940s and 1950s Cairo, education in England, and teaching work in America. Like the most skillful and subtle of teachers, she entices you with what seems like an afternoon chat over tea; only when it is over do you realize how much you have learned and how fascinating the journey has been. She imparts a great deal of Egyptian history, culture, and sociology, including some background on the concept of "Arabness," as well as a brilliant introduction to the difference between the Islam of men and the Islam of women. The descriptions of her grandmother's salon will no doubt

strike a chord of memory with any Western female who spent time listening to mothers, aunts, and grandmothers in the kitchen at family gatherings.

Border Wars: Inside Trump's Assault on Immigration by Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Michael D. Shear

Two *New York Times* Washington correspondents provide an inside account with never-before-told stories of the defining issue of Donald Trump's presidency: his steadfast opposition to immigration to the US. As his campaign rhetoric in the 2018 midterms demonstrated, no issue matters more to Donald Trump than immigration. And no issue—with the possible exception of his opposition to Robert Mueller's investigation of his 2016 campaign—better defines his administration. Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Michael D. Shear have covered the Trump administration from its earliest days. In *Border Wars*, they take readers inside the White House to document how Trump and his allies blocked asylum-seekers and refugees, separated families, threatened deportation and sought to erode the longstanding bipartisan consensus that immigration and immigrants make positive contributions to America. As the authors reveal, Trump has used immigration to stoke fears ("the caravan"), attack Democrats and the courts, and distract from negative news and political difficulties. Even as illegal immigration has fallen in recent years, Trump has elevated it in the imaginations of many Americans into a national crisis. Moreover, his comments about legal immigrants—Nigerians in their "huts," Haitians infected with AIDS, and people from "@#\$%hole countries"—have been incendiary. *Border Wars* identifies the players behind Trump's anti-immigration policies, showing how they planned, stumbled, and fought their way toward major immigration changes that have further polarized the nation.

Breach of Faith: Hurricane Katrina and the Near Death of a Great American City by Jed Horne

Horne, metro editor of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, writes with the clipped, raw urgency of a thriller writer in this humanist account of what happened after the levees broke. As already widely reported, residents who ignored the mandatory evacuation order (thinking "Katrina... had all the makings of a flop") quickly found themselves surrounded by bloated corpses floating in toxic floodwaters and without a consolidated rescue effort. Horne quickly moves past the melodrama of a striking disaster to recount the stories of individuals caught in the storm's hellish aftermath or mired in the government's hamstrung response: a Louisiana State University climatologist goes head-to-head with the Army Corps of Engineers over inadequate flood protection and faulty levees; a former Black Panther provides emergency health care at a local mosque. Horne saves his sharpest barbs for President Bush and the Department of Homeland Security ("if Homeland Security... was what stood between America and the next 9/11, then... America was in deep trouble") for failing to muster an appropriate response. Big disasters spawn big books, and though Horne's isn't the definitive account, it's an honest, angry and wrenching response to a massively bungled catastrophe.

Brooklyn by Colm Toibin

"One of the most unforgettable characters in contemporary literature" (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*), Eilis Lacey has come of age in small-town Ireland in the hard years following World War Two. When an Irish priest from Brooklyn offers to sponsor Eilis in America, she decides she must go, leaving her fragile mother and her charismatic sister behind. Eilis finds work in a department store on Fulton Street, and when she least expects it, finds love. Tony, who loves the Dodgers and his big Italian family, slowly wins her over with patient charm. But just as Eilis begins to fall in love, devastating news from Ireland threatens the promise of her future.

Brother, I'm Dying by Edwidge Danticat

Edwidge Danticat's father and uncle chose very different paths: the former struggled to make a new life for himself in America, while the latter remained in the homeland he paradoxically loved. In following their lives and their impact on future generations, Danticat's powerful family memoir explores how the private and the political, the past and the present, intersect. The most poignant section focuses on Joseph's tragic trip to the United States at age 81, but Danticat also tells a wider story about family and exile, the Haitian diaspora, the Duvalier regime, and post-9/11 immigration policy. Emotionally resonant and exceptionally clear-eyed, *Brother, I'm Dying* offers insight into a talented writer, her family history, and the injustices of the modern world.

Brothers and Keepers by John Edgar Wideman

Wideman, novelist and professor at the University of Wyoming, seeks to understand how he and his brother, who is serving a life sentence for murder, could have such disparate lives after a childhood together in a Pittsburgh ghetto. Ruthless about himself, particularly about his move into the upper middle-class as a "black intellectual," Wideman characterizes his brother as an intelligent, loving, proud dreamer. He raises "existential questions" about culture, racism and the "grief and guilt of a brother."

Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves by Adam Hochschild

"Men from England bought and sold me,/ Paid my price in paltry gold;/ But, though theirs they have enroll'd me,/ Minds are never to be sold." So went "The Negro's Complaint" by noted 18th-century poet William Cowper—written, says Hochschild, as an op-ed piece would be today, to spread the message of England's fledgling movement to abolish the slave trade. Hochschild, whose last book, *King Leopold's Ghost*, was a stunning account of the ravages perpetrated by Belgium on the Congo, turns to a more edifying but no less amazing tale: the rich, complex history of a movement that began with just 12 angry men meeting in a printer's shop in London in 1787 and, within a century, had led to the virtual disappearance of slavery. The men who met in James Phillips's print shop included Quakers, Evangelical Anglicans and a young Cambridge graduate who had had an epiphany about the evils of slavery while on the road to London. The last, Thomas Clarkson, became an indefatigable organizer, carrying out the first modern-style investigation into human rights abuses. Granville Sharp was an eccentric but socially respected man of progressive ideas who dreamed of founding a colony of free blacks in Africa. Within a short time these men and their colleagues had created a mass movement that included the first boycott, in which hundreds of thousands of Britons, chiefly women, refused to buy slave-made sugar from the Caribbean; petitions from all over the country flooded into Parliament; and a mass-produced drawing of a slaver's lower deck, showing where the slaves were densely crowded for the middle passage, became the first iconic image of human oppression. Hochschild tells of this campaign with verve, style and humor, but without preaching or moralizing, letting the horrific facts of slavery in the Caribbean (far more brutal than in the American South) speak for themselves. And he refuses to make saints out of the activists; while highlighting bravery in the face of death threats and physical violence by promoters of slavery, the author equally points out their foibles and failings, and the often ironic unintended consequences of their actions. Along the way, Hochschild illuminates how Britain's economy was dependent upon the slave trade, why England's civil society was particularly hospitable to a movement to abolish that trade, and the impact on the movement of the French Revolution and the particularly bloody slave uprising in French St. Domingue (today's Haiti). It's a brilliantly told tale, at once horrifying and pleasurable to read.

The Call of Service by Robert Coles

In a searching, inspirational probe, eminent Harvard psychiatrist Coles examines the idealistic motives of people who engage in volunteer work, community service or civil rights activism. Mixing autobiographical reminiscence, analysis and oral testimony, he interviews Peace Corps members as well as volunteers in hospitals, schools, prisons and nursing homes. Coles finds that volunteer work can have a transformative influence on those who heed the "call of service," even though they frequently experience doubts, misgivings, depression and even a sense of futility and despair. Rich in empathy and insight, his informed study interweaves his own experiences as a child psychiatrist helping Southern children caught up in the school desegregation struggle, an account of his current work as a volunteer inner-city elementary school teacher near Boston, recollections of his 1950s service in a Manhattan soup kitchen with Catholic Worker activist Dorothy Day and portraits of his mentors Anna Freud and poet/physician William Carlos Williams, who set him on his altruistic path.

Catch-22 by Joseph Heller

There was a time when reading Joseph Heller's classic satire on the murderous insanity of war was nothing less than a rite of passage. Echoes of Yossarian, the wise-ass bombardier who was too smart to die but not smart enough to find a way out of his predicament, could be heard throughout the counterculture. As a result, it's impossible not to consider *Catch-22* to be something of a period piece. But 40 years on, the novel's undiminished strength is its looking-glass logic. Again and again, Heller's characters demonstrate that what is commonly held to be good, is bad; what is sensible, is nonsense. Yossarian says, "You're talking about winning the war, and I am talking about winning the war and keeping alive." "Exactly," Cleveringer snapped smugly. "And which do you think

is more important?" "To whom?" Yossarian shot back. "It doesn't make a damn bit of difference who wins the war to someone who's dead." "The enemy," retorted Yossarian with weighted precision, "is anybody who's going to get you killed, no matter which side he's on." Mirabile dictu, the book holds up post-Reagan, post-Gulf War. It's a good thing, too. As long as there's a military, that engine of lethal authority, *Catch-22* will shine as a handbook for smart-alecky pacifists. It's an utterly serious and sad, but damn funny book.

Cat's Eye by Atwood

Herself the daughter of a Canadian forest entomologist, Atwood writes in an autobiographical vein about Elaine Risley, a middle-aged Canadian painter (and daughter of a forest entomologist) who is thrust into an extended reconsideration of her past while attending a retrospective show of her work in Toronto, a city she had fled years earlier in order to leave behind painful memories. Most pointedly, Risley reflects on the strangeness of her long relations with Cordelia, a childhood friend whose cruelties, dealt lavishly to Risley, helped hone her awareness of our inveterate appetite for destruction even while we love, and are understood as characteristically feminine betrayal of other women that masks a ferocious betrayal of oneself. Atwood's portrayal of the friendship gives the novel its fraught and mysterious center, but her critical assessment of Cordelia and the "whole world of girls and their doings" also takes the measure of a coercive, conformist society (not quite as extreme as in the futuristic *The Handmaid's Tale*).

The Cellist of Sarajevo by Steven Galloway

Canadian Galloway delivers a tense and haunting novel following four people trying to survive war-torn Sarajevo. After a mortar attack kills 22 people waiting in line to buy bread, an unnamed cellist vows to play at the point of impact for 22 days. Meanwhile, Arrow, a young woman sniper, picks off soldiers; Kenan makes a dangerous trek to get water for his family; and Dragan, who sent his wife and son out of the city at the start of the war, works at a bakery and trades bread in exchange for shelter. Arrow's assigned to protect the cellist, but when she's eventually ordered to commit a different kind of killing, she must decide who she is and why she kills. Dragan believes he can protect himself through isolation, but that changes when he runs into a friend of his wife's attempting to cross a street targeted by snipers. Kenan is repeatedly challenged by his fear and a cantankerous neighbor. All the while, the cellist continues to play. With wonderfully drawn characters and a stripped-down narrative, Galloway brings to life a distant conflict.

China in Ten Words by Yu Hua

From one of China's most acclaimed writers, his first work of nonfiction to appear in English: a unique, intimate look at the Chinese experience over the last several decades, told through personal stories and astute analysis that sharply illuminate the country's meteoric economic and social transformation. Framed by ten phrases common in the Chinese vernacular—"people," "leader," "reading," "writing," "Lu Xun" (one of the most influential Chinese writers of the twentieth century), "disparity," "revolution," "grassroots," "copycat," and "bamboozle"—*China in Ten Words* reveals as never before the world's most populous yet oft-misunderstood nation. In "Disparity," for example, Yu Hua illustrates the mind-boggling economic gaps that separate citizens of the country. In "Copycat," he depicts the escalating trend of piracy and imitation as a creative new form of revolutionary action. And in "Bamboozle," he describes the increasingly brazen practices of trickery, fraud, and chicanery that are, he suggests, becoming a way of life at every level of society. Characterized by Yu Hua's trademark wit, insight, and courage, *China in Ten Words* is a refreshingly candid vision of the "Chinese miracle" and all its consequences, from the singularly invaluable perspective of a writer living in China today.

China Road: A Journey into the Future of a Rising Power by Rob Gifford

National Public Radio China correspondent Gifford journeyed for six weeks on China's Mother Road, Route 312, from its beginning in Shanghai for nearly 3,000 miles to a tiny town in what used to be known as Turkestan. The route picks up the old Silk Road, which runs through the Gobi Desert to Central Asia to Persia and on to Europe. Along the way, Gifford meets entrepreneurs hoping to cash in on China's growing economy, citizens angry and frustrated with government corruption, older people alarmed at changes in Chinese culture and morality, and young people uncertain and excited about the future. Gifford profiles ordinary Chinese people coping with tumultuous change as development and commerce shrink a vast geography, bringing teeming cities and tiny towns into closer commercial and cultural proximity; the lure of wealth is changing the Chinese character and sense of shared experience, even if it was common poverty.

The Chosen by Chaim Potok

Few stories offer more warmth, wisdom, or generosity than this tale of two boys, their fathers, their friendship, and the chaotic times in which they live. Though on the surface it explores religious faith--the intellectually committed as well as the passionately observant--the struggles addressed in *The Chosen* are familiar to families of all faiths and in all nations. In 1940s Brooklyn, New York, an accident throws Reuven Malter and Danny Saunders together. Despite their differences (Reuven is a Modern Orthodox Jew with an intellectual, Zionist father; Danny is the brilliant son and rightful heir to a Hasidic rebbe), the young men form a deep, if unlikely, friendship. Together they negotiate adolescence, family conflicts, the crisis of faith engendered when Holocaust stories begin to emerge in the U.S., loss, love, and the journey to adulthood. The intellectual and spiritual clashes between fathers, between each son and his own father, and between the two young men, provide a unique backdrop for this exploration of fathers, sons, faith, loyalty, and, ultimately, the power of love.

Churchill and Orwell: The Fight for Freedom by Thomas Ricks

Both George Orwell and Winston Churchill came close to death in the mid-1930's—Orwell shot in the neck in a trench line in the Spanish Civil War, and Churchill struck by a car in New York City. If they'd died then, history would scarcely remember them. At the time, Churchill was a politician on the outs, his loyalty to his class and party suspect. Orwell was a mildly successful novelist, to put it generously. No one would have predicted that by the end of the 20th century they would be considered two of the most important people in British history for having the vision and courage to campaign tirelessly, in words and in deeds, against the totalitarian threat from both the left and the right. In a crucial moment, they responded first by seeking the facts of the matter, seeing through the lies and obfuscations, and then they acted on their beliefs. Together, to an extent not sufficiently appreciated, they kept the West's compass set toward freedom as its due north. It's not easy to recall now how lonely a position both men once occupied. By the late 1930's, democracy was discredited in many circles, and authoritarian rulers were everywhere in the ascent. There were some who decried the scourge of communism, but saw in Hitler and Mussolini "men we could do business with," if not in fact saviors. And there were others who saw the Nazi and fascist threat as malign, but tended to view communism as the path to salvation. Churchill and Orwell, on the other hand, had the foresight to see clearly that the issue was human freedom—that whatever its coloration, a government that denied its people basic freedoms was a totalitarian menace and had to be resisted. In the end, Churchill and Orwell proved their age's necessary men. The glorious climax of *Churchill and Orwell* is the work they both did in the decade of the 1940's to triumph over freedom's enemies. And though Churchill played the larger role in the defeat of Hitler and the Axis, Orwell's reckoning with the menace of authoritarian rule in *Animal Farm* and *1984* would define the stakes of the Cold War for its 50-year course, and continues to give inspiration to fighters for freedom to this day. Taken together, in Thomas E. Ricks's masterful hands, their lives are a beautiful testament to the power of moral conviction, and to the courage it can take to stay true to it, through thick and thin.

A Civil Action by Jonathan Harr

In America, when somebody does you wrong, you take 'em to court. W. R. Grace and Beatrice Foods had been dumping a cancer-causing industrial solvent into the water table of Woburn, Massachusetts, for years; in 1981, the families of eight leukemia victims sued. However, *A Civil Action* demonstrates powerfully that--even with the families' hotshot lawyers and the evidence on their side--justice is elusive, particularly when it involves malfeasance by megacorporations. Much of the legal infighting can cause the eyes to glaze. But the story is saved by great characters: the flawed, flamboyant Jan Schlichtmann and his group of bulldogs for the prosecution; Jerome Facher, the enigmatic lawyer for Beatrice, who proves to be more than a match; John J. Riley, the duplicitous, porcine tannery owner; and a host of others.

Clear Light of Day by Anita Desai

Set in India's Old Delhi, *Clear Light of Day* is Anita Desai's tender, warm, and compassionate novel about family scars, the ability to forgive and forget, and the trials and tribulations of familial love. At the novel's heart are the moving relationships between the members of the Das family, who have grown apart from each other. Bimla is a dissatisfied but ambitious teacher at a women's college who lives in her childhood home, where she cares for her mentally challenged brother, Baba. Tara is her younger, unambitious, estranged sister, married and with children of

her own. Raja is their popular, brilliant, and successful brother. When Tara returns for a visit with Bimla and Baba, old memories and tensions resurface and blend into a domestic drama that is intensely beautiful and leads to profound self-understanding.

Cleopatra: A Life by Stacy Schiff

Her palace shimmered with onyx and gold but was richer still in political and sexual intrigue. Above all else, Cleopatra was a shrewd strategist and an ingenious negotiator. She was married twice, each time to a brother. She waged a brutal civil war against the first and poisoned the second; incest and assassination were family specialties. She had children by Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, two of the most prominent Romans of the day. With Antony she would attempt to forge a new empire, in an alliance that spelled both their ends. Famous long before she was notorious, Cleopatra has gone down in history for all the wrong reasons. Her supple personality and the drama of her circumstances have been lost. In a masterly return to the classical sources, Stacy Schiff boldly separates fact from fiction to rescue the magnetic queen whose death ushered in a new world order.

The Cold Millions by Jess Walter

An intimate story of brotherhood, love, sacrifice, and betrayal set against the panoramic backdrop of an early twentieth-century America that eerily echoes our own time, *The Cold Millions* offers a kaleidoscopic portrait of a nation grappling with the chasm between rich and poor, between harsh realities and simple dreams. The Dolans live by their wits, jumping freight trains and lining up for day work at crooked job agencies. While sixteen-year-old Rye yearns for a steady job and a home, his older brother, Gig, dreams of a better world, fighting alongside other union men for fair pay and decent treatment. Enter Ursula the Great, a vaudeville singer who performs with a live cougar and introduces the brothers to a far more dangerous creature: a mining magnate determined to keep his wealth and his hold on Ursula. Dubious of Gig's idealism, Rye finds himself drawn to a fearless nineteen-year-old activist and feminist named Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. But a storm is coming, threatening to overwhelm them all, and Rye will be forced to decide where he stands. Is it enough to win the occasional battle, even if you cannot win the war? Featuring an unforgettable cast of cops and tramps, suffragists and socialists, madams and murderers, *The Cold Millions* is a tour de force from a "writer who has planted himself firmly in the first rank of American authors" (*Boston Globe*).

Cold Mountain by Charles Frazier

Sorely wounded and fatally disillusioned in the fighting at Petersburg, a Confederate soldier named Inman decides to walk back to his home in the Blue Ridge mountains to Ada, the woman he loves. His trek across the disintegrating South brings him into intimate and sometimes lethal converse with slaves and marauders, bounty hunters and witches, both helpful and malign. At the same time, the intrepid Ada is trying to revive her father's derelict farm and learning to survive in a world where the old certainties have been swept away. As it interweaves their stories, *Cold Mountain* asserts itself as an authentic odyssey, hugely powerful, majestically lovely, and keenly moving.

The Color of Law: The Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America by Richard Rothstein
Widely heralded as a "masterful" (*Washington Post*) and "essential" (*Slate*) history of the modern American metropolis, Richard Rothstein's *The Color of Law* offers "the most forceful argument ever published on how federal, state, and local governments gave rise to and reinforced neighborhood segregation" (William Julius Wilson). Exploding the myth of de facto segregation arising from private prejudice or the unintended consequences of economic forces, Rothstein describes how the American government systematically imposed residential segregation: with undisguised racial zoning; public housing that purposefully segregated previously mixed communities; subsidies for builders to create whites-only suburbs; tax exemptions for institutions that enforced segregation; and support for violent resistance to African Americans in white neighborhoods. A groundbreaking, "virtually indispensable" study that has already transformed our understanding of twentieth-century urban history (*Chicago Daily Observer*), *The Color of Law* forces us to face the obligation to remedy our unconstitutional past.

The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride

Like Gregory Williams's *Life on the Color Line*, these two memoirs describe growing up interracial from the perspective of the sons of African American fathers and white mothers. McBride, an accomplished journalist and musician, has viewed the yawning chasm of racial division from both sides and, despite carving out a successful life, has been scarred. Unlike Williams and Minerbrook, though, he focuses on a single, singular parent, a rabbi's daughter who later helped her husband establish an all-black Baptist church in her home and saw 12 children through college. His mother's own story, juxtaposed with McBride's, helps make this book a standout. Recommended for all collections. Minerbrook's father came from Chicago's African American high society, his mother from rural Missouri. He paints a detailed portrait of their family life, of relationships complicated by the fact that "human emotions, when mixed with racial issues, are prone to shatter like glass." Nearing middle age, he seeks out the white side of his family, who have rejected his mother and her offspring, and achieves a well-deserved catharsis. Still, his accounts of the almost unrelenting prejudice of white against black, black against white, light-skinned black against dark-skinned black, and so on are deeply disturbing. One is left to borrow the words of another recent commentator and say that this cancer does indeed make me want to holler.

Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families by J. Anthony Lukas

The climax of this humane account of 10 years in Boston that began with news of Martin Luther King's assassination is a watershed moment in the city's modern history--the 1974 racist riots that followed the court-ordered busing of kids to integrate the schools. To bring understanding to that moment, Lukas, a former *New York Times* journalist, focuses on two working-class families, headed by an Irish-American widow and an African-American mother, and on the middle-class family of a white liberal couple. Lukas goes beyond stereotypes, carefully grounding each perspective in its historical roots, whether in the antebellum South, or famine-era Ireland. In the background is the cast of public figures--including Judge Garrity, Mayor White, and Cardinal Cushing--with cameo roles in this disturbing history that won the 1986 Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction.

Composing a Life by Mary Catherine Bateson

Bateson, an anthropologist who is the daughter of Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, attempts to examine women's lives from a new perspective. Using her own life and those of several friends, all of whom have interesting, multifaceted careers, she looks at life as a work of improvisational art. Rather than a series of interruptions, she sees child rearing, career changes, divorce, etc., as creative opportunities and seeks a unifying thread in varied life experiences.

A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Marra

In a small rural village in Chechnya, eight-year-old Havaa watches from the woods as Russian soldiers abduct her father in the middle of the night and then set fire to her home. When their lifelong neighbor Akhmed finds Havaa hiding in the forest with a strange blue suitcase, he makes a decision that will forever change their lives. He will seek refuge at the abandoned hospital where the sole remaining doctor, Sonja Rabina, treats the wounded. For Sonja, the arrival of Akhmed and Havaa is an unwelcome surprise. Weary and overburdened, she has no desire to take on additional risk and responsibility. But over the course of five extraordinary days, Sonja's world will shift on its axis and reveal the intricate pattern of connections that weaves together the pasts of these three unlikely companions and unexpectedly decides their fate. A story of the transcendent power of love in wartime, *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* is a work of sweeping breadth, profound compassion, and lasting significance.

Country Driving by Peter Hessler

There is, as everyone knows, no place in the world changing as fast, and at such scale, as China. Accounts of the upheaval can be breathless and even alarming, but Peter Hessler is the calmest and most companionable of correspondents. In his reporting for the *New Yorker* and in his books *River Town*, *Oracle Bones*, and now the superb *Country Driving*, he's observed the past 15 years of change with the patience and perspective--and necessary good humor--of an outsider who expects to be there for a while. In *Country Driving*, Hessler takes to the roads, as so many Chinese are doing now for the first time, driving on dirt tracks to the desert edges of the ancient empire and on brand-new highways to the mushrooming factory towns of the globalized boom. He's modest but intrepid--having taken to heart the national philosophy that it's better to ask for forgiveness than

permission--and an utterly enjoyable guide, with a humane and empathetic eye for the ambitions, the failures, and the comedy of a country in which everybody, it seems, is on the move, and no one is quite sure of the rules.

Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa by Antjie Krog

In the year following South Africa's first democratic elections, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to investigate human rights abuses committed under the apartheid regime. Presided over by God's own diplomat, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the first hearings of the commission were held in April 1996. During the following two years of hearings, South Africans were daily exposed to revelations and public testimony about their traumatic past, and--like the world that looked on--continued to discover that the relationship between truth and reconciliation is far more complex than they had ever imagined. Antjie Krog, a prominent South African poet and journalist, led the South African Broadcasting Corporation team that for two years reported daily on the hearings. Extreme forms of torture, abuse, and state violence were the daily fare of the Truth Commission. Many of those involved with its proceedings, including Krog herself, suffered personal stresses--ill health, mental breakdown, dissolution of relationships--in the face of both the relentless onslaught of the truth and the continuing subterfuges of unrelenting perpetrators. Like the Truth Commission itself, *Country of My Skull* gives central prominence to the power of the testimony of the victims, combining a journalist's reportage skills with the poet's ability to give voice to stories previously unheard.

Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights by Kenji Yoshino

In this remarkable and elegant work, acclaimed Yale Law School professor Kenji Yoshino fuses legal manifesto and poetic memoir to call for a redefinition of civil rights in our law and culture.

Everyone covers. To cover is to downplay a disfavored trait so as to blend into the mainstream. Because all of us possess stigmatized attributes, we all encounter pressure to cover in our daily lives. Given its pervasiveness, we may experience this pressure to be a simple fact of social life.

Against conventional understanding, Kenji Yoshino argues that the demand to cover can pose a hidden threat to our civil rights. Though we have come to some consensus against penalizing people for differences based on race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, and disability, we still routinely deny equal treatment to people who refuse to downplay differences along these lines. Racial minorities are pressed to "act white" by changing their names, languages, or cultural practices. Women are told to "play like men" at work. Gays are asked not to engage in public displays of same-sex affection. The devout are instructed to minimize expressions of faith, and individuals with disabilities are urged to conceal the paraphernalia that permit them to function. In a wide-ranging analysis, Yoshino demonstrates that American civil rights law has generally ignored the threat posed by these covering demands. With passion and rigor, he shows that the work of civil rights will not be complete until it attends to the harms of coerced conformity. At the same time, Yoshino is responsive to the American exasperation with identity politics, which often seems like an endless parade of groups asking for state and social solicitude. He observes that the ubiquity of the covering demand provides an opportunity to lift civil rights into a higher, more universal register. Since we all experience the covering demand, we can all make common cause around a new civil rights paradigm based on our desire for authenticity--a desire that brings us together rather than driving us apart.

Yoshino's argument draws deeply on his personal experiences as a gay Asian American. He follows the Romantics in his belief that if a human life is described with enough particularity, the universal will speak through it. The result is a work that combines one of the most moving memoirs written in years with a landmark manifesto on the civil rights of the future.

Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Mired in poverty, the student Raskolnikov nevertheless thinks well of himself. Of his pawnbroker he takes a different view, and in deciding to do away with her he sets in motion his own tragic downfall. Dostoyevsky's penetrating novel of an intellectual whose moral compass goes haywire, and the detective who hunts him down for his terrible crime, is a stunning psychological portrait, a thriller and a profound meditation on guilt and retribution.

Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail by Ruben Martinez

Chronicling a family that lost three sons to a border crossing gone horribly wrong, Martinez travels repeatedly from San Diego to the city of Cheron, in the state of Michoacin, about 200 miles west of Mexico City. Though

treated by some of the Mexicans he meets as more of a gringo than a norteno (a Mexican who has lived in the north), Martinez, an American of Mexican emigri parents, gets terrifically close to his subjects, following them from stultifying poverty in Mexico to mortally dangerous illegal crossings and harsh and also dangerous (and illegal) work in Arkansas, Connecticut, Missouri and California. Martinez draws a wealth of social, ethnic, linguistic and economic nuance in completely absorbing narratives. Each of the 13 chapters begins with a facing-page photo by Joseph Rodriguez (with whom Martinez collaborated on *East Side Stories*), showing us the cholos (gang members), coyotes (crossing guides) and pollos ("chickens" being led across), and also the everyday people whose lives are spread, one way or another, across the border. Martinez is now at Harvard on a Loeb fellowship, has won an Emmy for his work as a journalist, is associate editor of *Pacific News Service* and a correspondent for PBS's *Religion and Ethics News Weekly*. His book is heroic in its honesty and self-examination, and in its determination to tell its story completely and fully

Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa by Jason Stearns
"Jason Stearns is probably better qualified and better able than any man alive to write about Congo. This is history felt on the body, and told from the heart." (JOHN LE CARRE) "(Dancing in the Glory of Monsters is) a brave and accessible take on the leviathan at the heart of so many of Africa's problems... Stearns's eye for detail, culled from countless interviews, brings this book alive... I once wrote that the Congo suffers from 'a lack of institutional memory', meaning that its atrocities well so inexorably that nobody bothers to keep an account of them. Stearns's book goes a long way to putting that right." (DAILY TELEGRAPH) "(t)his courageous book is a plea for more nuanced understanding and the silencing of the analysis-free 'the horror, the horror' exclamation that Congo still routinely wrings from Western lips." (MICHAELA WRONG, SPECTATOR) "[Stearns] is probably the most widely travelled and the most meticulous and empathetic observer of the war there. This is a serious book about the social and political forces behind one of the most violent clashes of modern times - as well as a damn good read." (THE ECONOMIST) "Stearns has done a fine job of amassing vast amounts (of material), much of it based directly on interviews with the participants and victims, to bring to light details of a scandalously under-reported war... (T)his book succeeds in providing a vivid chronicle of this rolling conflict involving 20 rival rebel groups." (SUNDAY TIMES) "(Dancing in the Glory of Monsters) is one of the most gripping and comprehensive accounts of this human tragedy yet written... Stearns makes a convincing case that greater international understanding is a crucial first step - and if he's right then this book could be a major contribution." (NEW HUMANIST)

Dark at the Crossing by Elliott Ackerman

Haris Abadi is a man in search of a cause. An Arab American with a conflicted past, he is now in Turkey, attempting to cross into Syria and join the fight against Bashar al-Assad's regime. But he is robbed before he can make it, and is taken in by Amir, a charismatic Syrian refugee and former revolutionary, and Amir's wife, Daphne, a sophisticated beauty haunted by grief. As it becomes clear that Daphne is also desperate to return to Syria, Haris's choices become ever more wrenching: Whose side is he really on? Is he a true radical or simply an idealist? And will he be able to bring meaning to a life of increasing frustration and helplessness? Told with compassion and a deft hand, *Dark at the Crossing* is an exploration of loss, of second chances, and of why we choose to believe--a trenchantly observed novel of raw urgency and power.

David Copperfield by Charles Dickens

Based in part on the author's own life, *David Copperfield* is the epic story of a young man's journey of self-discovery - from an unhappy and impoverished childhood to his vocation as a successful novelist. Among the memorable cast of characters he encounters along the way are his brutal stepfather, Mr. Murdstone; bubbly Nurse Peggotty; his brilliant, but unworthy schoolmate Steerforth, his eccentric aunt, Betsy Trotwood, the scheming clerk Uriah Heep, the enchanting Dora and the magnificent Mr. Macawber - a character much like Dickens' own father. Full of tragedy and comedy in equal measure, *David Copperfield* remains one of the most enduring and popular of Dickens' novels.

Deacon King Kong by James McBride

In September 1969, a fumbling, cranky old church deacon known as Sportcoat shuffles into the courtyard of the Cause Houses housing project in south Brooklyn, pulls a .38 from his pocket, and, in front of everybody, shoots

the project's drug dealer at point-blank range. The reasons for this desperate burst of violence and the consequences that spring from it lie at the heart of *Deacon King Kong*, James McBride's funny, moving novel and his first since his National Book Award-winning *The Good Lord Bird*. In *Deacon King Kong*, McBride brings to vivid life the people affected by the shooting: the victim, the African-American and Latinx residents who witnessed it, the white neighbors, the local cops assigned to investigate, the members of the Five Ends Baptist Church where Sportcoat was deacon, the neighborhood's Italian mobsters, and Sportcoat himself. As the story deepens, it becomes clear that the lives of the characters—caught in the tumultuous swirl of 1960s New York—overlap in unexpected ways. When the truth does emerge, McBride shows us that not all secrets are meant to be hidden, that the best way to grow is to face change without fear, and that the seeds of love lie in hope and compassion.

The Dead Are Arising: The Life of Malcolm X by Les Payne and Tamara Payne

An epic biography of Malcolm X finally emerges, drawing on hundreds of hours of the author's interviews, rewriting much of the known narrative. Les Payne, the renowned Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist, embarked in 1990 on a nearly thirty-year-long quest to interview anyone he could find who had actually known Malcolm X—all living siblings of the Malcolm Little family, classmates, street friends, cellmates, Nation of Islam figures, FBI moles and cops, and political leaders around the world. His goal was ambitious: to transform what would become over a hundred hours of interviews into an unprecedented portrait of Malcolm X, one that would separate fact from fiction. The result is this historic biography that conjures a never-before-seen world of its protagonist, a work whose title is inspired by a phrase Malcolm X used when he saw his Hartford followers stir with purpose, as if the dead were truly arising, to overcome the obstacles of racism. Setting Malcolm's life not only within the Nation of Islam but against the larger backdrop of American history, the book traces the life of one of the twentieth century's most politically relevant figures "from street criminal to devoted moralist and revolutionary." In tracing Malcolm X's life from his Nebraska birth in 1925 to his Harlem assassination in 1965, Payne provides searing vignettes culled from Malcolm's Depression-era youth, describing the influence of his Garveyite parents: his father, Earl, a circuit-riding preacher who was run over by a street car in Lansing, Michigan, in 1929, and his mother, Louise, who continued to instill black pride in her children after Earl's death. Filling each chapter with resonant drama, Payne follows Malcolm's exploits as a petty criminal in Boston and Harlem in the 1930s and early 1940s to his religious awakening and conversion to the Nation of Islam in a Massachusetts penitentiary. With a biographer's unwavering determination, Payne corrects the historical record and delivers extraordinary revelations—from the unmasking of the mysterious NOI founder "Fard Muhammad," who preceded Elijah Muhammad; to a hair-raising scene, conveyed in cinematic detail, of Malcolm and Minister Jeremiah X Shabazz's 1961 clandestine meeting with the KKK; to a minute-by-minute account of Malcolm X's murder at the Audubon Ballroom.

Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in The United States by Helen Prejean

Prejean, a Catholic nun, has written a moral indictment of capital punishment. This book is the result of her visits to two death-row inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary where she serves as a spiritual advisor. Although she documents the inequalities of the judicial system that has condemned these men, her main point is that if society is to inflict this extreme punishment, it should, itself, be perfect. Needless to say, it is not. Opponents of the death penalty will find reinforcement for their cause here.

Democracy: Stories from the Long Road to Freedom by Condoleezza Rice

From the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union to the ongoing struggle for human rights in the Middle East, Condoleezza Rice has served on the front lines of history. As a child, she was an eyewitness to a third awakening of freedom, when her hometown of Birmingham, Alabama, became the epicenter of the civil rights movement for black Americans. In this book, Rice explains what these epochal events teach us about democracy. At a time when people around the world are wondering whether democracy is in decline, Rice shares insights from her experiences as a policymaker, scholar, and citizen, in order to put democracy's challenges into perspective. When the United States was founded, it was the only attempt at self-government in the world. Today more than half of all countries qualify as democracies, and in the long run that number will continue to grow. Yet nothing worthwhile ever comes easily. Using America's long struggle as a template, Rice draws lessons for democracy around the world -- from Russia, Poland, and Ukraine, to Kenya, Colombia, and the Middle East. She finds that no transitions to democracy are the same because every country starts in a different place. Pathways

diverge and sometimes circle backward. Time frames for success vary dramatically, and countries often suffer false starts before getting it right. But, Rice argues, that does not mean they should not try. While the ideal conditions for democracy are well known in academia, they never exist in the real world. The question is not how to create perfect circumstances but how to move forward under difficult ones. These same insights apply in overcoming the challenges faced by governments today. The pursuit of democracy is a continuing struggle shared by people around the world, whether they are opposing authoritarian regimes, establishing new democratic institutions, or reforming mature democracies to better live up to their ideals. The work of securing it is never finished.

Desert Solitaire by Edward Abbey

Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*, the noted author's most enduring nonfiction work, is an account of Abbey's seasons as a ranger at Arches National Park outside Moab, Utah. Abbey reflects on the nature of the Colorado Plateau desert, on the condition of our remaining wilderness, and on the future of a civilization that cannot reconcile itself to living in the natural world. He also recounts adventures with scorpions and snakes, obstinate tourists and entrenched bureaucrats, and, most powerful of all, with his own mortality. Abbey's account of getting stranded in a rock pool down a side branch of the Grand Canyon is at once hilarious and terrifying.

The Devil's Highway: A True Story by Luis Alberto Urrea

In May 2001, 26 Mexican men scrambled across the border and into an area of the Arizona desert known as the Devil's Highway. Only 12 made it safely across. American Book Award-winning writer and poet Urrea, who was born in Tijuana and now lives outside Chicago, tracks the paths those men took from their home state of Veracruz all the way *norte*. Their enemies were many: the U.S. Border Patrol ("La Migra"); gung-ho gringo vigilantes bent on taking the law into their own hands; the Mexican Federales; rattlesnakes; severe hypothermia and the remorseless sun, a "110 degree nightmare" that dried their bodies and pounded their brains. In artful yet uncomplicated prose, Urrea captivantly tells how a dozen men squeezed by to safety, and how 14 others, whom the media labeled the Yuma 14, did not. But while many point to the group's smugglers (known as coyotes) as the prime villains of the tragedy, Urrea unloads on, in the words of one Mexican consul, "the politics of stupidity that rules both sides of the border." Mexican and U.S. border policy is backward, Urrea finds, and it does little to stem the flow of immigrants. Since the policy results in Mexicans making the crossing in increasingly forbidding areas, it contributes to the conditions that kill those who attempt it. Confident and full of righteous rage, Urrea's story is a well-crafted melange of first-person testimony, geographic history, cultural and economic analysis, poetry and an indictment of immigration policy. It may not directly influence the forces behind the U.S.'s southern border travesties, but it does give names and identities to the faceless and maligned "wetbacks" and "pollos," and highlights the brutality and unsustainable nature of the many walls separating the two countries.

The Dollmaker by Harriette Arnow

The Dollmaker was originally published in 1954 to immediate success and critical acclaim. In unadorned and powerful prose, Harriette Arnow tells the unforgettable and heartbreaking story of the Nevels family and their quest to preserve their deep-rooted values amidst the turmoil of war and industrialization. When Gertie Nevels, a strong and self-reliant matriarch, follows her husband to Detroit from their countryside home in Kentucky, she learns she will have to fight desperately to keep her family together. A sprawling book full of vividly drawn characters and masterful scenes, *The Dollmaker* is a passionate tribute to a woman's love for her children and the land.

Do Not Say We Have Nothing by Madeleine Thien

"In a single year, my father left us twice. The first time, to end his marriage, and the second, when he took his own life. I was ten years old." Master storyteller Madeleine Thien takes us inside an extended family in China, showing us the lives of two successive generations—those who lived through Mao's Cultural Revolution and their children, who became the students protesting in Tiananmen Square. At the center of this epic story are two young women, Marie and Ai-Ming. Through their relationship Marie strives to piece together the tale of her fractured family in present-day Vancouver, seeking answers in the fragile layers of their collective story. Her quest will unveil how Kai, her enigmatic father, a talented pianist, and Ai-Ming's father, the shy and brilliant composer, Sparrow, along with the violin prodigy Zhuli were forced to reimagine their artistic and private selves during China's political

campaigns and how their fates reverberate through the years with lasting consequences. With maturity and sophistication, humor and beauty, Thien has crafted a novel that is at once intimate and grandly political, rooted in the details of life inside China yet transcendent in its universality.

Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company That Addicted America by Beth Macy

In this masterful work, Beth Macy takes us into the epicenter of America's twenty-plus year struggle with opioid addiction. From distressed small communities in Central Appalachia to wealthy suburbs; from disparate cities to once-idyllic farm towns; it's a heartbreaking trajectory that illustrates how this national crisis has persisted for so long and become so firmly entrenched. Beginning with a single dealer who lands in a small Virginia town and sets about turning high school football stars into heroin overdose statistics, Macy endeavors to answer a grieving mother's question—why her only son died—and comes away with a harrowing story of greed and need. From the introduction of OxyContin in 1996, Macy parses how America embraced a medical culture where overtreatment with painkillers became the norm. In some of the same distressed communities featured in her bestselling book *Factory Man*, the unemployed use painkillers both to numb the pain of joblessness and pay their bills, while privileged teens trade pills in cul-de-sacs, and even high school standouts fall prey to prostitution, jail, and death. Through unsparing, yet deeply human portraits of the families and first responders struggling to ameliorate this epidemic, each facet of the crisis comes into focus. In these politically fragmented times, Beth Macy shows, astonishingly, that the only thing that unites Americans across geographic and class lines is opioid drug abuse. But in a country unable to provide basic healthcare for all, Macy still finds reason to hope—and signs of the spirit and tenacity necessary in those facing addiction to build a better future for themselves and their families.

Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits by Linda Gordon

We all know Dorothea Lange's iconic photos—the Migrant Mother holding her child, the shoeless children of the Dust Bowl—but now renowned American historian Linda Gordon brings them to three-dimensional life in this groundbreaking exploration of Lange's transformation into a documentarist. Using Lange's life to anchor a moving social history of twentieth-century America, Gordon masterfully re-creates bohemian San Francisco, the Depression, and the Japanese-American internment camps. Accompanied by more than one hundred images—many of them previously unseen and some formerly suppressed—Gordon has written a sparkling, fast-moving story that testifies to her status as one of the most gifted historians of our time.

Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance by Barack Obama

In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barack Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance.

The Dressmaker of Khair Khana: Five Sisters, One Remarkable Family, and the Woman Who Risked Everything to Keep Them Safe by Gayle Tzemach

The life Kamila Sidiqi had known changed overnight when the Taliban seized control of the city of Kabul. After receiving a teaching degree during the civil war—a rare achievement for any Afghan woman—Kamila was subsequently banned from school and confined to her home. When her father and brother were forced to flee the city, Kamila became the sole breadwinner for her five siblings. Armed only with grit and determination, she picked up a needle and thread and created a thriving business of her own. *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana* tells the incredible true story of this unlikely entrepreneur who mobilized her community under the Taliban. Former ABC News reporter Gayle Tzemach Lemmon spent years on the ground reporting Kamila's story, and the result is an unusually intimate and unsanitized look at the daily lives of women in Afghanistan. These women are not victims; they are the glue that holds families together; they are the backbone and the heart of their nation. Afghanistan's future remains uncertain as debates over withdrawal timelines dominate the news. *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana* moves beyond the headlines to transport you to an Afghanistan you have never seen before. This is a story of war, but it is also a story of sisterhood and resilience in the face of despair. Kamila Sidiqi's journey will inspire you, but it will also change the way you think about one of the most important political and humanitarian issues of our time.

The Dutch House by Ann Patchett

Ann Patchett, the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Commonwealth*, delivers her most powerful novel to date: a richly moving story that explores the indelible bond between two siblings, the house of their childhood, and a past that will not let them go. *The Dutch House* is the story of a paradise lost, a tour de force that digs deeply into questions of inheritance, love and forgiveness, of how we want to see ourselves and of who we really are. At the end of the Second World War, Cyril Conroy combines luck and a single canny investment to begin an enormous real estate empire, propelling his family from poverty to enormous wealth. His first order of business is to buy the Dutch House, a lavish estate in the suburbs outside of Philadelphia. Meant as a surprise for his wife, the house sets in motion the undoing of everyone he loves. The story is told by Cyril's son Danny, as he and his older sister, the brilliantly acerbic and self-assured Maeve, are exiled from the house where they grew up by their stepmother. The two wealthy siblings are thrown back into the poverty their parents had escaped from and find that all they have to count on is one another. It is this unshakeable bond between them that both saves their lives and thwarts their futures. Set over the course of five decades, *The Dutch House* is a dark fairy tale about two smart people who cannot overcome their past. Despite every outward sign of success, Danny and Maeve are only truly comfortable when they're together. Throughout their lives they return to the well-worn story of what they've lost with humor and rage. But when at last they're forced to confront the people who left them behind, the relationship between an indulged brother and his ever-protective sister is finally tested.

Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover

Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

The Education of Harriet Hatfield by May Sarton

Sarton's 19th novel echoes many earlier themes: the comfort of friendship; relationships between women; the precarious balance between union and solitude, the bond between people and their pets, and what it means to live an elegant life and achieve an elegant death. After the death of her companion of 30 years, 60-year-old Harriet Hatfield opens a bookstore for women in a changing, predominantly blue-collar neighborhood near Boston. Following a newspaper article in which she is labeled a lesbian, a word that very ladylike Harriet has never thought to use, she becomes the target of threats and abuse from an unknown assailant. As Harriet moves from the well-ordered life of a sheltered companion into the rougher, wider world, she begins to redefine herself.

The Education of an Idealist by Samantha Power

An intimate, powerful, and galvanizing memoir by Pulitzer Prize winner, human rights advocate, and former UN Ambassador Samantha Power. In her memoir, Power offers an urgent response to the question "What can one person do?" and a call for a clearer eye, a kinder heart, and a more open and civil hand in our politics and daily lives. *The Education of an Idealist* traces Power's distinctly American journey from immigrant to war correspondent to presidential Cabinet official. In 2005, her critiques of US foreign policy caught the eye of newly elected senator Barack Obama, who invited her to work with him on Capitol Hill and then on his presidential campaign. After Obama was elected president, Power went from being an activist outsider to a government insider, navigating the halls of power while trying to put her ideals into practice. She served for four years as Obama's human rights adviser, and in 2013, he named her US Ambassador to the United Nations, the youngest American to assume the role. Power transports us from her childhood in Dublin to the streets of war-torn Bosnia to the White House Situation Room and the world of high-stakes diplomacy. Humorous and deeply honest, *The Education of an Idealist* lays bare the searing battles and defining moments of her life and shows how she juggled the demands of a 24/7 national security job with the challenge of raising two young children. Along the way, she illuminates the intricacies of politics and geopolitics, reminding us how the United States can lead in the world, and why we each have the opportunity to advance the cause of human dignity. Power's memoir is an unforgettable account of the power of idealism and of one person's fierce determination to make a difference.

Empire Falls by Richard Russo

Miles Roby has been slinging burgers at the Empire Grill for 20 years, a job that cost him his college education and much of his self-respect. What keeps him there? It could be his bright, sensitive daughter Tick, who needs all his help surviving the local high school. Or maybe it's Janine, Miles' soon-to-be ex-wife, who's taken up with a noxiously vain health-club proprietor. Or perhaps it's the imperious Francine Whiting, who owns everything in town—and seems to believe that “everything” includes Miles himself. In *Empire Falls* Richard Russo delves deep into the blue-collar heart of America in a work that overflows with hilarity, heartache, and grace.

The End of Your Life Book Club by Will Schwalbe

“What are you reading?” That's the question Will Schwalbe asks his mother, Mary Anne, as they sit in the waiting room of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. In 2007, Mary Anne returned from a humanitarian trip to Pakistan and Afghanistan suffering from what her doctors believed was a rare type of hepatitis. Months later she was diagnosed with a form of advanced pancreatic cancer, which is almost always fatal, often in six months or less. This is the inspiring true story of a son and his mother, who start a “book club” that brings them together as her life comes to a close. Over the next two years, Will and Mary Anne carry on conversations that are both wide-ranging and deeply personal, prompted by an eclectic array of books and a shared passion for reading. Their list jumps from classic to popular, from poetry to mysteries, from fantastic to spiritual. The issues they discuss include questions of faith and courage as well as everyday topics such as expressing gratitude and learning to listen. Throughout, they are constantly reminded of the power of books to comfort us, astonish us, teach us, and tell us what we need to do with our lives and in the world. Reading isn't the opposite of doing; it's the opposite of dying. Will and Mary Anne share their hopes and concerns with each other—and rediscover their lives—through their favorite books. When they read, they aren't a sick person and a well person, but a mother and a son taking a journey together. The result is a profoundly moving tale of loss that is also a joyful, and often humorous, celebration of life: Will's love letter to his mother, and theirs to the printed page.

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

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Odd Girl Out*, a deeply urgent book that gives adults the tools to help girls in high school and college reject “supergirl” pressure, overcome a toxic stress culture, and become resilient adults with healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives. For many girls today, the drive to achieve is fueled by brutal self-criticism and an acute fear of failure. Though young women have never been more “successful”—outpacing boys in GPAs and college enrollment—they have also never struggled more. On the surface, girls may seem exceptional, but in reality, they are anxious and overwhelmed, feeling that, no matter how hard they try, they will never be smart enough, successful enough, pretty enough, thin enough, popular enough, or sexy enough. Rachel Simmons has been researching young women for two decades, and her research plainly shows that girl competence does not equal girl confidence—nor does it equal happiness, resilience, or self-worth. Backed by vivid case studies, Simmons warns that we have raised a generation of young women so focused on achieving that they avoid healthy risks, overthink setbacks, and suffer from imposter syndrome, believing they are frauds. As they spend more time projecting an image of effortless perfection on social media, these girls are prone to withdraw from the essential relationships that offer solace and support and bolster self-esteem. Deeply empathetic and meticulously researched, *Enough As She Is* offers a clear understanding of this devastating problem and provides practical parenting advice—including teaching girls self-compassion as an alternative to self-criticism, how to manage overthinking, resist the constant urge to compare themselves to peers, take healthy risks, navigate toxic elements of social media, prioritize self-care, and seek support when they need it. *Enough As She Is* sounds an alarm to parents and educators, arguing that young women can do more than survive adolescence. They can thrive. *Enough As She Is* shows us how.

Expecting Adam: A True Story of Birth, Rebirth, and Everyday Magic by Martha Beck

Expecting Adam is an autobiographical tale of an academically oriented Harvard couple who conceive a baby with Down's syndrome and decide to carry him to term. Despite everything Martha Beck and her husband John know about themselves and their belief system, when Martha gets accidentally pregnant and the fetus is discovered to have Down's syndrome, the Becks find they cannot even consider abortion. The presence of the fetus that they each, privately, believe is a familiar being named Adam is too strong. As Martha's terribly difficult pregnancy progresses, odd coincidences and paranormal experiences begin to occur for both Martha and John, though for months they don't share them with each other. Martha's pregnancy and Adam (once born) become the

catalyst for tremendous life changes for the Becks. Focusing primarily on the pregnancy but floating back and forth between the present and recent and distant past, Martha Beck's well-written, down-to-earth, funny, heart-rending, and tender book transcends the cloying tone of much spiritual literature. Beck is trained as a methodical academician. Because of her step-by-step explanation of her own progress from doubt to belief, she feels like a reliable witness, and even the most skeptical readers may begin to doubt their senses. When she describes an out-of-body experience, we, too, feel ourselves transported to a pungent, noisy hawker center in Singapore. We, too, feel calming, invisible, supporting hands when she falls. Yet, whether or not readers believe in Beck's experiences is ultimately a moot point. There is no doubt that Adam--a boy who sees the world as a series of connections between people who love each other--is a tremendous gift to Beck, her family, and all who have the honor of knowing him.

Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family by Condoleezza Rice

Having served under two Bush presidencies—as national security advisor and secretary of state—Rice is well known for her icy demeanor and steely disposition. This memoir presents a young woman deeply attached to her devoted parents, who encouraged her at every step of her life to overcome racism, sexism, and her own personal doubts. Her roots are deep in the South, with a family that pridefully skirted racism—never using the “colored” facilities or riding in the back of the bus. Her mother, Angelena, was a cultured teacher who taught her piano, while her father, John, was a Presbyterian minister and later a college administrator who, despite his Republican politics, strongly admired black radicals, developing a friendship with Stokely Carmichael. He declined to march with Martin Luther King in nonviolent protests and was more inclined to sit on the front porch with a loaded shotgun to ward off white night riders. The Rice family personally knew the young girls who were killed in the church bombing, one of the more violent episodes the family endured before they eventually left the South. Rice presents a frank, poignant, and loving portrait of a family that maintained its closeness through cancer, death, career ups and downs, and turbulent changes in American society.

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close: A Novel by Jonathan Safran Foer

Oskar Schell, hero of this brilliant follow-up to Foer's bestselling *Everything Is Illuminated*, is a nine-year-old amateur inventor, jewelry designer, astrophysicist, tambourine player and pacifist. Like the second-language narrator of *Illuminated*, Oskar turns his naïvely precocious vocabulary to the understanding of historical tragedy, as he searches New York for the lock that matches a mysterious key left by his father when he was killed in the September 11 attacks, a quest that intertwines with the story of his grandparents, whose lives were blighted by the firebombing of Dresden. Foer embellishes the narrative with evocative graphics, including photographs, colored highlights and passages of illegibly overwritten text, and takes his unique flair for the poetry of miscommunication to occasionally gimmicky lengths, like a two-page soliloquy written entirely in numerical code. Although not quite the comic tour de force that *Illuminated* was, the novel is replete with hilarious and appalling passages, as when, during show-and-tell, Oskar plays a harrowing recording by a Hiroshima survivor and then launches into a Poindexterish disquisition on the bomb's "charring effect." It's more of a challenge to play in the same way with the very recent collapse of the towers, but Foer gambles on the power of his protagonist's voice to transform the cataclysm from raw current event to a tragedy at once visceral and mythical. Unafraid to show his traumatized characters' constant groping for emotional catharsis, Foer demonstrates once again that he is one of the few contemporary writers willing to risk sentimentalism in order to address great questions of truth, love and beauty.

Facing the Mountain: A True Story of Japanese American Heroes. In World War II by Daniel James Brown

From the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Boys in the Boat*, a gripping World War II saga of patriotism, highlighting the contributions and sacrifices that Japanese immigrants and their American-born children made for the sake of the nation: the courageous Japanese-American Army unit that overcame brutal odds in Europe; their families, incarcerated back home; and a young man who refused to surrender his constitutional rights, even if it meant imprisonment. They came from across the continent and Hawaii. Their parents taught them to embrace both their Japanese heritage and the ways of America. They faced bigotry, yet they believed in their bright futures as American citizens. But within days of Pearl Harbor, the FBI was ransacking their houses and locking up their fathers. And within months many would themselves be living behind barbed wire. *Facing the Mountain* is an unforgettable chronicle of war-time America and the battlefields of Europe. Based

on Daniel James Brown's extensive interviews with the families of the protagonists as well as deep archival research, it portrays the kaleidoscopic journey of four Japanese-American families and their sons, who volunteered for 442nd Regimental Combat Team and were deployed to France, Germany, and Italy, where they were asked to do the near impossible. But this is more than a war story. Brown also tells the story of these soldiers' parents, immigrants who were forced to shutter the businesses, surrender their homes, and submit to life in concentration camps on U.S. soil. Woven throughout is the chronicle of a brave young man, one of a cadre of patriotic resisters who stood up against their government in defense of their own rights. Whether fighting on battlefields or in courtrooms, these were Americans under unprecedented strain, doing what Americans do best--striving, resisting, pushing back, rising up, standing on principle, laying down their lives, and enduring

Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade by Assia Djébar

In this stunning novel, Assia Djébar intertwines the history of her native Algeria with episodes from the life of a young girl in a story stretching from the French conquest in 1830 to the War of Liberation of the 1950s. The girl, growing up in the old Roman coastal town of Cherchel, sees her life in contrast to that of a neighboring French family, and yearns for more than law and tradition allow her to experience. Headstrong and passionate, she escapes from the cloistered life of her family to join her brother in the maquis' fight against French domination. Djébar's exceptional descriptive powers bring to life the experiences of girls and women caught up in the dual struggle for independence - both their own and Algeria's.

The Far Away Brothers: Two Young Migrants and the Making of an American Life by Lauren Markham

Growing up in rural El Salvador in the wake of the civil war, the United States was a distant fantasy to identical twins Ernesto and Raul Flores—until, at age seventeen, a deadly threat from the region's brutal gangs forces them to flee the only home they've ever known. In this urgent chronicle of contemporary immigration, journalist Lauren Markham follows the Flores twins as they make their way across the Rio Grande and the Texas desert, into the hands of immigration authorities, and from there to their estranged older brother in Oakland, CA. Soon these unaccompanied minors are navigating school in a new language, working to pay down their mounting coyote debt, and facing their day in immigration court, while also encountering the triumphs and pitfalls of teenage life with only each other for support. With intimate access and breathtaking range, Markham offers an unforgettable testament to the migrant experience.

The Farming of Bones by Edwidge Danticat

The almost dreamlike pace of Danticat's second novel and the measured narration by the protagonist, Amabelle Desir, at first give no indication that this will be a story of furious violence and nearly unbearable loss. The setting, the Dominican Republic in 1937, when dictator Trujillo was beginning his policy of genocide, is a clue, however, to the events that Amabelle relates. She and her lover, Sebastien Onius, are Haitians who have crossed the border. Amabelle is a servant to a patrician family, while Sebastien endures the brutal conditions of work in the cane fields. The lovers each have poignant memories of parental deaths, and other deaths enter the narrative early, subtly presaging the slaughter that is to come. Haitians in the DR, always regarded as foreigners, are "an orphaned people, a group of vwayaje, wayfarers." When a military-led assault against them does erupt, it is a surprise, however, and as Amabelle barely survives a massacre by soldiers and an equally bloodthirsty civilian population, the narrative acquires the unflinching clarity of a documentary. In addition to illuminating a shameful, little known chapter of history, Danticat gives us fully realized characters who endure their lives with dignity, a sensuously atmospheric setting and a perfectly paced narrative written in prose that is lushly poetic and erotic, specifically detailed (the Haitians were betrayed by their inability to pronounce "parsley") and starkly realistic. While this novel is deeply sad, it is infused with Danticat's fierce need to bear witness, coupled with a knowledge that "life can be a strange gift" even when memory makes endurance a difficult task.

Fascism: A Warning by Madeleine Albright

A personal and urgent examination of Fascism in the twentieth century and the way its legacy shapes today's world, this is written by one of America's most admired public servants, the first woman to serve as U.S. secretary of state. A Fascist, observes Madeleine Albright, "is someone who claims to speak for a whole nation or group, is utterly unconcerned with the rights of others, and is willing to use violence and whatever other means are necessary to achieve the goals he or she might have." The twentieth century was defined by the clash between

democracy and Fascism, a struggle that created uncertainty about the survival of human freedom and left millions dead. Given the horrors of that experience, one might expect the world to reject the spiritual successors to Hitler and Mussolini should they arise in our era. In *Fascism: A Warning*, Madeleine Albright draws on her experiences as a child in war-torn Europe and her distinguished career as a diplomat to question that assumption. Fascism, as she shows, not only endured through the twentieth century but now presents a more virulent threat to peace and justice than at any time since the end of World War II. The momentum toward democracy that swept the world when the Berlin Wall fell has gone into reverse. The United States, which historically championed the free world, is led by a president who exacerbates division and heaps scorn on democratic institutions. In many countries, economic, technological, and cultural factors are weakening the political center and empowering the extremes of right and left. Contemporary leaders such as Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong-un are employing many of the tactics used by Fascists in the 1920s and 30s. *Fascism: A Warning* is a book for our times that is relevant to all times. Written by someone who has not only studied history but helped to shape it, this call to arms teaches us the lessons we must understand and the questions we must answer if we are to save ourselves from repeating the tragic errors of the past.

Fist Stick Knife Gun: A Personal History of Violence by Geoffrey Canada

Long before the avalanche of praise for his work—from Oprah Winfrey, from President Bill Clinton, from President Barack Obama—long before he became known for his talk show appearances, Members Project spots, and documentaries like *Waiting for “Superman”*, Geoffrey Canada was a small boy growing up scared on the mean streets of the South Bronx. His childhood world was one where “sidewalk boys” learned the codes of the block and were ranked through the rituals of fist, stick, and knife. Then the streets changed, and the stakes got even higher. In his candid and riveting memoir, Canada relives a childhood in which violence stalked every street corner.

Five Days at Memorial: Life and Death in a Storm-Ravaged Hospital by Sheri Fink

Pulitzer Prize winner Sheri Fink’s landmark investigation of patient deaths at a New Orleans hospital ravaged by Hurricane Katrina – and her suspenseful portrayal of the quest for truth and justice. In the tradition of the best investigative journalism, physician and reporter Sheri Fink reconstructs 5 days at Memorial Medical Center and draws the reader into the lives of those who struggled mightily to survive and to maintain life amid chaos. After Katrina struck and the floodwaters rose, the power failed, and the heat climbed, exhausted caregivers chose to designate certain patients last for rescue. Months later, several health professionals faced criminal allegations that they deliberately injected numerous patients with drugs to hasten their deaths. *Five Days at Memorial*, the culmination of six years of reporting, unspools the mystery of what happened in those days, bringing the reader into a hospital fighting for its life and into a conversation about the most terrifying form of health care rationing. In a voice at once involving and fair, masterful and intimate, Fink exposes the hidden dilemmas of end-of-life care and reveals just how ill-prepared we are in America for the impact of large-scale disasters—and how we can do better. A remarkable book, engrossing from start to finish, *Five Days at Memorial* radically transforms your understanding of human nature in crisis.

Five Star Billionaire by Tash Aw

Phoebe is a factory girl who has come to Shanghai with the promise of a job—but when she arrives she discovers that the job doesn’t exist. Gary is a country boy turned pop star who is spinning out of control. Justin is in Shanghai to expand his family’s real estate empire, only to find that he might not be up to the task. He has long harbored a crush on Yinghui, a poetry-loving, left-wing activist who has reinvented herself as a successful Shanghai businesswoman. Yinghui is about to make a deal with the shadowy Walter Chao, the five star billionaire of the novel, who with his secrets and his schemes has a hand in the lives of each of the characters. All bring their dreams and hopes to Shanghai, the shining symbol of the New China, which, like the novel’s characters, is constantly in flux and which plays its own fateful role in the lives of its inhabitants. *Five Star Billionaire* is a dazzling, kaleidoscopic novel that offers rare insight into the booming world of Shanghai, a city of elusive identities and ever-changing skylines, of grand ambitions and outsize dreams.

Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver

The extraordinary *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Lacuna* (winner of the Orange Prize), *The Poisonwood Bible* (nominated for the Pulitzer Prize), and *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, Barbara Kingsolver returns with a truly

stunning and unforgettable work. *Flight Behavior* is a brilliant and suspenseful novel set in present-day Appalachia; a breathtaking parable of catastrophe and denial that explores how the complexities we inevitably encounter in life lead us to believe in our particular chosen truths. Kingsolver's riveting story concerns a young wife and mother on a failing farm in rural Tennessee who experiences something she cannot explain, and how her discovery energizes various competing factions—religious leaders, climate scientists, environmentalists, politicians—trapping her in the center of the conflict and ultimately opening up her world.

Fools Crow by James Welch

Suspenseful and moving, written with an authenticity and integrity that give it sweeping power, Welch's third novel (*The Death of Jim Loney* is a masterful evocation of a Native American culture and its passing. From their lodges on the endless Montana plains, the members of the Lone Eaters band of the Pikuni (Blackfeet) Indians live in harmony with nature, hunting the "blackhorns" (buffalo), observing a complex system of political administration based on mutual respect and handing down legends that explain the natural world and govern daily conduct. The young protagonist is first called White Man's Dog, but earns the respected name Fools Crow for meritorious conduct in battle. Through his eyes we watch the escalating tensions between the Pikunis and the white men ("the Napikwans"), who deliberately violate treaties and initiate hostilities with the hard-pressed red men. At the same time, the feared "white scabs plague" (smallpox) decimates the Lone Eaters communities, and they realize that their days are numbered. There is much to savor in this remarkable book: the ease with which Fools Crow and his brethren converse with animals and spirits, the importance of dreams in their daily lives, the customs and ceremonies that measure the natural seasons and a person's lifespan. Without violating the patterns of Native American speech, Welch writes in prose that surges and sings. This bittersweet story is an outstanding work.

The Forever War by Dexter Filkins

Filkins, a *New York Times* prize-winning reporter, is widely regarded as among the finest war correspondents of this generation. His richly textured book is based on his work in Afghanistan and Iraq since 1998. It begins with a Taliban-staged execution in Kabul. It ends with Filkins musing on the names in a WWI British cemetery in Baghdad. In between, the work is a vivid kaleidoscope of vignettes. Individually, the strength of each story is its immediacy; together they portray a theater of the absurd, in which Filkins, an extraordinarily brave man, moves as both participant and observer. Filkins does not editorialize—a welcome change from the punditry that shapes most writing from these war zones. This book also differs essentially from traditional war correspondence because of its universal empathy, feelings enhanced by Filkins's spare prose. Saudi women in Kabul airport, clad in burqas and stylish shoes, bemoan their husbands' devotion to jihad. An Iraqi casually says to his friend, Let's go kill some Americans. A marine is shot dead escorting Filkins on a photo opportunity. Iraqi soldiers are disconcerted when he appears in running shorts (They looked at [my legs] in horror, as if I were naked). Carl von Clausewitz said war is a chameleon. In vividly illustrating the varied ways people in Afghanistan and Iraq have been affected by ongoing war, Filkins demonstrates that truth in prose.

Forgotten Country by Catherine Chung

Moving among feelings from reserved to exuberant and from easy joy all the way to devastating pain and loss, Chung's superb debut examines the twin hearts of cruelty and compassion between sisters in particular and family in general. Korean immigrant and grad student Janie, born Jeehyun, and her younger sister, Hannah, known as Haejin in their native tongue, struggle to maintain even the veneer of a sisterly bond as they at times gracefully float together, then violently come apart, throughout their lives. When Hannah abruptly disappears from the family fold, Janie is charged by their father with finding her and bringing her back. Haunted by childhood memories of her grandmother's story about the family being cursed with lost sisters for generations, Janie feels compelled to find Hannah yet bitterly resentful as well. A second harrowing blow to the family lends urgency to Janie's search while providing deeper introspection about the fragile and implacable bonds that hold a family together even across the seemingly impassable chasm of different cultures and changing generations.

A Fort of Nine Towers: An Afghan Family Story by Qais Akbar Omar

Omar's Afghan childhood encompassed the love of an extended family and the violent tyranny of warlords and the Taliban, and he renders every facet with the glorious precision and rich palette of the exquisite carpets that

provided a livelihood for his grandfather, father, and, eventually, himself. Kabul in the 1980s was a lush garden, where young Omar flew kites, excelled at school, and played with a band of cousins. The Mujahedin rapidly destroyed this verdant world, and Omar and his family fled the city for the Fort of Nine Towers, an old outpost filled with flowers, fruit trees, deer, peacocks, even a leopard. But war came to this paradise, too, precipitating his family's death-defying cross-country quest for sanctuary. They joined nomadic relatives on a caravan and lived in the caves behind one of the towering Buddhas of Bamiyan, which the Taliban later destroyed. Though he is as modest as he is entrancing, Omar clearly was a preternaturally attentive, sensitive boy with a gift for languages and an artistic eye, who embraced the diversity, beauty, and wisdom of Afghan life. He also suffered the soul-scarring horrors of looting, bombs, snipers, homelessness, atrocities, incarceration, and torture. Omar tells this staggering true story of a life and a land of radiance and terror with magnificent humility, grace, and power.

Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom by David Blight

As a young man Frederick Douglass (1818–1895) escaped from slavery in Baltimore, Maryland. He was fortunate to have been taught to read by his slave owner mistress, and he would go on to become one of the major literary figures of his time. He wrote three versions of his autobiography over the course of his lifetime and published his own newspaper. His very existence gave the lie to slave owners: with dignity and great intelligence he bore witness to the brutality of slavery.

Initially mentored by William Lloyd Garrison, Douglass spoke widely, often to large crowds, using his own story to condemn slavery. He broke with Garrison to become a political abolitionist, a Republican, and eventually a Lincoln supporter. By the Civil War and during Reconstruction, Douglass became the most famed and widely travelled orator in the nation. He denounced the premature end of Reconstruction and the emerging Jim Crow era. In his unique and eloquent voice, written and spoken, Douglass was a fierce critic of the United States as well as a radical patriot. He sometimes argued politically with younger African Americans, but he never forsook either the Republican party or the cause of black civil and political rights. In this remarkable biography, David Blight has drawn on new information held in a private collection that few other historians have consulted, as well as recently discovered issues of Douglass's newspapers. Blight tells the fascinating story of Douglass's two marriages and his complex extended family. Douglass was not only an astonishing man of words, but a thinker steeped in Biblical story and theology.

From Cold War to Hot Peace: An American Ambassador in Putin's Russia by Michael McFaul

In 2008, when Michael McFaul was asked to leave his perch at Stanford and join an unlikely presidential campaign, he had no idea that he would find himself at the beating heart of one of today's most contentious and consequential international relationships. As President Barack Obama's adviser on Russian affairs, McFaul helped craft the United States' policy known as "reset" that fostered new and unprecedented collaboration between the two countries. And then, as U.S. ambassador to Russia from 2012 to 2014, he had a front-row seat when this fleeting, hopeful moment crumbled with Vladimir Putin's return to the presidency. This riveting inside account combines history and memoir to tell the full story of U.S.-Russia relations from the fall of the Soviet Union to the new rise of the hostile, paranoid Russian president. From the first days of McFaul's ambassadorship, the Kremlin actively sought to discredit and undermine him, hassling him with tactics that included dispatching protesters to his front gates, slandering him on state media, and tightly surveilling him, his staff, and his family.

From Outrage to Courage: Women Taking Action for Health and Justice by Anne Firth Murray

From sex-selective abortions to millions of girls who are "disappeared," from 90 million girls who do not go to school to HIV/AIDS spreading fastest among adolescent girls, women face unique health challenges, writes Anne Firth Murray. In this searing cradle-to-grave review, Murray tackles health issues from prenatal care to challenges faced by aging women. Looking at how gender inequality affects basic nutrition, Murray makes clear the issues are political more than they are medical. In an inspiring look, *From Outrage to Courage* shows how women are organizing the world over. Women's courage to transform their situations and communities provides inspiration and models for change. From China to India, from Indonesia to Kenya, Anne Firth Murray takes readers on a whirlwind tour of devastation—and resistance.

The Future Is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia by Masha Gessen

Award-winning journalist Masha Gessen's understanding of the events and forces that have wracked Russia in recent times is unparalleled. In *The Future Is History*, Gessen follows the lives of four people born at what

promised to be the dawn of democracy. Each of them came of age with unprecedented expectations, some as the children and grandchildren of the very architects of the new Russia, each with newfound aspirations of their own--as entrepreneurs, activists, thinkers, and writers, sexual and social beings. Gessen charts their paths against the machinations of the regime that would crush them all, and against the war it waged on understanding itself, which ensured the unobstructed reemergence of the old Soviet order in the form of today's terrifying and seemingly unstoppable mafia state. Powerful and urgent, *The Future Is History* is a cautionary tale for our time and for all time.

The Garden of Evening Mists by Tan Twan Eng

Malaya, 1951. Yun Ling Teoh, the scarred lone survivor of a brutal Japanese wartime camp, seeks solace among the jungle-fringed tea plantations of Cameron Highlands. There she discovers Yugiri, the only Japanese garden in Malaya, and its owner and creator, the enigmatic Aritomo, exiled former gardener of the emperor of Japan. Despite her hatred of the Japanese, Yun Ling seeks to engage Aritomo to create a garden in memory of her sister, who died in the camp. Aritomo refuses but agrees to accept Yun Ling as his apprentice "until the monsoon comes." Then she can design a garden for herself. As the months pass, Yun Ling finds herself intimately drawn to the gardener and his art, while all around them a communist guerilla war rages. But the *Garden of Evening Mists* remains a place of mystery. Who is Aritomo and how did he come to leave Japan? And is the real story of how Yun Ling managed to survive the war perhaps the darkest secret of all?

The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College by Jacques Steinberg

Education reporter Steinberg presents a compelling tale in this account, told from the perspective of Ralph Figueroa, an admissions officer at Wesleyan University. Expanding on a series of articles in *The New York Times*, Steinberg provides an insider's look at how Figueroa and the school's admissions committee factored grades, test scores, essays, extracurricular activities and race into account as they winnowed 700 students for the class of 2004 from nearly 7,000 applicants. Using real names, applications and interviews, Steinberg follows six applicants of varying backgrounds from their first encounter with Figueroa to their final acceptance or rejection. Although not a how-to book per se, Steinberg's work does include helpful advice, such as "there's no way to outthink this process" and "if you've got something you want to write, then write it the way you want." Steinberg portrays Figueroa and the other admissions officers as doing the best they can to give each applicant a fair assessment, despite their responsibility for 1,500 of them. Among the book's surprises are that supplementary material, no matter how impressive, carries no weight in deciding who gets in, while honesty about a mistake in one case, an incident involving a pot brownie can influence an admissions officer to admit. Wesleyan's high standards e.g., a 1350 combined score on the SAT may put some readers off, but the process that Steinberg describes is similar at most private colleges and universities.

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

He can't leave his hotel. You won't want to. From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Rules of Civility*—a transporting novel about a man who is ordered to spend the rest of his life inside a luxury hotel. In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors. Unexpectedly, his reduced circumstances provide him entry into a much larger world of emotional discovery. Brimming with humor, a glittering cast of characters, and one beautifully rendered scene after another, this singular novel casts a spell as it relates the count's endeavor to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be a man of purpose.

Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in American by Jill Leovy

On a warm spring evening in South Los Angeles, a young man is shot and killed on a sidewalk minutes away from his home, one of the thousands of black Americans murdered that year. His assailant runs down the street, jumps into an SUV, and vanishes, hoping to join the scores of killers in American cities who are never arrested for their crimes. But as soon as the case is assigned to Detective John Skaggs, the odds shift. Here is the kaleidoscopic story of the quintessential, but mostly ignored, American murder—a "ghettoside" killing, one young black man slaying another—and a brilliant and driven cadre of detectives whose creed is to pursue justice for forgotten

victims at all costs. *Ghettoside* is a fast-paced narrative of a devastating crime, an intimate portrait of detectives and a community bonded in tragedy, and a surprising new lens into the great subject of why murder happens in our cities—and how the epidemic of killings might yet be stopped.

The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic--and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World by Steven Johnson

It's the summer of 1854, and London is just emerging as one of the first modern cities in the world. But lacking the infrastructure—garbage removal, clean water, sewers—necessary to support its rapidly expanding population, the city has become the perfect breeding ground for a terrifying disease no one knows how to cure. As the cholera outbreak takes hold, a physician and a local curate are spurred to action—and ultimately solve the most pressing medical riddle of their time. In a triumph of multidisciplinary thinking, Johnson illuminates the intertwined histories of the spread of disease, the rise of cities, and the nature of scientific inquiry, offering both a riveting history and a powerful explanation of how it has shaped the world we live in.

Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side by Eve Ewing

“Failing schools. Underprivileged schools. Just plain *bad* schools.” That’s how Eve L. Ewing opens *Ghosts in the Schoolyard*: describing Chicago Public Schools from the outside. The way politicians and pundits and parents of kids who attend other schools talk about them, with a mix of pity and contempt. But Ewing knows Chicago Public Schools from the inside: as a student, then a teacher, and now a scholar who studies them. And that perspective has shown her that public schools are not buildings full of failures—they’re an integral part of their neighborhoods, at the heart of their communities, storehouses of history and memory that bring people together. Never was that role more apparent than in 2013 when Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced an unprecedented wave of school closings. Pitched simultaneously as a solution to a budget problem, a response to declining enrollments, and a chance to purge bad schools that were dragging down the whole system, the plan was met with a roar of protest from parents, students, and teachers. But if these schools were so bad, why did people care so much about keeping them open, to the point that some would even go on a hunger strike? Ewing’s answer begins with a story of systemic racism, inequality, bad faith, and distrust that stretches deep into Chicago history. Rooting her exploration in the historic African American neighborhood of Bronzeville, Ewing reveals that this issue is about much more than just schools. Black communities see the closing of their schools—schools that are certainly less than perfect but that are *theirs*—as one more in a long line of racist policies. The fight to keep them open is yet another front in the ongoing struggle of black people in America to build successful lives and achieve true self-determination.

The Gift of Rain by Tan Twan Eng

This remarkable debut saga of intrigue and akido flashes back to a darkly opulent WWII-era Malaya. Phillip Hutton, 72, lives in serene Penang comfort, occasionally training students as an akido master teacher of teachers. A visit from Michiko Murakami sends him spiraling back into his past, where he grows up the alienated half-British, half-Chinese son of a wealthy Penang trader in the years before WWII. When Hutton's father and three siblings leave him to run the family company one summer, he befriends a mysterious Japanese neighbor named Mr. Endo. Japan is on the opposing side of the coming war, but Endo paradoxically opts to train Hutton in the ways of aikido, in what both men come to see as the fulfillment of a prophecy that has haunted them for several lifetimes. Eng's characters are as deep and troubled as the time in which the story takes place, and he draws on a rich palette to create a sprawling portrait of a lesser explored corner of the war. Hutton's first-person narration is measured, believable and enthralling.

The Girl Who Smiled Beads: A Story of War and What Comes After by Clemantine Wamariya

“The plot provided by the universe was filled with starvation, war and rape. I would not—could not—live in that tale.” Clemantine Wamariya was six years old when her mother and father began to speak in whispers, when neighbors began to disappear, and when she heard the loud, ugly sounds her brother said were thunder. In 1994, she and her fifteen-year-old sister, Claire, fled the Rwandan massacre and spent the next six years migrating through seven African countries, searching for safety—perpetually hungry, imprisoned and abused, enduring and escaping refugee camps, finding unexpected kindness, witnessing inhuman cruelty. They did not know whether their parents were dead or alive. When Clemantine was twelve, she and her sister were granted refugee status in

the United States; there, in Chicago, their lives diverged. Though their bond remained unbreakable, Claire, who had for so long protected and provided for Clemantine, was a single mother struggling to make ends meet, while Clemantine was taken in by a family who raised her as their own. She seemed to live the American dream: attending private school, taking up cheerleading, and, ultimately, graduating from Yale. Yet the years of being treated as less than human, of going hungry and seeing death, could not be erased. She felt at the same time six years old and one hundred years old. In *The Girl Who Smiled Beads*, Clemantine provokes us to look beyond the label of “victim” and recognize the power of the imagination to transcend even the most profound injuries and aftershocks. Devastating yet beautiful, and bracingly original, it is a powerful testament to her commitment to constructing a life on her own terms.

The Girls in the Balcony: Women, Men, and The New York Times by Nan Robertson

This is what the women of The New York Times were up against in the 1970s, when they began their historic fight to end discrimination at an institution that prided itself on its liberal traditions and fairness. Nan Robertson was one of the members of the Women's Caucus and in this exhilarating and angering book she recounts events that she rightly describes as “a metaphor for what working women everywhere faced.” The saga of how the Caucus went up against the old boy network and prevailed will leave women readers everywhere feeling empowered to fight for parity in the workplace.

Go, Went, Gone by Jenny Erpenbeck

Go, Went, Gone is the masterful new novel by the acclaimed German writer Jenny Erpenbeck, “one of the most significant German-language novelists of her generation” (*The Millions*). The novel tells the tale of Richard, a retired classics professor who lives in Berlin. His wife has died, and he lives a routine existence until one day he spies some African refugees staging a hunger strike in Alexanderplatz. Curiosity turns to compassion and an inner transformation, as he visits their shelter, interviews them, and becomes embroiled in their harrowing fates. *Go, Went, Gone* is a scathing indictment of Western policy toward the European refugee crisis, but also a touching portrait of a man who finds he has more in common with the Africans than he realizes.

Gone to Soldiers by Marge Piercy

In a stunning tour-de-force, Marge Piercy has woven a tapestry of World War II, of six women and four men, who fought and died, worked and worried, and moved through the dizzying days of the war. A compelling chronicle of humans in conflict with inhuman events, *Gone To Soldiers* is an unforgettable reading experience and a stirring tribute to the remarkable survival of the human spirit.

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

In the year 2018, it seems as if women's anger has suddenly erupted into the public conversation. But long before Pantsuit Nation, before the Women's March, and before the #MeToo movement, women's anger was not only politically catalytic—but politically problematic. The story of female fury and its cultural significance demonstrates the long history of bitter resentment that has enshrouded women's slow rise to political power in America, as well as the ways that anger is received when it comes from women as opposed to when it comes from men. With eloquence and fervor, Rebecca tracks the history of female anger as political fuel—from suffragettes marching on the White House to office workers vacating their buildings after Clarence Thomas was confirmed to the Supreme Court. Here Traister explores women's anger at both men and other women; anger between ideological allies and foes; the varied ways anger is perceived based on its owner; as well as the history of caricaturing and delegitimizing female anger; and the way women's collective fury has become transformative political fuel—as is most certainly occurring today. She deconstructs society's (and the media's) condemnation of female emotion (notably, rage) and the impact of their resulting repercussions.

The Good Pirates of the Forgotten Bayous: Fighting to Save a Way of Life in the Wake of Hurricane Katrina by Ken Wells

Author and journalist Wells, a native of Louisiana bayou country, was a Wall Street Journal reporter when Katrina struck in 2005. Arguably more horrific than the scene in New Orleans were the bayou parishes, particularly St. Bernard and Plaquemines, where the eye of Katrina came on land. After hitching a National Guard helicopter to St. Bernard Parish, Wells meets Ricky Robin, whose ancestors had been hunting, fishing, and pirating the bayous for over 250 years. Robin became Wells's guide, relating harrowing stories of the storm, as even the parish president and his staff were trapped, their emergency vehicles flooded or washed away entirely; the first outside

help to reach them was not FEMA, but a squad of Canadian Mounted Police. Wells also examines the disaster's "unnatural causes," like the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet, a shipping canal dredged from Lake Pontchartrain to the Gulf of Mexico, which provided an inland channel for the Category 5 storm surge driven by Katrina. Afterwards, the failed levee system prevented filthy, polluted water from draining back to the ocean, turning much of the bayou into a cesspool. Vivid prose, first-hand testimony and solid, heartbreaking reportage make this disaster debrief hard to put down, and worth the attention of every U.S. citizen.

The Good Soldiers by David Finkel

A success story in the headlines, the surge in Iraq was an ordeal of hard fighting and anguished trauma for the American soldiers on the ground, according to this riveting war report. *Washington Post* correspondent Finkel chronicles the 15-month deployment of the 2-16 Infantry Battalion in Baghdad during 2007 and 2008, when the chaos in Iraq subsided to a manageable uproar. For the 2-16, waning violence still meant wild firefights, nerve-wracking patrols through hostile neighborhoods where every trash pile could hide an IED, and dozens of comrades killed and maimed. At the fraught center of the story is Col. Ralph Kauzlarich, whose dogged can-do optimism—his motto is It's all good—pits itself against declining morale and whispers of mutiny. While vivid and moving, Finkel's grunt's-eye view is limited; the soldiers' perspective is one of constant improvisatory reaction to attacks and crises, and we get little sense of exactly how and why the new American counterinsurgency methods calmed the Iraqi maelstrom. Still, Finkel's keen firsthand reportage, its grit and impact only heightened by the literary polish of his prose, gives us one of the best accounts yet of the American experience in Iraq.

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Novel by John Steinbeck, published in 1939. Set during the Great Depression, it traces the migration of an Oklahoma Dust Bowl family to California and their subsequent hardships as migrant farm workers. It won a Pulitzer Prize in 1940. The work did much to publicize the injustices of migrant labor. The narrative, interrupted by prose-poem interludes, chronicles the struggles of the Joad family's life on a failing Oklahoma farm, their difficult journey to California, and their disillusionment once they arrive there and fall prey to a parasitic economic system. The insularity of the Joads--Ma's obsession with family togetherness, son Tom's self-centeredness, and daughter Rose of Sharon's materialism--ultimately gives way to a sense of universal community.

The Grass Dancer by Susan Power

A major talent debuts with this beguiling novel whose characters are Dakota Sioux and their spirit ancestors. Covering some of the same themes as Louise Erdrich but displaying her own distinctive voice and transcendent imagination, Power has produced an authentic portrait of Native American culture and characters who are as resilient and tangible as the grass moving over the Great Plains. In interconnected stories that begin in 1981 and range back to 1864, the residents of a Sioux reservation endure poverty, epidemic illness, injustice and--no less importantly--jealousy, greed, anger and unrequited love. The tales begin and end with Harley Wind Soldier, a 17-year-old whose soul is a "black, empty hole" because his mother has not spoken a word since the accident 17 years earlier in which Harley's father and brother died. Eventually we discover the true circumstances surrounding that event and other secrets--of clandestine love affairs, of childrens' paternity--that stretch back several generations but hold a grip on the present. Meanwhile, Harley falls in love with enchanting Pumpkin, an amazingly adept grass dancer whose fate will make readers gasp. Mercury Thunder and her daughter Anna use magic in a sinister way, and tragedy results. Herod Small War, a Yuwipi (interpreter of dreams), tries to bring his community into harmony with the spiritual world. The existence of ghosts in the real world is accepted with calm belief by the characters, who know the old legends and understand that the direction of their lives is determined by their gods and ancestors. Power weaves historical events--the Apollo Moon landing; the 19th-century Great Plains drought--into her narrative, reinforcing the seamless coexistence of the real and the spirit realm. A consummate storyteller whose graceful prose is plangent with lyrical metaphor and sensuous detail, she deftly uses suspense, humor, irony and the gradual revelation of dramatic disclosures to compose a tapestry of human life. Seduced by her humane vision and its convincing depiction, one absorbs the traditions and lore of the Sioux community with a sense of wonder reflecting that with which the characters view the natural world. This is a book that begs to be read at one sitting, and then again.

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* charts the course of orphan Pip Pirrip's life as it is transformed by a vast, mysterious inheritance. A terrifying encounter with the escaped convict Abel Magwitch in a graveyard on the wild Kent marshes; a summons to meet the bitter, decrepit Miss Havisham and her beautiful, cold-hearted ward Estella at Satis House; the sudden generosity of a mysterious benefactor - these form a series of events that change the orphaned Pip's life forever, and he eagerly abandons his humble station as an apprentice to blacksmith Joe Gargery, beginning a new life as a gentleman. Charles Dickens's haunting late novel depicts Pip's education and development through adversity as he discovers the true nature of his identity, and his 'great expectations.'

Green Island by Shawna Yang Ryan

February 28, 1947: Trapped inside the family home amid an uprising that has rocked Taipei, Dr. Tsai delivers his youngest daughter, the unnamed narrator of *Green Island*, just after midnight as the city is plunged into martial law. In the following weeks, as the Chinese Nationalists act to crush the opposition, Dr. Tsai becomes one of the many thousands of people dragged away from their families and thrown into prison. His return, after more than a decade, is marked by alienation from his loved ones and paranoia among his community—conflicts that loom over the growing bond he forms with his youngest daughter. Years later, this troubled past follows her to the United States, where, as a mother and a wife, she too is forced to decide between what is right and what might save her family—the same choice she witnessed her father make many years before. As the novel sweeps across six decades and two continents, the life of the narrator shadows the course of Taiwan's history from the end of Japanese colonial rule to the decades under martial law and, finally, to Taiwan's transformation into a democracy. But, above all, *Green Island* is a lush and lyrical story of a family and a nation grappling with the nuances of complicity and survival, raising the question: how far would you be willing to go for the ones you love?

Gunfight: The Battle Over the Right to Bear Arms in America by Adam Winkler

Gunfight is a timely work examining America's four-centuries-long political battle over gun control and the right to bear arms. In this definitive and provocative history, Adam Winkler reveals how guns—not abortion, race, or religion—are at the heart of America's cultural divide. Using the landmark 2008 case *District of Columbia v. Heller*—which invalidated a law banning handguns in the nation's capital—as a springboard, Winkler brilliantly weaves together the dramatic stories of gun-rights advocates and gun-control lobbyists, providing often unexpected insights into the venomous debate that now cleaves our nation

Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

New York Times columnist Kristof and his wife, WuDunn, a former *Times* reporter, make a brilliantly argued case for investing in the health and autonomy of women worldwide. More girls have been killed in the last fifty years, precisely because they were girls, than men were killed in all the wars of the twentieth century, they write, detailing the rampant gendercide in the developing world, particularly in India and Pakistan. Far from merely making moral appeals, the authors posit that it is impossible for countries to climb out of poverty if only a fraction of women (9% in Pakistan, for example) participate in the labor force. China's meteoric rise was due to women's economic empowerment: 80% of the factory workers in the Guangdong province are female; six of the 10 richest self-made women in the world are Chinese. The authors reveal local women to be the most effective change agents: The best role for Americans... isn't holding the microphone at the front of the rally but writing the checks, an assertion they contradict in their unnecessary profiles of American volunteers finding compensations for the lack of shopping malls and Netflix movies in making a difference abroad.

Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell

England, 1580: The Black Death creeps across the land, an ever-present threat, infecting the healthy, the sick, the old and the young alike. The end of days is near, but life always goes on. A young Latin tutor—penniless and bullied by a violent father—falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman. Agnes is a wild creature who walks her family's land with a falcon on her glove and is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon, she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast,

centrifugal force in the life of her young husband, whose career on the London stage is just taking off when his beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever.

The Hare with Amber Eyes by Edmund de Waal

Edmund de Waal is a world-famous ceramicist. Having spent thirty years making beautiful pots—which are then sold, collected, and handed on—he has a particular sense of the secret lives of objects. When he inherited a collection of 264 tiny Japanese wood and ivory carvings, called netsuke, he wanted to know who had touched and held them, and how the collection had managed to survive. And so begins this extraordinarily moving memoir and detective story as de Waal discovers both the story of the netsuke and of his family, the Ephrussis, over five generations. A nineteenth-century banking dynasty in Paris and Vienna, the Ephrussis were as rich and respected as the Rothschilds. Yet by the end of the World War II, when the netsuke were hidden from the Nazis in Vienna, this collection of very small carvings was all that remained of their vast empire.

The Heart of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present by David Treuer

The received idea of Native American history—as promulgated by books like Dee Brown's mega-bestselling 1970 *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*—has been that American Indian history essentially ended with the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. Not only did one hundred fifty Sioux die at the hands of the U. S. Cavalry, the sense was, but Native civilization did as well. Growing up Ojibwe on a reservation in Minnesota, training as an anthropologist, and researching Native life past and present for his nonfiction and novels, David Treuer has uncovered a different narrative. Because they did not disappear—and not despite but rather because of their intense struggles to preserve their language, their traditions, their families, and their very existence—the story of American Indians since the end of the nineteenth century to the present is one of unprecedented resourcefulness and reinvention. In *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee*, Treuer melds history with reportage and memoir. Tracing the tribes' distinctive cultures from first contact, he explores how the depredations of each era spawned new modes of survival. The devastating seizures of land gave rise to increasingly sophisticated legal and political maneuvering that put the lie to the myth that Indians don't know or care about property. The forced assimilation of their children at government-run boarding schools incubated a unifying Native identity. Conscription in the US military and the pull of urban life brought Indians into the mainstream and modern times, even as it steered the emerging shape of self-rule and spawned a new generation of resistance. *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee* is the essential, intimate story of a resilient people in a transformative era.

Heartland: A Memoir of Being Broke and Working Hard in the Richest Country on Earth by Sarah Smarsh

During Sarah Smarsh's turbulent childhood in Kansas in the 1980s and 1990s, the forces of cyclical poverty and the country's changing economic policies solidified her family's place among the working poor. By telling the story of her life and the lives of the people she loves, Smarsh challenges us to look more closely at the class divide in our country and examine the myths about people thought to be less because they *earn* less. Her personal history affirms the corrosive impact intergenerational poverty can have on individuals, families, and communities, and she explores this idea as lived experience, metaphor, and level of consciousness. Smarsh was born a fifth generation Kansas wheat farmer on her paternal side and the product of generations of teen mothers on her maternal side. Through her experiences growing up as the daughter of a dissatisfied young mother and raised predominantly by her grandmother on a farm thirty miles west of Wichita, we are given a unique and essential look into the lives of poor and working-class Americans living in the heartland. Combining memoir with powerful analysis and cultural commentary, *Heartland* is an uncompromising look at class, identity, and the particular perils of having less in a country known for its excess.

Here I Am: The Story of Tim Hetherington, War Photographer by Alan Huffman

Tim Hetherington (1970-2011) was one of the world's most distinguished and dedicated photojournalists, whose career was tragically cut short when he died in a mortar blast while covering the Libyan Civil War. Tim won many awards for his war reporting, and was nominated for an Academy Award for the critically acclaimed documentary, *Restrepo*. Hetherington's dedication to his career led him time after time into war zones, and unlike some other journalists, he did not pack up after the story had broken. In *Here I Am*, journalist and freelance writer Alan Huffman tells Hetherington's life story, and through it analyzes what it means to be a war reporter in the twenty-first century. Huffman recounts Hetherington's life from his first interests in photography, through his critical role in reporting the Liberian Civil War, to his tragic death in Libya. Huffman also traces Hetherington's photographic milestones, from his iconic and prize-winning photographs of Liberian children, to the celebrated

portraits of sleeping U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan. *Here I Am* explores the risks, challenges, and thrills of war reporting, and is a testament to the unique work of people like Hetherington, who risk their lives to give a voice to people ravaged by war.

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi

Ghana, eighteenth century: two half-sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery. *Homegoing* follows the parallel paths of these sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi's extraordinary novel illuminates slavery's troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

The Hour of Land: A Personal Topography of America's National Parks by Terry Tempest Williams

America's national parks are breathing spaces in a world in which such spaces are steadily disappearing, which is why more than 300 million people visit the parks each year. Now Terry Tempest Williams, the *New York Times* bestselling author of the environmental classic *Refuge* and the beloved memoir *When Women Were Birds*, returns with *The Hour of Land*, a literary celebration of our national parks and an exploration of what they mean to us and what we mean to them. From the Grand Tetons in Wyoming to Acadia in Maine to Big Bend in Texas, Williams creates a series of lyrical portraits that illuminate the unique grandeur of each place while delving into what it means to shape a landscape with its own evolutionary history into something of our own making. Part memoir, part natural history, and part social critique, *The Hour of Land* is a meditation and a manifesto on why wild lands matter to the soul of America.

House at Sugar Beach: In Search of a Lost African Childhood by Helene Cooper

Journalist Cooper has a compelling story to tell: born into a wealthy, powerful, dynastic Liberian family descended from freed American slaves, she came of age in the 1980s when her homeland slipped into civil war. On Cooper's 14th birthday, her mother gives her a diamond pendant and sends her to school. Cooper is convinced that somehow our world would right itself. That afternoon her uncle Cecil, the minister of foreign affairs, is executed. Cooper combines deeply personal and wide-ranging political strands in her memoir. There's the halcyon early childhood in Africa, a history of the early settlement of Liberia, an account of the violent, troubled years as several regimes are overthrown, and the story of the family's exile to America. A journalist-as-a-young-woman narrative unfolds as Cooper reports the career path that led her from local to national papers in the U.S.

The House of Mirth by Edith Wharton

"The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth," warns Ecclesiastes 7:4, and so does the novel by Edith Wharton that takes its title from this call to heed. New York at the turn of the century was a time of opulence and frivolity for those who could afford it. But for those who couldn't and yet wanted desperately to keep up with the whirlwind, like Wharton's charming Lily Bart, it was something else altogether: a gilded cage rather than the Gilded Age. One of Wharton's earliest descriptions of her heroine, in the library of her bachelor friend and sometime suitor Lawrence Selden, indicates that she appears "as though she were a captured dryad subdued to the conventions of the drawing room." Indeed, herein lies Lily's problem. She has, we're told, "been brought up to be ornamental," and yet her spirit is larger than what this ancillary role requires. By today's standards she would be nothing more than a mild rebel, but in the era into which Wharton drops her unmercifully, this tiny spark of character, combined with numerous assaults by vicious society women and bad luck, ultimately renders Lily persona non grata. Her own ambivalence about her position serves to open the door to disaster: several times she is on the verge of "good" marriage and squanders it at the last moment, unwilling to play by the rules of a society that produces, as she calls them, "poor, miserable, marriageable girls."

House of Stone by Anthony Shadid

In the summer of 2006, racing through Lebanon to report on the Israeli invasion, Anthony Shadid found himself in his family's ancestral hometown of Marjayoun. There, he discovered his great-grandfather's once magnificent estate in near ruins, devastated by war. One year later, Shadid returned to Marjayoun, not to chronicle the

violence, but to rebuild in its wake. So begins the story of a battle-scarred home and a journalist's wounded spirit, and of how reconstructing the one came to fortify the other. In this bittersweet and resonant memoir, Shadid creates a mosaic of past and present, tracing the house's renewal alongside the history of his family's flight from Lebanon and resettlement in America around the turn of the twentieth century. In the process, he memorializes a lost world and provides profound insights into a shifting Middle East.

The Housekeeper and the Professor by Yoko Ogawa

Ogawa weaves a poignant tale of beauty, heart and sorrow in her exquisite new novel. Narrated by the Housekeeper, the characters are known only as the Professor and Root, the Housekeeper's 10-year-old son, nicknamed by the Professor because the shape of his hair and head remind the Professor of the square root symbol. A brilliant mathematician, the Professor was seriously injured in a car accident and his short-term memory only lasts for 80 minutes. He can remember his theorems and favorite baseball players, but the Housekeeper must reintroduce herself every morning, sometimes several times a day. The Professor, who adores Root, is able to connect with the child through baseball, and the Housekeeper learns how to work with him through the memory lapses until they can come together on common ground, at least for 80 minutes.

Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson

Ruth narrates the story of how she and her younger sister Lucille are raised by a succession of relatives in the fictional town of Fingerbone, Idaho. Eventually their aunt Sylvie (who has been living as a transient) comes to take care of them. Initially they become a close-knit group, but as Lucille grows up she comes to dislike their eccentric lifestyle and she moves out. Then when Ruth's well-being is being questioned by the courts, Sylvie returns to living on the road and takes Ruth with her.

The novel treats the subject of housekeeping, not only in the domestic sense of cleaning, but in the larger sense of keeping a spiritual home for one's self and family in the face of loss, for the girls experience a series of abandonments as they come of age.

How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent by Julia Alvarez

This sensitive story of four sisters who must adjust to life in America after having to flee from the Dominican Republic is told through a series of episodes beginning in adulthood, when their lives have been shaped by U. S. mores, and moving backwards to their wealthy childhood on the island. Adapting to American life is difficult and causes embarrassment when friends meet their parents, anger as they are bullied and called "spics," and identity confusion following summer trips to the family compound in the Dominican Republic. These interconnected vignettes of family life, resilience, and love are skillfully intertwined and offer young adults a perspective on immigration and families as well as a look at America through Hispanic eyes. This unique coming-of-age tale is a feast of stories that will enchant and captivate readers.

How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America by Clint Smith

Beginning in his hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader on an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks—those that are honest about the past and those that are not—that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation's collective history, and ourselves. It is the story of the Monticello Plantation in Virginia, the estate where Thomas Jefferson wrote letters espousing the urgent need for liberty while enslaving more than four hundred people. It is the story of the Whitney Plantation, one of the only former plantations devoted to preserving the experience of the enslaved people whose lives and work sustained it. It is the story of Angola, a former plantation-turned-maximum-security prison in Louisiana that is filled with Black men who work across the 18,000-acre land for virtually no pay. And it is the story of Blandford Cemetery, the final resting place of tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers. A deeply researched and transporting exploration of the legacy of slavery and its imprint on centuries of American history, *How the Word Is Passed* illustrates how some of our country's most essential stories are hidden in plain view—whether in places we might drive by on our way to work, holidays such as Juneteenth, or entire neighborhoods like downtown Manhattan, where the brutal history of the trade in enslaved men, women, and children has been deeply imprinted. Informed by scholarship and brought to life by the story of people living today, Smith's debut work of nonfiction is a landmark of reflection and insight that offers a new understanding of the hopeful role that memory and history can play in making sense of our country and how it has come to be.

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize. *I Am Malala* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons. *I Am Malala* will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

In this first of five volumes of autobiography, poet Maya Angelou recounts a youth filled with disappointment, frustration, tragedy, and finally hard-won independence. Sent at a young age to live with her grandmother in Arkansas, Angelou learned a great deal from this exceptional woman and the tightly knit black community there. These very lessons carried her throughout the hardships she endured later in life, including a tragic occurrence while visiting her mother in St. Louis and her formative years spent in California--where an unwanted pregnancy changed her life forever. Marvelously told, with Angelou's "gift for language and observation," this "remarkable autobiography by an equally remarkable black woman from Arkansas captures, indelibly, a world of which most Americans are shamefully ignorant."

An Imperfect Offering: Humanitarian Action for the Twenty-First Century by James Orbinski

Judging by his biography, James Orbinski is superhuman. As a med student in the late '80s, he spent a year researching pediatric AIDS in Rwanda, which opened his eyes to the human consequences of political failure. After cofounding the Canadian chapter of Doctors Without Borders, Orbinski embarked on relief missions to the world's most chaotic pockets, including war-torn Somalia and the refugee camps of Afghanistan. When reports of genocide filtered out of Rwanda, Orbinski led a small team that--with scant supplies--tended to the sick and wounded in Kigali. Within 14 weeks, 800,000 people were killed as the international community sat idly by, and Orbinski experienced a profound personal crisis. He emerged with a renewed commitment to his role as doctor, not only as a healer but as a voice for those who have been disastrously failed by governments. In *An Imperfect Offering*, he bears witness to surreal levels of suffering, and his actions seem impossibly heroic. But descriptions of his patients' courage and his own moral challenges make this story an exploration of what it means to be human, and what our responsibilities are to each other. Through his story, the suffering of millions is no longer unimaginable, and indifference is not an option.

In Country by Bobbie Ann Mason

Sam Hughes, whose father was killed in Vietnam, lives in rural Kentucky with her uncle Emmett, a veteran whom she suspects is suffering from exposure to Agent Orange. Sam is a typical teenager, trying to choose a college, anticipating a new job at the local Burger Boy, sharing intimacies with her friend Dawn, breaking up with her high school boyfriend, and dealing with her feelings for Tom, one of Emmett's buddies. Sam feels that her life is bound to the war in Vietnam and becomes obsessed with the idea because of the reluctance of her family and Tom to talk about it. Her father's diary finally provides the insight she seeks, insight she cannot accept until she has visited the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C. *In Country* is both a powerful and touching novel of America that analyzes the impact of the 1960s on the culture of the 1980s and a beautiful portrayal of an often forgotten area of the country.

In the Country of Men by Hisham Matar

This is the story of the impact of small revolutions, not on the men and women who participate in the upheavals, but on the children who barely understand the world in which they find themselves. Suleiman is a nine-year-old in

Qaddafi's Libya, proud of his country and his father, and worried about his mother's "illness." He is unprepared to understand the danger his father, a believer in democracy, is in, or the role that he, just a child, must play to protect his family. What is most disturbing is that he must play the games of adults, but without knowing the rules.

In the Empire of Ice: Encounters in a Changing Landscape by Gretel Ehrlich

In this gripping circumnavigation of the Arctic Circle, Gretel Ehrlich paints a vivid portrait of the indigenous cultures that inhabit the starkly beautiful boreal landscape surrounding the Arctic Ocean, an ice-bound wilderness that includes northern Siberia, northwestern Greenland, Canada's vast Nunavut, and northern Alaska. Ehrlich's expedition, supported by the National Geographic Society, documents what remains of these cultures, specifically the similarities and differences among them, including hunting traditions, shamanic and ceremonial practices, languages and legends—the ways in which they have survived, or have been assimilated, and how they are adapting to the impact of climate change on their ice-age cultures. Ehrlich is fascinated by what she calls the ecology of culture—the ways in which the human presence of indigenous Arctic people is intricately interwoven with land, rock, river, sea, and ice. Depicting human-caused climate change as only the latest and most destructive of the ills and abuses first peoples have been suffering for 250 years, Ehrlich's haunting and lovely prose portrays ancient tribes and traditions on the edge of extinction and captures the austere beauty of their various lifeways in the frozen dreamscape of the world they have always known.

In the Shadow of the Buddha: One Man's Journey of Discovery in Tibet by Matteo Pistono

From Wyoming to Himalayan meditation caves to Capitol Hill, Pistono's account of his quest for spiritual illumination and political justice is heartbreaking and awe-inspiring. Pistono, raised with the belief that social activism is a core responsibility, began traveling to Tibet in 1999, motivated, in part, by his fascination with Tertön Sogyal, a nineteenth-century mystic and "Tibet's great champion and protector." Pistono follows in Tertön Sogyal's footsteps while telling the mystic's astonishing story, from his father's insistence that he join a band of highway robbers to serving as teacher to the XIII Dalai Lama and guiding Tibet through political turmoil and the intrusion of British forces. Traveling as both a journalist and a Buddhist pilgrim, Pistono also found himself at the crossroads of spirituality and politics when he was asked to serve as a human-rights courier, carrying to the West hard evidence of China's systematic brutality in occupied Tibet. Pistono tells chilling cloak-and-dagger tales and offers mesmerizing descriptions of haunting landscapes and miracle-performing lamas. But what shimmers most in this riveting and mysterious chronicle, which includes a foreword by Tibet activist Richard Gere, is the courage of those dedicated to "the Dalai Lama's vision for real autonomy and religious freedom in Tibet through nonviolent means."

In These Girls, Hope Is a Muscle by Madeleine Blais

When Pulitzer Prize-winner Blais pokes gentle fun at Amherst, Mass., where an infuriated teen-aged athlete in the heat of the fray may yell, "You ignore your inner child!" you suspect this will be a special book. And it is, as the reader follows the Amherst High girls basketball team—the Lady Hurricanes—in the 1992-93 season, from game one on December 15 to the final game on March 16, when they all but obliterated Haverhill, 74-36, to win the state championship. While this is the story of well-bred, upper-middle class, genteel girls who learned to be tough, it is also a picture of a changing period in American sports history, when a town rallied around its female athletes in a way that had previously been reserved for males. Alternately funny, exciting and moving, the book should be enjoyed not only by girls and women who have played sports but also those who wanted to but let themselves be discouraged.

The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

In the early 1830s, Sarah Grimké and her younger sister, Angelina, were the most infamous women in America. They had rebelled so vocally against their family, society, and their religion that they were reviled, pursued, and exiled from their home city of Charleston, South Carolina, under threat of death. Their crime was speaking out in favor of liberty and equality and for African American slaves and women, arguments too radically humanist even for the abolitionists of their time. Their lectures drew crowds of thousands, even (shockingly, then) men, and their most popular pamphlet directly inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*--published 15 years later. These women took many of the first brutal backlashes against feminists and abolitionists, but even their names are barely known now. Sue Monk Kidd became fascinated by these sisters, and the question of what compelled

them to risk certain fury and say with the full force of their convictions what others had not (or could not). She discovered that in 1803, when Sarah turned 11, her parents gave her the “human present” of 10-year-old Hetty to be her handmaid, and Sarah taught Hetty to read, an act of rebellion met with punishment so severe that the slave girl died of “an unspecified disease” shortly after her beating. Kidd knew then that she had to try to bring Hetty back to life (“I would imagine what might have been,” she tells us), and she starts these girls' stories here, both cast in roles they despise. She trades chapters between their voices across decades, imagining the Grimké sisters' courageous metamorphosis and, perhaps more vitally, she gives Hetty her own life of struggle and transformation. Few characters have ever been so alive to me as Hetty and Sarah. Long after you finish this book, you'll feel its courageous heart beating inside your own.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

We rely, in this world, on the visual aspects of humanity as a means of learning who we are. This, Ralph Ellison argues convincingly, is a dangerous habit. A classic from the moment it first appeared in 1952, *Invisible Man* chronicles the travels of its narrator, a young, nameless black man, as he moves through the hellish levels of American intolerance and cultural blindness. Searching for a context in which to know himself, he exists in a very peculiar state. “I am an invisible man,” he says in his prologue. “When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination--indeed, everything and anything except me.” But this is hard-won self-knowledge, earned over the course of many years.

Iran Awakening: One Woman's Journey to Reclaim Her Life and Country by Shirin Ebadi

The moving, inspiring memoir of one of the great women of our times, Shirin Ebadi, winner of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize and advocate for the oppressed, whose spirit has remained strong in the face of political persecution and despite the challenges she has faced raising a family while pursuing her work. Best known in this country as the lawyer working tirelessly on behalf of Canadian photojournalist, Zara Kazemi – raped, tortured and murdered in Iran – Dr. Ebadi offers us a vivid picture of the struggles of one woman against the system. The book movingly chronicles her childhood in a loving, untraditional family, her upbringing before the Revolution in 1979 that toppled the Shah, her marriage and her religious faith, as well as her life as a mother and lawyer battling an oppressive regime in the courts while bringing up her girls at home.

Outspoken, controversial, Shirin Ebadi is one of the most fascinating women today. She rose quickly to become the first female judge in the country; but when the religious authorities declared women unfit to serve as judges she was demoted to clerk in the courtroom she had once presided over. She eventually fought her way back as a human rights lawyer, defending women and children in politically charged cases that most lawyers were afraid to represent. She has been arrested and been the target of assassination, but through it all has spoken out with quiet bravery on behalf of the victims of injustice and discrimination and become a powerful voice for change, almost universally embraced as a hero. Her memoir is a gripping story – a must-read for anyone interested in Zara Kazemi's case, in the life of a remarkable woman, or in understanding the political and religious upheaval in our world.

Jane Addams: Spirit in Action by Louise W. Knight

Jane Addams (1860–1935) was one of the leading figures of the Progressive era. This “pragmatic visionary,” as Knight calls her, is best known as the creator of Hull House, a model settlement house offering training, shelter, and culture for Chicago's poor. Addams also involved herself in a long list of Progressive campaigns. Her rhetorical skills as both speaker and writer made her internationally recognized as a supporter of civil rights, woman suffrage, and labor reform. Using brief quotes and contextual details, Knight (*Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy*) describes her subject's journey from a Victorian upbringing that stressed family duty through her practice of lofty “benevolence” as a young woman to the confidence to unhesitatingly risk her substantial reputation advocating pacifism during WWI. Her continuing peace activities earned her a Nobel Peace Prize in 1931, but antagonized many longstanding supporters. In this well-supported and appealing portrait of an iconic American, Knight emphasizes Addams's struggle to redefine Victorian womanhood and claim her right to “possess authority in the public realm” and “exercise authority” as a lobbying feminist who helped women acquire the right to vote.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

Jane Eyre (1847) has enjoyed huge popularity since first publication, and its success owes much to its exceptional emotional power. Jane Eyre, a penniless orphan, is engaged as governess at Thornfield Hall by the mysterious Mr. Rochester. Her integrity and independence are tested to the limit as their love for each other grows, and the secrets of Mr. Rochester's past are revealed.

Janesville: An American Story by Amy Goldstein

A *Washington Post* reporter's intimate account of the fallout from the closing of a General Motors' assembly plant in Janesville, Wisconsin—Paul Ryan's hometown—and a larger story of the hollowing of the American middle class. This is the story of what happens to an industrial town in the American heartland when its factory stills—but it's not the familiar tale. Most observers record the immediate shock of vanished jobs, but few stay around long enough to notice what happens next, when a community with a can-do spirit tries to pick itself up. Pulitzer Prize-winner Amy Goldstein has spent years immersed in Janesville, Wisconsin, where the nation's oldest operating General Motors plant shut down in the midst of the Great Recession, two days before Christmas of 2008. Now, with intelligence, sympathy, and insight into what connects and divides people in an era of economic upheaval, she makes one of America's biggest political issues human. Her reporting takes the reader deep into the lives of autoworkers, educators, bankers, politicians, and job re-trainers to show why it's so hard in the twenty-first century to recreate a healthy, prosperous working class. For this is not just a Janesville story or a Midwestern story. It's an American story.

The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan

Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who's "saying" the stories. In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. "To despair was to wish back for something already lost. Or to prolong what was already unbearable." Forty years later the stories and history continue. With wit and sensitivity, Amy Tan examines the sometimes painful, often tender, and always deep connection between mothers and daughters. As each woman reveals her secrets, trying to unravel the truth about her life, the strings become more tangled, more entwined. Mothers boast or despair over daughters, and daughters roll their eyes even as they feel the inextricable tightening of their matriarchal ties. Tan is an astute storyteller, enticing readers to immerse themselves into these lives of complexity and mystery.

Jubilee by Margaret Walker

Here is the classic--and true--story of Vvry, the child of a white plantation owner and his black mistress, a Southern Civil War heroine to rival Scarlett O'Hara. Vvry bears witness to the South's prewar opulence and its brutality, to its wartime ruin and the subsequent promise of Reconstruction. It is a story that Margaret Walker heard as a child from her grandmother, the real Vvry's daughter. The author spent thirty years researching the novel so that the world might know the intelligent, strong, and brave black woman called Vvry. The phenomenal acclaim this best-selling book has achieved from readers black and white, young and old, attests to her success.

Jude the Obscure by Thomas Hardy

Hardy's last and most controversial novel, *Jude the Obscure* caused much outrage when it was published in 1895. Jude Fawley, poor and working-class, longs to study at the University of Christminster, but his ambitions to go to university are thwarted by class prejudice and his entrapment in a loveless marriage. He falls in love with his unconventional cousin, Sue Bridehead, and their refusal to marry when free to do so confirms their rejection of and by the world around them. The shocking fate that overtakes them is an indictment of a rigid and uncaring society.

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

What is the one commonality of people on death row? If the victim is white, the perpetrator is 11 times more likely to be condemned to die than if the victim is black. When Stevenson was a 23-year-old Harvard law student, he started an internship in Georgia where his first assignment was to deliver a message to a man living on death row. This assignment became his calling: representing the innocent, the inadequately defended, the children, the

domestic abuse survivors, the mentally ill—the imprisoned. This fast-paced book reads like a John Grisham novel. One of those profiled, Walter, was at a barbecue with over 100 people at the time of the murder he was accused of, and spent more than six years on death row. The stories include those of children, teens, and adults who have been in the system since they were teens. This is a title for the many young adults who have a parent or loved one in the prison system and the many others who are interested in social justice, the law, and the death penalty.

Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann

In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, they rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe. Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. Her relatives were shot and poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as more and more members of the tribe began to die under mysterious circumstances. In this last remnant of the Wild West—where oilmen like J. P. Getty made their fortunes and where desperadoes like Al Spencer, the “Phantom Terror,” roamed—many of those who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered. As the death toll climbed to more than twenty-four, the FBI took up the case. It was one of the organization’s first major homicide investigations and the bureau badly bungled the case. In desperation, the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including one of the only American Indian agents in the bureau. The agents infiltrated the region, struggling to adopt the latest techniques of detection. Together with the Osage they began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history. In *Killers of the Flower Moon*, David Grann revisits a shocking series of crimes in which dozens of people were murdered in cold blood. Based on years of research and startling new evidence, the book is a masterpiece of narrative nonfiction, as each step in the investigation reveals a series of sinister secrets and reversals. But more than that, it is a searing indictment of the callousness and prejudice toward American Indians that allowed the murderers to operate with impunity for so long. *Killers of the Flower Moon* is utterly compelling, but also emotionally devastating.

King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa by Adam Hochschild

Hochschild's superb, engrossing chronicle focuses on one of the great, horrifying and nearly forgotten crimes of the century: greedy Belgian King Leopold II's rape of the Congo, the vast colony he seized as his private fiefdom in 1885. Until 1909, he used his mercenary army to force slaves into mines and rubber plantations, burn villages, mete out sadistic punishments, including dismemberment, and commit mass murder. The hero of Hochschild's highly personal, even gossipy narrative is Liverpool shipping agent Edmund Morel, who, having stumbled on evidence of Leopold's atrocities, became an investigative journalist and launched an international Congo reform movement with support from Mark Twain, Booker T. Washington and Arthur Conan Doyle. Other pivotal figures include Joseph Conrad, whose disgust with Leopold's "civilizing mission" led to *Heart of Darkness*; and black American journalist George Washington Williams, who wrote the first systematic indictment of Leopold's colonial regime in 1890. Hochschild (*The Unquiet Ghost*) documents the machinations of Leopold, who won over President Chester A. Arthur and bribed a U.S. senator to derail Congo protest resolutions. He also draws provocative parallels between Leopold's predatory one-man rule and the strong-arm tactics of Mobutu Sese Seko, who ruled the successor state of Zaire. But most of all it is a story of the bestiality of one challenged by the heroism of many in an increasingly democratic world.

Know My Name by Chanel Miller

She was known to the world as Emily Doe when she stunned millions with a letter. Brock Turner had been sentenced to just six months in county jail after he was found sexually assaulting her on Stanford's campus. Her victim impact statement was posted on BuzzFeed, where it instantly went viral--viewed by eleven million people within four days, it was translated globally and read on the floor of Congress; it inspired changes in California law and the recall of the judge in the case. Thousands wrote to say that she had given them the courage to share their own experiences of assault for the first time. Now she reclaims her identity to tell her story of trauma, transcendence, and the power of words. It was the perfect case, in many ways--there were eyewitnesses, Turner ran away, physical evidence was immediately secured. But her struggles with isolation and shame during the aftermath and the trial reveal the oppression victims face in even the best-case scenarios. Her story illuminates a

culture biased to protect perpetrators, indicts a criminal justice system designed to fail the most vulnerable, and, ultimately, shines with the courage required to move through suffering and live a full and beautiful life.

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren

Geobiologist Hope Jahren has spent her life studying trees, flowers, seeds, and soil. *Lab Girl* is her revelatory treatise on plant life—but it is also a celebration of the lifelong curiosity, humility, and passion that drive every scientist. In these pages, Hope takes us back to her Minnesota childhood, where she spent hours in unfettered play in her father's college laboratory. She tells us how she found a sanctuary in science, learning to perform lab work “with both the heart and the hands.” She introduces us to Bill, her brilliant, eccentric lab manager. And she extends the mantle of *scientist* to each one of her readers, inviting us to join her in observing and protecting our environment. Warm, luminous, compulsively readable, *Lab Girl* vividly demonstrates the mountains that we can move when love and work come together.

Lands of Lost Borders: A Journey on the Silk Road by Kate Harris

As a teenager, Kate Harris realized that the career she craved—to be an explorer, equal parts swashbuckler and metaphysician—had gone extinct. From what she could tell of the world from small-town Ontario, the likes of Marco Polo and Magellan had mapped the whole earth; there was nothing left to be discovered. Looking beyond this planet, she decided to become a scientist and go to Mars. In between studying at Oxford and MIT, Harris set off by bicycle down the fabled Silk Road with her childhood friend Mel. Pedaling mile upon mile in some of the remotest places on earth, she realized that an explorer, in any day and age, is the kind of person who refuses to live between the lines. Forget charting maps, naming peaks: what she yearned for was the feeling of soaring completely out of bounds. The farther she traveled, the closer she came to a world as wild as she felt within. *Lands of Lost Borders*, winner of the 2018 Banff Adventure Travel Award, is the chronicle of Harris's odyssey and an exploration of the importance of breaking the boundaries we set ourselves; an examination of the stories borders tell, and the restrictions they place on nature and humanity; and a meditation on the existential need to explore—the essential longing to discover what in the universe we are doing here. Like Rebecca Solnit and Pico Iyer, Kate Harris offers a travel account at once exuberant and reflective, wry and rapturous. *Lands of Lost Borders* explores the nature of limits and the wildness of the self that can never fully be mapped. Weaving adventure and philosophy with the history of science and exploration, *Lands of Lost Borders* celebrates our connection as humans to the natural world, and ultimately to each other—a belonging that transcends any fences or stories that may divide us.

LaRose by Louise Erdrich

The premise of Louise Erdrich's stunning *La Rose* is provocative. A man goes deer hunting and accidentally shoots and kills his neighbor's son; consumed by guilt and sorrow, the man and his wife agree to give their son LaRose to the distraught neighbor to raise. It was their penance, as both Catholics and Ojibwe. From this shocking and painful beginning, Louise Erdrich spins an amazing, complex tale of love, family, obligation; the book moves among generations and eras (La Rose is a family name that has been used by both males and females), arriving at a present-day conclusion that is both thoroughly modern and rooted in indigenous culture. This is Erdrich at her best, weaving together Native American and white culture, the strands of America. But what makes this book particularly strong – and what even those of us who love Erdrich's books can sometimes forget – is what a beautiful writer she is. One character is “a branchy woman, lovely in her angularity.” She also can be wryly observant – “suddenly it seemed everyone was saying it is what it is...as though this was a wise saying.” And her depiction of a kind of practical joke two kids play with a school bus is equal parts joyful and terrifying.

Lazy B: Growing up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest by Sandra Day O'Connor

Now, for the first time in paperback, here is the remarkable story of Sandra Day O'Connor's family and early life, her journey to adulthood in the American Southwest that helped make her the woman she is today—the first female justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and one of the most powerful women in America. In this illuminating and unusual book, Sandra Day O'Connor tells, with her brother, Alan, the story of the Day family, and of growing up on the harsh yet beautiful land of the Lazy B ranch in Arizona.

Laced throughout these stories about three generations of the Day family, and everyday life on the Lazy B, are the lessons Sandra and Alan learned about the world, self-reliance, and survival, and how the land, people, and

values of the Lazy B shaped them. This fascinating glimpse of life in the Southwest in the last century recounts an important time in American history, and provides an enduring portrait of an independent young woman on the brink of becoming one of the most prominent figures in America.

Life Itself by Roger Ebert

Roger Ebert is the best-known film critic of our time. He has been reviewing films for the *Chicago Sun-Times* since 1967, and was the first film critic ever to win a Pulitzer Prize. He has appeared on television for four decades, including twenty-three years as cohost of *Siskel & Ebert at the Movies*. In 2006, complications from thyroid cancer treatment resulted in the loss of his ability to eat, drink, or speak. But with the loss of his voice, Ebert has only become a more prolific and influential writer. And now, for the first time, he tells the full, dramatic story of his life and career. Roger Ebert's journalism carried him on a path far from his nearly idyllic childhood in Urbana, Illinois. It is a journey that began as a reporter for his local daily, and took him to Chicago, where he was unexpectedly given the job of film critic for the *Sun-Times*, launching a lifetime's adventures. In this candid, personal history, Ebert chronicles it all: his loves, losses, and obsessions; his struggle and recovery from alcoholism; his marriage; his politics; and his spiritual beliefs. He writes about his years at the *Sun-Times*, his colorful newspaper friends, and his life-changing collaboration with Gene Siskel. He remembers his friendships with Studs Terkel, Mike Royko, Oprah Winfrey, and Russ Meyer (for whom he wrote *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* and an ill-fated Sex Pistols movie). He shares his insights into movie stars and directors like John Wayne, Werner Herzog, and Martin Scorsese.

The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border by Francisco Cantú

For Francisco Cantú, the border is in the blood: his mother, a park ranger and daughter of a Mexican immigrant, raised him in the scrublands of the Southwest. Haunted by the landscape of his youth, Cantú joins the Border Patrol. He and his partners are posted to remote regions crisscrossed by drug routes and smuggling corridors, where they learn to track other humans under blistering sun and through frigid nights. They haul in the dead and deliver to detention those they find alive. Cantú tries not to think where the stories go from there. Plagued by nightmares, he abandons the Patrol for civilian life. But when an immigrant friend travels to Mexico to visit his dying mother and does not return, Cantú discovers that the border has migrated with him, and now he must know the whole story. Searing and unforgettable, *The Line Becomes a River* goes behind the headlines, making urgent and personal the violence our border wreaks on both sides of the line.

Little Bee by Chris Cleave

The publishers of Chris Cleave's new novel "don't want to spoil" the story by revealing too much about it, and there's good reason not to tell too much about the plot's pivot point. All you should know going in to *Little Bee* is that what happens on the beach is brutal, and that it braids the fates of a 16-year-old Nigerian orphan (who calls herself Little Bee) and a well-off British couple--journalists trying to repair their strained marriage with a free holiday--who should have stayed behind their resort's walls. The tide of that event carries Little Bee back to their world, which she claims she couldn't explain to the girls from her village because they'd have no context for its abundance and calm. But she shows us the infinite rifts in a globalized world, where any distance can be crossed in a day--with the right papers--and "no one likes each other, but everyone likes U2." Where you have to give up the safety you'd assumed as your birthright if you decide to save the girl gazing at you through razor wire, left to the wolves of a failing state.

Lives on the Boundary: A Moving Account of the Struggles and Achievements of America's Educationally Underprepared by Mike Rose

Remedial, illiterate, intellectually deficient—these are the stigmas that define America's educationally underprepared. Having grown up poor and been labeled this way, nationally acclaimed educator and author Mike Rose takes us into classrooms and communities to reveal what really lies behind the labels and test scores. With rich detail, Rose demonstrates innovative methods to initiate "problem" students into the world of language, literature, and written expression. This book challenges educators, policymakers, and parents to re-examine their assumptions about the capacities of a wide range of students. Already a classic, *Lives on the Boundary* offers a truly democratic vision, one that should be heeded by anyone concerned with America's future.

The Long Loneliness by Dorothy Day

This inspiring and fascinating memoir, subtitled, "The Autobiography of the Legendary Catholic Social Activist," *The Long Loneliness* is the late Dorothy Day's compelling autobiographical testament to her life of social activism and her spiritual pilgrimage. A founder of the Catholic Worker Movement and longtime associate of Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day was eulogized in the *New York Times* as, "a nonviolent social radical of luminous personality." *The Long Loneliness* recounts her remarkable journey from the Greenwich Village political and literary scene of the 1920s through her conversion to Catholicism and her lifelong struggle to help bring about "the kind of society where it is easier to be good."

Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela by Nelson Mandela

This fluid memoir matches South African President Mandela's stately grace with wise reflection on his life and the freedom struggle that defined it. Mandela began this book in 1975, during his 27-year imprisonment. He has fleshed out a sweeping story that begins in the rural Transkei in 1918 and moves beyond, especially to Johannesburg, where he became politically active as one of only a few black African lawyers. As an African National Congress leader, this military novice helped launch an armed struggle against the intransigent apartheid government, then eloquently explained his political convictions when on trial in 1964 for sabotage. Perhaps the most powerful passages involve the Robben Island prison, where political prisoners formed a "university" and Mandela read books like *War and Peace*, resisting embitterment and finding decency even in callous Afrikaner jailers. Moved to a mainland prison in 1985, Mandela, unable to consult with exiled ANC leaders, initiated intricate negotiations with the government; the story fascinates. This book—perhaps out of diplomacy and haste—covers the period since Mandela's 1990 release with less nuance and candor than other recent accounts; still his belief in repairing his country inspires. Mandela's family life has involved much sadness: he was not permitted a contact visit with wife Winnie for 21 years, was separated from his two young children and split with Winnie after his release, although he supported her during her 1991 conviction for kidnapping (a sentence she is appealing). "In South Africa," he notes, "a man who tried to fulfill his duty to his people was inevitably ripped from his family and his home."

Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language by Eva Hoffman

Daughter of Holocaust survivors, the author, a *New York Times Book Review* editor, lost her sense of place and belonging when she emigrated with her family from Poland to Vancouver in 1959 at the age of 13. Although she works within a familiar genre here, Hoffman's is a penetrating, lyrical memoir that casts a wide net as it joins vivid anecdotes and vigorous philosophical insights on Old World Cracow and Ivy League America; Polish anti-Semitism; the degradations suffered by immigrants; Hoffman's cultural nostalgia, self-analysis and intellectual passion; and the atrophy of her Polish from disuse and her own disabling inarticulateness in English as a newcomer. Linguistic dispossession, she explains, "is close to the dispossession of one's self." As Hoffman savors the cadences and nuances of her adopted language, she remains ever conscious of assimilation's perils: "But how does one bend toward another culture without falling over, how does one strike an elastic balance between rigidity and self-effacement?"

Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood: by Richard Kim

In this classic tale, Richard E. Kim paints seven vivid scenes from a boyhood and early adolescence in Korea at the height of the Japanese occupation, 1932 to 1945. Taking its title from the grim fact that the occupiers forced the Koreans to renounce their own names and adopt Japanese names instead, the book follows one Korean family through the Japanese occupation to the surrender of the Japanese empire. *Lost Names* is at once a loving memory of family and a vivid portrayal of life in a time of anguish.

The Lowland by Jhumpa Lahiri

From the Pulitzer Prize-winning, best-selling author of *The Namesake* comes an extraordinary new novel, set in both India and America, that expands the scope and range of one of our most dazzling storytellers: a tale of two brothers bound by tragedy, a fiercely brilliant woman haunted by her past, a country torn by revolution, and a love that lasts long past death. Born just fifteen months apart, Subhash and Udayan Mitra are inseparable brothers, one often mistaken for the other in the Calcutta neighborhood where they grow up. But they are also opposites, with gravely different futures ahead. It is the 1960s, and Udayan—charismatic and impulsive—finds himself drawn

to the Naxalite movement, a rebellion waged to eradicate inequity and poverty; he will give everything, risk all, for what he believes. Subhash, the dutiful son, does not share his brother's political passion; he leaves home to pursue a life of scientific research in a quiet, coastal corner of America. But when Subhash learns what happened to his brother in the lowland outside their family's home, he goes back to India, hoping to pick up the pieces of a shattered family, and to heal the wounds Udayan left behind—including those seared in the heart of his brother's wife.

Mama Day by Gloria Naylor

The beauty of Naylor's prose is its plainness, and the secret power of her third novel is that she does not simply tell a story but brings you face to face with human beings living through the complexity, pain and mystery of real life. But *Mama Day* is a black story as well as a human story, which is, paradoxically, what makes it such an all-encompassing experience. A young black couple meet in New York and fall in love. Ophelia ("Cocoa") is from Willow Island, off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia but part of neither state, and George is an orphan who was born and raised in New York. Every August, Cocoa visits her grandmother Abigail and great-aunt Miranda ("Mama Day") back home. The lure of New York and the magic of home and *Mama Day*'s folk medicines and mystical powers pull at the couple and bring about unforeseen, yet utterly believable, changes in them and their relationship. Naylor interweaves three simple narratives, Cocoa and George alternately tell about their relationship, while a third-person narrative relates the story of *Mama Day* and Willow Island.

Manhattan Beach by Jennifer Egan

Anna Kerrigan, nearly twelve years old, accompanies her father to visit Dexter Styles, a man who, she gleans, is crucial to the survival of her father and her family. She is mesmerized by the sea beyond the house and by some charged mystery between the two men. Years later, her father has disappeared and the country is at war. Anna works at the Brooklyn Naval Yard, where women are allowed to hold jobs that once belonged to men, now soldiers abroad. She becomes the first female diver, the most dangerous and exclusive of occupations, repairing the ships that will help America win the war. One evening at a nightclub, she meets Dexter Styles again, and begins to understand the complexity of her father's life, the reasons he might have vanished. With the atmosphere of a noir thriller, Egan's first historical novel follows Anna and Styles into a world populated by gangsters, sailors, divers, bankers, and union men. *Manhattan Beach* is a deft, dazzling, propulsive exploration of a transformative moment in the lives and identities of women and men, of America and the world. It is a magnificent novel by the author of *A Visit from the Goon Squad*, one of the great writers of our time.

The Map of Love: A Novel by Ahdaf Soueif

Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love* is a massive family saga, a story that draws its readers into two moments in the complex, troubled history of modern Egypt. The story begins in 1977 in New York. There Isabel Parkman discovers an old trunk full of documents--some in English, some in Arabic--in her dying mother's apartment. Incapable of deciphering this stash by herself, she turns to Omar al-Ghamrawi, a man with whom she is falling in love. And Omar directs her in turn to his sister Amal in Cairo. Together the two women begin to uncover the stories embedded in the journal of Lady Anna Winterbourne, who traveled to Egypt in 1900 and fell in love with Sharif Pasha al-Barudi, an Egyptian nationalist. To their surprise, they stumble across some unsuspected connections between their own families. Less surprising, perhaps, is the persistence of the very same issues that dogged their ancestors: colonialism, Egyptian nationalism, and the clash of cultures throughout the Middle East. The past, however, does offer some semblance of omniscience: That is the beauty of the past; there it lies on the table: journals, pictures, a candle-glass, a few books of history. You leave it and come back to it and it waits for you--unchanged. You can turn back the pages, look again at the beginning. You can leaf forward and know the end. And you tell the story that they, the people who lived it, could only tell in part.

With its multiple narratives and ever-shifting perspectives, *The Map of Love* would seem to cast some doubt on even the most confident historian's version of events. Yet this subtle and reflective tale of love does suggest that the relations between individuals can (sometimes) make a difference. "I am in an English autumn in 1897," Amal confesses at one point, "and Anna's troubled heart lies open before me." Here, perhaps, is a hint about how we should read Soueif's staggering novel, using words as a means to travel through time, space, and identity.

Martyrs' Crossing by Amy Wilentz

A former Jerusalem correspondent for the New Yorker and 1990 National Book Critics Circle nonfiction nominee, Wilentz supplements a natural storyteller's eye for character with a reporter's grasp of swirling political detail in this complex, haunting debut novel. At a checkpoint in Jerusalem, a beautiful young Palestinian woman begs an Israeli soldier for permission to "cross over" in order to get her two-year-old son to the hospital. The soldier, Lt. Ari Doron, frantically telephones headquarters, but is rebuffed by an anonymous commander: the woman is Marina Raad Hajimi, wife of jailed Hamas terrorist Hassan Hajimi, and therefore presumptively barred from Israel during a border "closure." Within minutes, the child dies, devastating family members on both sides of the checkpoint. It turns out the little boy was the grandson of American cardiologist George Raad, a secular Palestinian patriot whose iconoclastic views are courted, but largely ignored, by the Palestinian leadership. Despite his failing health, George returns to Ramallah to be with his bereaved daughter and to shelter her from the gathering political storm, as Palestinian discontents gear up to play "Find the Soldier." The soldier, meanwhile, plagued with guilt over "his dead baby," is unable to stay out of Ramallah, where he seeks absolution from Marina and George before the newly liberated Hajimi finds him. Characters on both sides of the border are nuanced, sympathetic and deeply ambivalent, which heightens the well-crafted suspense: you don't know what will happen next because neither do they. Wilentz's insight into the region is so sharp that even the maelstrom she depicts is vivid and comprehensible, a full-fledged human tragedy from every perspective.

Mary Barton by Elizabeth Gaskell

A moving account of poverty set in 1840s Manchester, Gaskell's first novel follows the young and beautiful Mary Barton, daughter of a factory worker, who is eventually caught up in the class struggle of her time. She attracts the attention of a wealthy mill-owner's son, Henry Carson, although she soon discovers her love for the poor, hard-working Jem Wilson. When a brutal shooting leaves a man dead, Mary must decide if she wishes to help in Jem's defense, for he is accused of the murder, and she knows who the real culprit is with certainty. Gaskell weaves Mary's story amidst a moving account of the hardships and grinding poverty of England's working class. A clear call for increased communication, greater equality between the rich and the poor, and redemption is made by Gaskell, who is often called Great Britain's social conscience of the Industrial Revolution.

Mean Spirit by Linda Hogan

Set in Oklahoma during the oil boom of the early 1920s, this brooding and profoundly moving first novel focuses on two doomed Osage Indian families, the Blankets and the Grayclouds. The brutal murder of Grace Blanket, owner of oil-rich land, witnessed in horror by her young daughter Nola and Nola's friend Rena Graycloud, is only the first of a series of violent events designed to coerce the tribes and put their lands into the hands of the oil barons. Justice is slow and ambiguous. When Stace Red Hawk, a policeman with the U.S. Bureau of Investigation, finds his inquiries blocked and his efforts frustrated by evasive and corrupt federal officials, he travels from Washington, D.C., to Oklahoma to investigate firsthand. Soon, like many of the Indian families depicted here, Stace is torn between the glitter of 20th-century life and the pull of sacred traditions. Hogan, a poet, professor and member of the Chickasaw tribe, mines a rich vein of Indian customs and rituals, and approaches her characters with reverence, bringing them to life with quick, spare phrases. Her absorbing novel pays elegiac tribute to the slow and irrevocable breakup of centuries of culture.

The Meaning of Matthew: My Son's Murder in Laramie and a World Transformed by Judy Shepard

The mother of Matthew Shepard shares her story about her son's death and the choice she made to become an international gay rights activist. Today, the name Matthew Shepard is synonymous with gay rights, but before his grisly murder in 1998, Matthew was simply Judy Shepard's son. For the first time in book form, Judy Shepard speaks about her loss, sharing memories of Matthew, their life as a typical American family, and the pivotal event in the small college town that changed everything. *The Meaning of Matthew* follows the Shepard family in the days immediately after the crime, when Judy and her husband traveled to see their incapacitated son, kept alive by life support machines; how the Shepards learned of the incredible response from strangers all across America who held candlelit vigils and memorial services for their child; and finally, how they struggled to navigate the legal system as Matthew's murderers were on trial. Heart-wrenchingly honest, Judy Shepard confides with readers about how she handled the crippling loss of her child, why she became a gay rights activist, and the challenges and rewards of raising a gay child in America today. *The Meaning of Matthew* not only captures the historical

significance and complicated civil rights issues surrounding one young man's life and death, but it also chronicles one ordinary woman's struggle to cope with the unthinkable.

The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography by Sidney Poitier

"I have no wish to play the pontificating fool, pretending that I've suddenly come up with the answers to all life's questions. Quite the contrary, I began this book as an exploration, an exercise in self-questioning. In other words, I wanted to find out, as I looked back at a long and complicated life, with many twists and turns, how well I've done at measuring up to the values I myself have set." —Sidney Poitier In this luminous memoir, a true American icon looks back on his celebrated life and career. His body of work is arguably the most morally significant in cinematic history, and the power and influence of that work are indicative of the character of the man behind the many storied roles. Sidney Poitier here explores these elements of character and personal values to take his own measure—as a man, as a husband and a father, and as an actor. Poitier credits his parents and his childhood on tiny Cat Island in the Bahamas for equipping him with the unflinching sense of right and wrong and of self-worth that he has never surrendered and that have dramatically shaped his world. "In the kind of place where I grew up," recalls Poitier, "what's coming at you is the sound of the sea and the smell of the wind and momma's voice and the voice of your dad and the craziness of your brothers and sisters...and that's it." Without television, radio, and material distractions to obscure what matters most, he could enjoy the simple things, endure the long commitments, and find true meaning in his life. Poitier was uncompromising as he pursued a personal and public life that would honor his upbringing and the invaluable legacy of his parents. Just a few years after his introduction to indoor plumbing and the automobile, Poitier broke racial barrier after racial barrier to launch a pioneering acting career. Committed to the notion that what one does for a living articulates to who one is, Poitier played only forceful and affecting characters who said something positive, useful, and lasting about the human condition. Here is Poitier's own introspective look at what has informed his performances and his life. Poitier explores the nature of sacrifice and commitment, pride and humility, rage and forgiveness, and paying the price for artistic integrity. What emerges is a picture of a man in the face of limits—his own and the world's. A triumph of the spirit, *The Measure of a Man* captures the essential Poitier.

Meltdown in Tibet: China's Reckless Destruction of Ecosystems from the Highlands of Tibet to the Deltas of Asia by Michael Buckley

Tibetans have experienced waves of genocide since the 1950s. Now they are facing ecocide. The Himalayan snowcaps are in meltdown mode, due to climate change—accelerated by a rain of black soot from massive burning of coal and other fuels in both China and India. The mighty rivers of Tibet are being dammed by Chinese engineering consortiums to feed the mainland's thirst for power, and the land is being relentlessly mined in search of minerals to feed China's industrial complex. On the drawing board are plans for a massive engineering project to divert water from Eastern Tibet to water-starved Northern China. Ruthless Chinese repression leaves Tibetans powerless to stop the reckless destruction of their sacred land, but they are not the only victims of this campaign: the nations downstream from Tibet rely heavily on rivers sourced in Tibet for water supply, and for rich silt used in agriculture. This destruction of the region's environment has been happening with little scrutiny until now. In *Meltdown in Tibet*, Michael Buckley turns the spotlight on the darkest side of China's emergence as a global super power.

The Memory Keeper's Daughter by Kim Edwards

Edwards's assured but schematic debut novel (after her collection, *The Secrets of a Fire King*) hinges on the birth of fraternal twins, a healthy boy and a girl with Down syndrome, resulting in the father's disavowal of his newborn daughter. A snowstorm immobilizes Lexington, Ky., in 1964, and when young Norah Henry goes into labor, her husband, orthopedic surgeon Dr. David Henry, must deliver their babies himself, aided only by a nurse. Seeing his daughter's handicap, he instructs the nurse, Caroline Gill, to take her to a home and later tells Norah, who was drugged during labor, that their son Paul's twin died at birth. Instead of institutionalizing Phoebe, Caroline absconds with her to Pittsburgh. David's deception becomes the defining moment of the main characters' lives, and Phoebe's absence corrodes her birth family's core over the course of the next 25 years. David's undetected lie warps his marriage; he grapples with guilt; Norah mourns her lost child; and Paul not only deals with his parents' icy relationship but with his own yearnings for his sister as well.

Men We Reaped: A Memoir by Jesmyn Ward

"We saw the lightning and that was the guns; and then we heard the thunder and that was the big guns; and then we heard the rain falling and that was the blood falling; and when we came to get in the crops, it was dead men that we reaped." —Harriet Tubman

In five years, Jesmyn Ward lost five young men in her life—to drugs, accidents, suicide, and the bad luck that can follow people who live in poverty, particularly black men. Dealing with these losses, one after another, made Jesmyn ask the question: Why? And as she began to write about the experience of living through all the dying, she realized the truth—and it took her breath away. Her brother and her friends all died because of who they were and where they were from, because they lived with a history of racism and economic struggle that fostered drug addiction and the dissolution of family and relationships. Jesmyn says the answer was so obvious she felt stupid for not seeing it. But it nagged at her until she knew she had to write about her community, to write their stories and her own. Jesmyn grew up in poverty in rural Mississippi. She writes powerfully about the pressures this brings, on the men who can do no right and the women who stand in for family in a society where the men are often absent. She bravely tells her story, revisiting the agonizing losses of her only brother and her friends. As the sole member of her family to leave home and pursue higher education, she writes about this parallel American universe with the objectivity distance provides and the intimacy of utter familiarity.

The Middle of Everywhere: Helping Refugees Enter the American Community by Mary Pipher

"I saw my father and grandfather shot in our living room," says Anton, a Bosnian teen who now lives in Nebraska. His teachers see him as a potential suicide, and he struggles to make sense of being an American high school student. Profiling Anton and other refugees from around the world Russia, Croatia, Yemen, Hungary, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone bestselling author Pipher (*Reviving Ophelia*), drawing upon anthropology, sociology and psychology, offers a deft, moving portrait of the complexity of American life. Pipher, a family therapist in Lincoln, Neb., where these immigrants all live, is interested in the effects of globalization how it affects people's relationships, their sense of place, their identities. She writes in rich, empathetic language and with a keen, observant eye for detail and nuance. Her relationships with her subjects range widely: she is a surrogate parent to a family of four children orphaned during the Sudanese civil war; to others she is "cultural broker," for instance, helping an Iraqi family understand the difference between what they see on television and the realities of everyday American life. As in *Another Country*, her book about aging parents, Pipher writes directly and movingly about the complications of people's lives in a constant culture clash but is mindful to place them in a clearly defined social and political setting. Noting that after September 11, "we are all refugees from what was once our America," Pipher's ambitious undertaking of combining personal stories with global politics is wonderfully realized.

Middlemarch by George Eliot

Often called the greatest nineteenth-century British novelist, George Eliot (the pen name of Mary Ann Evans) created in *Middlemarch* a vast panorama of life in a provincial Midlands town. At the story's center stands the intellectual and idealistic Dorothea Brooke—a character who in many ways resembles Eliot herself. But the very qualities that set Dorothea apart from the materialistic, mean-spirited society around her also lead her into a disastrous marriage with a man she mistakes for her soul mate. In a parallel story, young doctor Tertius Lydgate, who is equally idealistic, falls in love with the pretty but vain and superficial Rosamund Vincy, whom he marries to his ruin. Eliot surrounds her main figures with a gallery of characters drawn from every social class, from laborers and shopkeepers to the rising middle class to members of the wealthy, landed gentry. Together they form an extraordinarily rich and precisely detailed portrait of English provincial life in the 1830s. But Dorothea's and Lydgate's struggles to retain their moral integrity in the midst of temptation and tragedy remind us that their world is very much like our own. Strikingly modern in its painful ironies and psychological insight, *Middlemarch* was pivotal in the shaping of twentieth-century literary realism.

Midnight's Children by Salman Rushdie

Anyone who has spent time in the developing world will know that one of Bombay's claims to fame is the enormous film industry that churns out hundreds of musical fantasies each year. The other, of course, is native son Salman Rushdie—less prolific, perhaps than Bollywood, but in his own way just as fantastical. Though Rushdie's novels lack the requisite six musical numbers that punctuate every Bombay talkie, they often share basic plot points with their cinematic counterparts. Take, for example, his 1980 Booker Prize-winning *Midnight's*

Children: two children born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947--the moment at which India became an independent nation--are switched in the hospital. The infant scion of a wealthy Muslim family is sent to be raised in a Hindu tenement, while the legitimate heir to such squalor ends up establishing squatters' rights to his unlucky hospital mate's luxurious bassinet. Switched babies are standard fare for a Hindi film, and one can't help but feel that Rushdie's world-view--and certainly his sense of the fantastical--has been shaped by the films of his childhood. But whereas the movies, while entertaining, are markedly mediocre, *Midnight's Children* is a masterpiece, brilliant written, wildly unpredictable, hilarious and heartbreaking in equal measure.

Monkey Bridge by Lan Cao

Not only is this Lan's first novel, it is one of the finest dramatizations of the experiences of Vietnamese refugees in the U.S. Lan herself was airlifted out of Saigon in 1975, and she has transformed her prismatic memories into a stunning and powerful drama. The title refers to the tenuous bamboo bridges that sway above the rivers of the verdant Vietnamese countryside, a resonant symbol of the fragility of links between people and nations, the past and the future. As Lan's young heroine, Mai Nguyen, learns over the course of her war-torn childhood and abrupt relocation to Farmington, Connecticut, even the strongest connections to home and loved ones can break under the weight of events greater than ourselves. Mai and her widowed mother escape the terrible aftermath of the war, but while Mai takes readily to American life, her mother, haunted by her losses, recoils from the place she calls "the great brand-new." Much of Lan's tale evokes classic immigrant quandaries, but her vivid characters have the added burden of being perceived as the enemy in a shameful war, a twist Lan explores with exquisite sensitivity.

The Morning They Came for Us: Dispatches from Syria by Janine Giovanni

Doing for Syria what *Imperial Life in the Emerald City* did for the war in Iraq, *The Morning They Came for Us* bears witness to one of the most brutal, internecine conflicts in recent history. Drawing from years of experience covering Syria for *Vanity Fair*, *Newsweek*, and the front pages of the *New York Times*, award-winning journalist Janine di Giovanni gives us a tour de force of war reportage, all told through the perspective of ordinary people—among them a doctor, a nun, a musician, and a student. What emerges is an extraordinary picture of the devastating human consequences of armed conflict, one that charts an apocalyptic but at times tender story of life in a jihadist war zone. Recalling celebrated works by Ryszard Kapusćin'ski, Philip Gourevitch, and Anne Applebaum, *The Morning They Came for Us*, through its unflinching account of a nation on the brink of disintegration, becomes an unforgettable testament to resilience in the face of nihilistic human debasement.

Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World by Tracy Kidder
Thought-provoking and profoundly satisfying, this book will inspire feelings of humility, admiration, and disquietude; in some readers, it may sow the seeds of humanitarian activism. As a specialist in infectious diseases, Farmer's goal is nothing less than redressing the "steep gradient of inequality" in medical service to the desperately poor. His work establishing a complex of public health facilities on the central plateau of Haiti forms the keystone to efforts that now encompass initiatives on three continents. Farmer and a trio of friends began in the 1980s by creating a charitable foundation called Partners in Health (PIH, or Zanmi Lasante in Creole), armed with passionate conviction and \$1 million in seed money from a Boston philanthropist. Kidder provides anecdotal evidence that their early approach to acquiring resources for the Haitian project at times involved a Robin Hood type of "redistributive justice" by liberating medical equipment from the "rich" (Harvard) and giving to the "poor" (the PIH clinic). Yet even as PIH has grown in size and sophistication, gaining the ability to influence and collaborate with major international organizations because of the founders' energy, professional credentials, and successful outcomes, their dedicated vision of doctoring to the poor remains unaltered. Farmer's conduct is offered as a "road map to decency," albeit an uncompromising model that nearly defies replication. This story is remarkable, and Kidder's skill in sequencing both dramatic and understated elements into a reflective commentary is unsurpassed.

My American Journey by Colin Powell

The eminently readable journey of one African American boy from a close-knit neighborhood in the South Bronx through his rise to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to civilian retirement. Powell was neither an athlete nor a scholar; his childhood centered around his home, friends, and church. Later, in college, he found his niche. ROTC

offered structure and purpose. A recounting of his army career and the support offered by family and friends are the primary focus of this work. Challenges, lessons learned, and opportunities opened by each posting are shared. Commanding officers, selected business contracts, and four presidents are introduced and evaluated, almost all in a positive light. Powell's involvement with and analysis of national and international affairs, from Vietnam to the Clinton administration, are succinctly and objectively recounted. Scattered throughout the book are personal rules of conduct and occasional incidents of particular kindnesses and of racism.

My Own Country: A Doctor's Story by Abraham Verghese

In fall 1985 Verghese--who was born in Ethiopia of Indian parents--returned with his wife and newborn son to Johnson City, Tennessee, where he had done his internship and residence. As he watched AIDS infect the small town, he and the community learned many things from one another, including the power of compassion. An AIDS expert who initially had no patients, Verghese describes meeting gay men and then eventually others struggling with this new disease. Verghese's patients include a factory worker confronting her husband's AIDS, bisexuality, and her own HIV status and a religious couple infected via a blood transfusion attempting to keep their disease secret from their church and their children.

My Son's Story by Nadine Gordimer

When Will skips school to slip off to a movie theater near Johannesburg, he is shocked to see his father. An ordinary mishap, but his father is no ordinary man. He is a "colored" and revered anti-apartheid hero, and his female companion is a white activist fiercely dedicated to the cause. As Will struggles with confusion and bitterness, *My Son's Story* unravels the consequences of one man's infidelity as a new South Africa violently emerges from the apartheid.

Native Speaker by Chang-rae Lee

Espionage acts as a metaphor for the uneasy relationship of Amerasians to American society in this eloquent, thought-provoking tale of a young Korean-American's struggle to conjoin the fragments of his personality in culturally diverse New York City. Raised in a family and culture valuing careful control of emotions and appearances, narrator Henry Park, son of a successful Korean-American grocer, works as an undercover operative for a vaguely sinister private intelligence agency. He and his "American wife," Lelia, are estranged, partly as a result of Henry's stoical way of coping with the recent death of their young son. Henry is also having trouble at work, becoming emotionally attached to the people he should be investigating. Ruminating on his upbringing, he traces the path that has led to his present sorrow; as he infiltrates the staff of a popular Korean-American city councilman, he discovers the broader, societal context of the issues he has been grappling with personally. Writing in a precise yet freewheeling prose that takes us deep into Henry's head, first-novelist Lee packs this story, whose intrigue is well measured and compelling, with insights into both current political events and timeless questions of love, culture, family bonds and identity.

Negroland: A Memoir by Margo Jefferson

At once incendiary and icy, mischievous and provocative, celebratory and elegiac—here is a deeply felt meditation on race, sex, and American culture through the prism of the author's rarefied upbringing and education among a black elite concerned with distancing itself from whites and the black generality while tirelessly measuring itself against both. Born in upper-crust black Chicago—her father was for years head of pediatrics at Provident, at the time the nation's oldest black hospital; her mother was a socialite—Margo Jefferson has spent most of her life among (call them what you will) the colored aristocracy, the colored elite, the blue-vein society. Since the nineteenth century they have stood apart, these inhabitants of Negroland, "a small region of Negro America where residents were sheltered by a certain amount of privilege and plenty." Reckoning with the strictures and demands of Negroland at crucial historical moments—the civil rights movement, the dawn of feminism, the fallacy of postracial America—Jefferson brilliantly charts the twists and turns of a life informed by psychological and moral contradictions. Aware as it is of heart-wrenching despair and depression, this book is a triumphant paean to the grace of perseverance.

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander

Once in a great while a book comes along that changes the way we see the world and helps to fuel a nationwide social movement. *The New Jim Crow* is such a book. Praised by Harvard Law professor Lani Guinier as "brave and bold," this book directly challenges the notion that the election of Barack Obama signals a new era of colorblindness. With dazzling candor, legal scholar Michelle Alexander argues that "we have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it." By targeting black men through the War on Drugs and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control—relegating millions to a permanent second-class status—even as it formally adheres to the principle of colorblindness. In the words of Benjamin Todd Jealous, president and CEO of the NAACP, this book is a "call to action."

The New Odyssey: The Story of the Twenty-First Century Refugee Crisis by Patrick Kingsley

On the day of his son's fourteenth birthday, Hashem al-Souki lay somewhere in the Mediterranean, crammed in a wooden dinghy. His family was relatively safe—at least for the time being—in Egypt, where they had only just settled after fleeing their war-torn Damascus home three years prior. Traversing these unforgiving waters and the treacherous terrain that would follow was worth the slim chance of securing a safe home for his children in Sweden. If he failed, at least he would fail alone. Hashem's story is tragically common, as desperate victims continue to embark on deadly journeys in search of freedom. Tracking the harrowing experiences of these brave refugees, *The New Odyssey* finally illuminates the shadowy networks that have facilitated the largest forced exodus since the end of World War II. The *Guardian's* first-ever migration correspondent, Patrick Kingsley has traveled through seventeen countries to put an indelible face on this overwhelming disaster. Embedding himself alongside the refugees, Kingsley reenacts their flight with hundreds of people across the choppy Mediterranean in the hopes of better understanding who helps or hinders their path to salvation. From the starving migrants who push through sandstorms with children strapped to their backs to the exploitive criminals who prey on them, from the smugglers who dangerously stretch the limits of their cargo space to the volunteers who uproot their own lives to hand out water bottles—what emerges is a kaleidoscope of humanity in the wake of tragedy. By simultaneously tracing the narrative of Hashem, who endured the trek not once but twice, Kingsley memorably creates a compassionate, visceral portrait of the mass migration in both its epic scope and its heartbreaking specificity.

The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead

In this bravura follow-up to the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award-winning #1 *New York Times* bestseller *The Underground Railroad*, Colson Whitehead brilliantly dramatizes another strand of American history through the story of two boys sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida. When Elwood Curtis, a black boy growing up in 1960s Tallahassee, is unfairly sentenced to a juvenile reformatory called the Nickel Academy, he finds himself trapped in a grotesque chamber of horrors. Elwood's only salvation is his friendship with fellow "delinquent" Turner, which deepens despite Turner's conviction that Elwood is hopelessly naive, that the world is crooked, and that the only way to survive is to scheme and avoid trouble. As life at the Academy becomes ever more perilous, the tension between Elwood's ideals and Turner's skepticism leads to a decision whose repercussions will echo down the decades. Based on the real story of a reform school that operated for 111 years and warped the lives of thousands of children, *The Nickel Boys* is a devastating, driven narrative that showcases a great American novelist writing at the height of his powers.

The Night Watchman by Louise Erdrich

Based on the extraordinary life of National Book Award-winning author Louise Erdrich's grandfather who worked as a night watchman and carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington, D.C., this powerful novel explores themes of love and death with lightness and gravity and unfolds with the elegant prose, sly humor, and depth of feeling of a master craftsman. Thomas Wazhashk is the night watchman at the jewel bearing plant, the first factory located near the Turtle Mountain Reservation in rural North Dakota. He is also a Chippewa Council member who is trying to understand the consequences of a new "emancipation" bill on its way to the floor of the United States Congress. It is 1953 and he and the other council members know the bill isn't about freedom; Congress is fed up with Indians. The bill is a "termination" that threatens the rights of Native Americans to their land and their very identity. How can the government abandon treaties made in good faith with Native Americans "for as long as the grasses shall grow, and the rivers run"?

Since graduating high school, Pixie Paranteau has insisted that everyone call her Patrice. Unlike most of the girls on the reservation, Patrice, the class valedictorian, has no desire to wear herself down with a husband and kids. She makes jewel bearings at the plant, a job that barely pays her enough to support her mother and brother. Patrice's shameful alcoholic father returns home sporadically to terrorize his wife and children and bully her for money. But Patrice needs every penny to follow her beloved older sister, Vera, who moved to the big city of Minneapolis. Vera may have disappeared; she hasn't been in touch in months, and is rumored to have had a baby. Determined to find Vera and her child, Patrice makes a fateful trip to Minnesota that introduces her to unexpected forms of exploitation and violence, and endangers her life. Thomas and Patrice live in this impoverished reservation community along with young Chippewa boxer Wood Mountain and his mother Juggie Blue, her niece and Patrice's best friend Valentine, and Stack Barnes, the white high school math teacher and boxing coach who is hopelessly in love with Patrice. In the *Night Watchman*, Louise Erdrich creates a fictional world populated with memorable characters who are forced to grapple with the worst and best impulses of human nature. Illuminating the loves and lives, the desires and ambitions of these characters with compassion, wit, and intelligence, *The Night Watchman* is a majestic work of fiction from this revered cultural treasure.

The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah

In love we find out who we want to be. In war we find out who we are. FRANCE, 1939 In the quiet village of Carriveau, Vianne, Mauriac says goodbye to her husband, Antoine, as he heads for the Front. She doesn't believe that the Nazis will invade France ... but invade they do, in droves of marching soldiers, in caravans of trucks and tanks, in planes that fill the skies and drop bombs upon the innocent. When a German captain requisitions Vianne's home, she and her daughter must live with the enemy or lose everything. Without food or money or hope, as danger escalates all around them, she is forced to make one impossible choice after another to keep her family alive. Vianne's sister, Isabelle, is a rebellious eighteen-year-old girl, searching for purpose with all the reckless passion of youth. While thousands of Parisians march into the unknown terrors of war, she meets G  tan, a partisan who believes the French can fight the Nazis from within France, and she falls in love as only the young can ... completely. But when he betrays her, Isabelle joins the Resistance and never looks back, risking her life time and again to save others. With courage, grace and powerful insight, bestselling author Kristin Hannah captures the epic panorama of WWII and illuminates an intimate part of history seldom seen: the women's war. *The Nightingale* tells the stories of two sisters, separated by years and experience, by ideals, passion and circumstance, each embarking on her own dangerous path toward survival, love, and freedom in German-occupied, war-torn France--a heartbreakingly beautiful novel that celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and the durability of women. It is a novel for everyone, a novel for a lifetime.

Nine Lives: Magic, Mystery, Death, and Life in New Orleans by Dan Baum

The hidden history of a haunted and beloved city told through the intersecting lives of nine remarkable characters. After Hurricane Katrina, Dan Baum moved to New Orleans to write about the city's response to the disaster for *The New Yorker*. He quickly realized that Katrina was not the most interesting thing about New Orleans, not by a long shot. The most interesting question, which struck him as he watched residents struggling to return, was this: Why are New Orleanians—along with people from all over the world who continue to flock there—so devoted to a place that was, even before the storm, the most corrupt, impoverished, and violent corner of America? Here's the answer. *Nine Lives* is a multivoiced biography of this dazzling, surreal, and imperiled city through the lives of nine characters over forty years and bracketed by two epic storms: Hurricane Betsy, which transformed the city in the 1960's, and Katrina, which nearly destroyed it. These nine lives are windows into every strata of one of the most complex and fascinating cities in the world. From outsider artists and Mardi Gras Kings to jazz-playing coroners and transsexual barkeeps, these lives are possible only in New Orleans, but the city that nurtures them is also, from the beginning, a city haunted by the possibility of disaster. All their stories converge in the storm, where some characters rise to acts of heroism and others sink to the bottom. But it is New Orleans herself—perpetually whistling past the grave yard—that is the story's real heroine. *Nine Lives* is narrated from the points of view of some of New Orleans's most charismatic characters, but underpinning the voices of the city is an extraordinary feat of reporting that allows Baum to bring this kaleidoscopic portrait to life with brilliant color and crystalline detail. Readers will find themselves wrapped up in each of these individual dramas and delightfully immersed in the life of one of this country's last unique places, even as its ultimate devastation looms ever closer.

By resurrecting this beautiful and tragic place and portraying the extraordinary lives that could have taken root only there, *Nine Lives* shows us what was lost in the storm and what remains to be saved.

No Future Without Forgiveness by Desmond Tutu

Archbishop Desmond Tutu stands alongside Nelson Mandela as one of the most iconic figures of the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa. As archbishop of Cape Town throughout the 1980s, Tutu came to symbolize dignified, rational opposition to the iniquities of the apartheid regime, a faithful irreverence for unjust authority that led to his being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984. In 1995 he took up his greatest challenge, as chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the remarkable yet harrowing attempt by South Africans to come to terms with the gross violations of human rights committed throughout the apartheid era by offering amnesty and forgiveness rather than punishment and dismissal. *No Future Without Forgiveness* is Tutu's remarkable personal memoir of his time as chair of the commission. It records his insistence of the need to discover a "third way" in the healing of the national psyche and his powerful belief that "we can indeed transcend the conflicts of the past, we can hold hands as we realize our common humanity." Tutu's characteristic humor, resilience, and compassion are evoked in a way that demonstrates how essential they have been to his unique political style--and his ability to get results where all others failed. He recalls the darkest days of apartheid's "vicious awfulness" when, preaching about God's authority, he was "frequently tempted to whisper in God's ear, 'For goodness sake, why don't You make it more obvious that *You* are in charge?'" *No Future Without Forgiveness* could be profitably read alongside Antjie Krog's equally compelling *Country of My Skull*, as it considers the emotional toll that such a process of national soul-searching has had upon its participants. As Tutu himself points out, "It is a costly business to try to heal a wounded and traumatized people, and those engaging in that crucial task will perhaps bear the brunt themselves ... we were, in Henri Nouwen's celebrated phrase, 'wounded healers.'"

No Good Men Among the Living: America, the Taliban, and the War through Afghan Eyes by Anand Gopal

In a breathtaking chronicle, acclaimed journalist Anand Gopal traces in vivid detail the lives of three Afghans caught in America's war on terror. He follows a Taliban commander, who rises from scrawny teenager to leading insurgent; a US-backed warlord, who uses the American military to gain personal wealth and power; and a village housewife trapped between the two sides, who discovers the devastating cost of neutrality. Through their dramatic stories, Gopal shows that the Afghan war, so often regarded as a hopeless quagmire, could in fact have gone very differently. Top Taliban leaders actually tried to surrender within months of the US invasion, renouncing all political activity and submitting to the new government. Effectively, the Taliban ceased to exist—yet the Americans were unwilling to accept such a turnaround. Instead, driven by false intelligence from their allies and an unyielding mandate to fight terrorism, American forces continued to press the conflict, resurrecting the insurgency that persists to this day. With its intimate accounts of life in war-torn Afghanistan, Gopal's thoroughly original reporting lays bare the workings of America's longest war and the truth behind its prolonged agony. A heartbreaking story of mistakes and misdeeds, *No Good Men Among the Living* challenges our usual perceptions of the Afghan conflict, its victims, and its supposed winners.

No Sweetness Here and Other Stories by Ama Ata Aidoo

Eleven stories explore postcolonial life in Ghana for women and men, from African women returning home from the West to others confronting independence and all its ramifications. Varied characters and encounters mark an involving and unusual presentation of varied West African experiences.

No Turning Back: Life, Loss, and Hope in Wartime Syria by Rania Abouzeid

This astonishing book by the prize-winning journalist Rania Abouzeid tells the tragedy of the Syrian War through the dramatic stories of four young people seeking safety and freedom in a shattered country. Extending back to the first demonstrations of 2011, *No Turning Back* dissects the tangle of ideologies and allegiances that make up the Syrian conflict. As protests ignited in Daraa, some citizens were brimming with a sense of possibility. A privileged young man named Suleiman posted videos of the protests online, full of hope for justice and democracy. A father of two named Mohammad, secretly radicalized and newly released from prison, saw a darker opportunity in the unrest. When violence broke out in Homs, a poet named Abu Azzam became an unlikely commander in a Free Syrian Army militia. The regime's brutal response disrupted a family in Idlib province, where a nine-year-old girl opened the door to a military raid that caused her father to flee. As the bombings increased

and roads grew more dangerous, these people's lives intertwined in unexpected ways. Rania Abouzeid brings readers deep inside Assad's prisons, to covert meetings where foreign states and organizations manipulated the rebels, and to the highest levels of Islamic militancy and the formation of ISIS. Based on more than five years of clandestine reporting on the front lines, *No Turning Back* is an utterly engrossing human drama full of vivid, indelible characters that shows how hope can flourish even amid one of the twenty-first century's greatest humanitarian disasters.

Nora Webster by Colm Toibin

Atmospheric and emotional, Colm Toibin's (*Brooklyn*, *The Master*) seventh novel is the story of a forty-year-old widow in 1960s/70s rural Ireland who's on the verge of slipping back into the isolated life from which her husband had rescued her. Nora Webster is, like Toibin's best characters, iconoclastic, strong and deep. When she loses her beloved Maurice to a long and horrible illness, she seems beyond help: she resents the neighbors' well-meaning questions and concerns and she's so grief stricken she barely notices how her children are suffering. Nora is not entirely likable—a self-centered person mired in depression rarely is. But Nora is also proud, fierce and angry—and slowly, slowly she wins you over. Even more important, she eventually finds a way to save herself. This is not a novel that makes a lot of noise—and yet it's musical. It has a kind of deliberate, note-by-note crescendo—but very few crashing cymbals—as Nora rediscovers her love of singing, learns how art can help her navigate through grief, and how music can help even the most quiet among us to regain our voice.

Obasan by Joy Kogawa

Based on the author's own experiences, this award-winning novel was the first to tell the story of the evacuation, relocation, and dispersal of Canadian citizens of Japanese ancestry during the Second World War.

Old School by Tobias Wolff

A scholarship boy at a New England prep school grapples with literary ambition and insecurity in this lucid, deceptively sedate novel, set in the early 1960s and narrated by the unnamed protagonist from the vantage point of adulthood. Each year, the school hosts a number of visiting writers, and the boys in the top form are allowed to compete for a private audience by composing a poem or story. The narrator judges the skills of his competitors, avidly exposing his classmates' weaknesses and calculating their potential ("I knew better than to write George off.... He could win.... Bill was a contender"). His own chances are hurt by his inability to be honest with himself and examine his ambivalent feelings about his Jewish roots. After failing to win audiences with Robert Frost and Ayn Rand, he is determined to be chosen by the last and best guest, legendary Ernest Hemingway. The anxiety of influence afflicts all the boys, but in crafting his final literary offering, the narrator discovers inspiration in imitation, finding his voice in someone else's. The novel's candid, retrospective narration ruefully depicts its protagonist's retreat further and further behind his public facade ("I'd been absorbed so far into my performance that nothing else came naturally"). Beneath its staid trappings, this is a sharply ironic novel, in which love of literature is counterbalanced by bitter disappointment (as one character bluntly puts it, "[Writing] just cuts you off and makes you selfish and doesn't really do any good"). Wolff, an acclaimed short story writer (*The Night in Question*, etc.) and author of the memoir *This Boy's Life*, here offers a delicate, pointed meditation on the treacherous charms of art.

Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout

At times stern, at other times patient, at times perceptive, at other times in sad denial, Olive Kitteridge, a retired schoolteacher, deplores the changes in her little town of Crosby, Maine, and in the world at large, but she doesn't always recognize the changes in those around her: a lounge musician haunted by a past romance; a former student who has lost the will to live; Olive's own adult child, who feels tyrannized by her irrational sensitivities; and her husband, Henry, who finds his loyalty to his marriage both a blessing and a curse. As the townspeople grapple with their problems, mild and dire, Olive is brought to a deeper understanding of herself and her life—sometimes painfully, but always with ruthless honesty. Olive Kitteridge offers profound insights into the human condition—its conflicts, its tragedies and joys, and the endurance it requires.

The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals by Michael Pollan

Pollan (*The Botany of Desire*) examines what he calls "our national eating disorder" (the Atkins craze, the precipitous rise in obesity) in this remarkably clearheaded book. It's a fascinating journey up and down the food chain, one that might change the way you read the label on a frozen dinner, dig into a steak or decide whether to buy organic eggs. You'll certainly never look at a Chicken McNugget the same way again. Pollan approaches his mission not as an activist but as a naturalist: "The way we eat represents our most profound engagement with the natural world." All food, he points out, originates with plants, animals and fungi. "[E]ven the deathless Twinkie is constructed out of... well, precisely *what* I don't know offhand, but ultimately some sort of formerly living creature, i.e., a *species*. We haven't yet begun to synthesize our foods from petroleum, at least not directly." Pollan's narrative strategy is simple: he traces four meals back to their ur-species. He starts with a McDonald's lunch, which he and his family gobble up in their car. Surprise: the origin of this meal is a cornfield in Iowa. Corn feeds the steer that turns into the burgers, becomes the oil that cooks the fries and the syrup that sweetens the shakes and the sodas, and makes up 13 of the 38 ingredients (yikes) in the Chicken McNuggets. Indeed, one of the many eye-openers in the book is the prevalence of corn in the American diet; of the 45,000 items in a supermarket, more than a quarter contain corn. Pollan meditates on the freakishly protean nature of the corn plant and looks at how the food industry has exploited it, to the detriment of everyone from farmers to fat-and-getting-fatter Americans. Besides Stephen King, few other writers have made a corn field seem so sinister. Later, Pollan prepares a dinner with items from Whole Foods, investigating the flaws in the world of "big organic"; cooks a meal with ingredients from a small, utopian Virginia farm; and assembles a feast from things he's foraged and hunted. This may sound earnest, but Pollan isn't preachy: he's too thoughtful a writer, and too dogged a researcher, to let ideology take over. He's also funny and adventurous. He bounces around on an old International Harvester tractor, gets down on his belly to examine a pasture from a cow's-eye view, shoots a wild pig and otherwise throws himself into the making of his meals. I'm not convinced I'd want to go hunting with Pollan, but I'm sure I'd enjoy having dinner with him. Just as long as we could eat at a table, not in a Toyota.

1 Dead in Attic: After Katrina by Chris Rose

The physical and psychic dislocation wrought by Hurricane Katrina is painstakingly recollected in this brilliant collection of columns by award-winning New Orleans Times-Picayune columnist Rose (who has already hand-sold 60,000 self-published copies). After evacuating his family first to Mississippi and then to his native Maryland, Rose returned almost immediately to chronicle his adopted hometown's journey to "hell and back." Rose deftly sketches portraits of the living, from the cat lady who survives the storm only to die from injuries sustained during a post-hurricane mugging, to the California National Guard troops who gratefully chow down on steaks Rose managed to turn up in an unscathed French Quarter freezer. He's equally adept at evoking the spirit of the dead and missing, summed up by the title, quoting the entirety of an epitaph spray-painted on one home. Although the usual suspects (FEMA and Mayor Ray Nagin, among others) receive their fair share of barbs, Rose's rancor toward the powers that be is surprisingly muted. In contrast, he chronicles his own descent into mental illness (and subsequent recovery) with unsparing detail; though his maniacal dedication to witnessing the innumerable tragedies wrought by "The Thing" took him down a dark, dangerous path ("three friends of mine have, in fact, killed themselves in the past year"), it also produced one of the finest first-person accounts yet in the growing Katrina canon.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey

Boisterous, ribald, and ultimately shattering, Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is the seminal novel of the 1960s that has left an indelible mark on the literature of our time. Here is the unforgettable story of a mental ward and its inhabitants, especially the tyrannical Big Nurse Ratched and Randle Patrick McMurphy, the brawling, fun-loving new inmate who resolves to oppose her. We see the struggle through the eyes of Chief Bromden, the seemingly mute half-Indian patient who witnesses and understands McMurphy's heroic attempt to do battle with the awesome powers that keep them all imprisoned.

One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy by Carol Anderson

In her *New York Times* bestseller *White Rage*, Carol Anderson laid bare an insidious history of policies that have systematically impeded black progress in America, from 1865 to our combustible present. With *One Person, No Vote*, she chronicles a related history: the rollbacks to African American participation in the vote since the 2013

Supreme Court decision that eviscerated the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Known as the *Shelby* ruling, this decision effectively allowed districts with a demonstrated history of racial discrimination to change voting requirements without approval from the Department of Justice. Focusing on the aftermath of *Shelby*, Anderson follows the astonishing story of government-dictated racial discrimination unfolding before our very eyes as more and more states adopt voter suppression laws. In gripping, enlightening detail she explains how voter suppression works, from photo ID requirements to gerrymandering to poll closures. In a powerful new afterword, she examines the repercussions of the 2018 midterm elections. And with vivid characters, she explores the resistance: the organizing, activism, and court battles to restore the basic right to vote to all Americans.

An Ordinary Man by Paul Rusesabagina

For former hotel manager Paul Rusesabagina, words are the most powerful weapon in the human arsenal. For good and for evil, as was the case in the spring of 1994 in Rwanda. Over 100 days, some 800,000 people were slaughtered, most hacked to death by machete. Rusesabagina "inspiration for the movie *Hotel Rwanda* "used his facility with words and persuasion to save 1,268 of his fellow countrymen, turning the Belgian luxury hotel under his charge into a sanctuary from madness. Through negotiation, favor, flattery and deception, Rusesabagina managed to keep his "guests" alive another day despite the homicidal gangs just beyond the fence and the world's failure to act. Narrator Hoffman delivers those words in a stirring audio performance. With a crisp African accent, Hoffman renders each sentence with heartfelt conviction and flat-out becomes Rusesabagina. The humble hotel manager not only illuminates the machinery behind the genocide but delves into Rwanda's complex and colorful cultural history as well as his own childhood, the son of a Hutu father and Tutsi mother. Hoffman successfully draws out the understated elegance of Rusesabagina's simple and straightforward prose, lending the story added vividness. This tale of good, evil and moral responsibility winds down with Rusesabagina visiting a church outside Kigali where thousands were massacred and where a multilingual sign-cloth now pledges, "Never Again." He once more stops to consider words, the ones he worries lack true conviction "like those at the church "as well as the ones with the power to heal. For the listener, the words of Paul Rusesabagina won't soon be forgotten.

Orhan's Inheritance by Aline Ohanesian

"Places and things stay with us, and sometimes we stay with them." Remembering the past can be a tricky business and for those who experienced dark times in history the memories they may most want to forget are the very ones that future generations insist that they share. *Orhan's Inheritance* begins in a small village in Turkey, with the death of a patriarch, Kemal, who bequeaths the family home to a woman his heirs have never heard of. Kemal's grandson, Orhan, finds her across the world in a home for elderly Armenians and their meeting leads to a long-buried account of two people deeply in love, torn apart by war and terrible sacrifice. Aline Ohanesian's debut novel is rich in emotion and its roots run deep and wide, tapping into a largely neglected time in Turkish history, spanning decades, and honoring the resilience of the human spirit.

Orphan Master's Son by Adam Johnson

Jun Do is *The Orphan Master's Son*, a North Korean citizen with a rough past who is working as a government-sanctioned kidnapper when we first meet him. He is hardly a sympathetic character, but sympathy is not author Johnson's aim. In a totalitarian nation of random violence and bewildering caprice—a poor, gray place that nonetheless refers to itself as "the most glorious nation on earth"—an unnatural tension exists between a citizen's national identity and his private life. Through Jun Do's story we realize that beneath the weight of oppression and lies beats a heart not much different from our own—one that thirsts for love, acceptance, and hope—and that realization is at the heart of this shockingly believable, immersive, and thrilling novel.

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates by Wes Moore

In 2000, Wes Moore had recently been named a Rhodes Scholar in his final year of college at Johns Hopkins University when he read a newspaper article about another Wes Moore who was on his way to prison. It turned out that the two of them had much in common, both young black men raised in inner-city neighborhoods by single mothers. Stunned by the similarities in their names and backgrounds and the differences in their ultimate fates, the author eventually contacted the other Wes Moore and began a long relationship. Moore visited his namesake in prison; he was serving a life sentence, convicted for his role in an armed robbery that resulted in the

killing of an off-duty policeman. Growing up, both men were subject to the pitfalls of urban youth: racism, rebellion, violence, drug use, and dealing. The author examines eight years in the lives of both Wes Moores to explore the factors and choices that led one to a Rhodes scholarship, military service, and a White House fellowship, and the other to drug dealing, prison, and eventual conversion to the Muslim faith, with both sharing a gritty sense of realism about their pasts. Moore ends this haunting look at two lives with a call to action and a detailed resource guide.

Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis by Robert Putnam

Central to the very idea of America is the principle that we are a nation of opportunity. But over the last quarter century we have seen a disturbing “opportunity gap” emerge. We Americans have always believed that those who have talent and try hard will succeed, but this central tenet of the American Dream seems no longer true or at the least, much less true than it was. In *Our Kids*, Robert Putnam offers a personal and authoritative look at this new American crisis, beginning with the example of his high school class of 1959 in Port Clinton, Ohio. The vast majority of those students went on to lives better than those of their parents. But their children and grandchildren have faced diminishing prospects. Putnam tells the tale of lessening opportunity through poignant life stories of rich, middle class, and poor kids from cities and suburbs across the country, brilliantly blended with the latest social-science research.

Out of Mao's Shadow: The Struggle for the Soul of a New China by Philip Pan

How is the world's most populous and emerging global power managing to counterbalance the freedoms of capitalism—and the Internet age—against the continued restrictions of authoritarianism? For seven years, Pan, former Beijing bureau chief for the Washington Post, traveled China and talked to officials, journalists, artists, entrepreneurs, and ordinary citizens to get a portrait of an extraordinary time in that nation's—and the world's—history. Pan begins by examining how the Chinese are preserving their most recent history of fighting resistance to authoritarianism, including a young entrepreneur's account of openly defying the police by attending the funeral of Chinese official Zhao Ziyang, who was sympathetic to the Tiananmen Square protest 15 years earlier. Pan goes on to explore how the Communist Party has evolved since the death of Mao, including recollections of factory workers who have not benefited from the new emphasis on capitalism and tycoons who are thriving. Finally, Pan presents the perspective of Chinese with hopes for a democratic future in China, even as that nation struggles to reconcile its past and future ambitions and its place in the broader world.

Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference by Warren St. John

St. John builds on his 2007 *New York Times* article about the Fugees, a soccer program for boys from families of refugees from war-torn nations who have been resettled in the town of Clarkston, Ga., 13 miles east of Atlanta. Led by the founder and coach Luma Mufleh, a strong-willed, Jordanian woman who turned her back on a privileged past to stay in America after attending Smith College, the three youth teams are a conglomeration of players from Africa, the Balkans and the Middle East. The challenges they face are many, including an ongoing fight against city hall for a field on which to play, and getting by with subpar equipment. Their biggest challenge, however, is the difficulty immigrants face in learning the ways of a strange land and living with the memories of tragedy (some players had lost a parent to violence or imprisonment). In spite of it all, the Fugees compete admirably with mostly white, better-funded suburban teams.

Outpost: Life on the Frontlines of American Diplomacy by Christopher Hill

An “inside the room” memoir from one of our most distinguished ambassadors who—in a career of service to the country—was sent to some of the most dangerous outposts of American diplomacy. From the wars in the Balkans to the brutality of North Korea to the endless war in Iraq, this is the real life of an American diplomat. Hill was on the front lines in the Balkans at the breakup of Yugoslavia. He takes us from one-on-one meetings with the dictator Milosevic, to Bosnia and Kosovo, to the Dayton conference, where a truce was brokered. Hill draws upon lessons learned as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon early on in his career and details his prodigious experience as a US ambassador. He was the first American Ambassador to Macedonia; Ambassador to Poland, where he also served in the depth of the cold war; Ambassador to South Korea and chief disarmament negotiator in North Korea; and Hillary Clinton's hand-picked Ambassador to Iraq. Hill's account is an adventure story of

danger, loss of comrades, high stakes negotiations, and imperfect options. There are fascinating portraits of war criminals (Mladic, Karadzic), of presidents and vice presidents (Clinton, Bush and Cheney, and Obama), of Secretaries of State (Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton), of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, and of Ambassadors Richard Holbrooke and Lawrence Eagleburger. Hill writes bluntly about the bureaucratic warfare in DC and expresses strong criticism of America's aggressive interventions and wars of choice.

The Overachievers: The Secret Lives of Driven Kids by Alexandra Robbins

In this engrossing anthropological study of the cult of overachieving that is prevalent in many middle- and upper-class schools, Robbins (*Pledged: The Secret Life of Sororities*) follows the lives of students from a Bethesda, Md., high school as they navigate the SAT and college application process. These students are obsessed with success, contending with illness, physical deterioration (senior Julie is losing hair over the pressure to get into Stanford), cheating (students sell a physics project to one another), obsessed parents (Frank's mother manages his time to the point of abuse) and emotional breakdowns. What matters to them is that all-important acceptance to the right name-brand school. "When teenagers inevitably look at themselves through the prism of our overachiever culture," Robbins writes, "they often come to the conclusion that no matter how much they achieve, it will never be enough." The portraits of the teens are compelling and make for an easy read. Robbins provides a series of critiques of the system, including college rankings, parental pressure, the meaninglessness of standardized testing and the push for A.P. classes. She ends with a call to action, giving suggestions on how to alleviate teens' stress and panic at how far behind they feel.

Pachinko by Min Jin Lee

Profoundly moving and gracefully told, *Pachinko* follows one Korean family through the generations, beginning in early 1900s Korea with Sunja, the prized daughter of a poor yet proud family, whose unplanned pregnancy threatens to shame them. Betrayed by her wealthy lover, Sunja finds unexpected salvation when a young tubercular minister offers to marry her and bring her to Japan to start a new life. So begins a sweeping saga of exceptional people in exile from a homeland they never knew and caught in the indifferent arc of history. In Japan, Sunja's family members endure harsh discrimination, catastrophes, and poverty, yet they also encounter great joy as they pursue their passions and rise to meet the challenges this new home presents. Through desperate struggles and hard-won triumphs, they are bound together by deep roots as their family faces enduring questions of faith, family, and identity.

The Pact: Three Young Men Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream by Sampson Davis

Chosen by *Essence* to be among the forty most influential African Americans, the three doctors grew up in the streets of Newark, facing city life's temptations, pitfalls, even jail. But one day these three young men made a pact. They promised each other they would all become doctors, and stick it out together through the long, difficult journey to attaining that dream. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt are not only friends to this day—they are all doctors. This is a story about the power of friendship. Of joining forces and beating the odds. A story about changing your life, and the lives of those you love most...together.

Parkland: Birth of a Movement by David Cullen

On the first anniversary of the events at Parkland, the acclaimed, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Columbine* offers an intimate, deeply moving account of the extraordinary teenage survivors who became activists and pushed back against the NRA and feckless Congressional leaders—inspiring millions of Americans to join their grassroots #neveragain movement. Nineteen years ago, Dave Cullen was among the first to arrive at Columbine High, even before most of the SWAT teams went in. While writing his acclaimed account of the tragedy, he suffered two bouts of secondary PTSD. He covered all the later tragedies from a distance, working with a cadre of experts cultivated from academia and the FBI, but swore he would never return to the scene of a ghastly crime. But in March 2018, Cullen went to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School because something radically different was happening. In nearly twenty years witnessing the mass shootings epidemic escalate, he was stunned and awed by the courage, anger, and conviction of the high school's students. Refusing to allow adults and the media to shape their story, these remarkable adolescents took control, using their grief as a catalyst for change, transforming tragedy into a movement of astonishing hope that has galvanized a nation. Cullen unfolds the story of Parkland through the voices of key participants whose diverse personalities and

outlooks comprise every facet of the movement. Instead of taking us into the minds of the killer, he takes us into the hearts of the Douglas students as they cope with the common concerns of high school students everywhere —awaiting college acceptance letters, studying for mid-term exams, competing against their athletic rivals, putting together the yearbook, staging the musical *Spring Awakening*, enjoying prom and graduation— while moving forward from a horrific event that has altered them forever. Deeply researched and beautifully told, *Parkland* is an in-depth examination of this pivotal moment in American culture—and an up-close portrait that reveals what these extraordinary young people are like as kids. As it celebrates the passion of these astonishing students who are making history, this spellbinding book is an inspiring call to action for lasting change.

Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63 by Taylor Branch

Pacifist theologian Reinhold Niebuhr influenced Martin Luther King Jr. more deeply than did Gandhi, according to Branch, whose 880-page chronicle shows the civil rights leader taking Billy Graham's evangelist crusades as his model for organizing mass meetings to attack segregation. Epic in scope, often startling in its judgments and revelations, this gripping narrative mingles biography and history as it moves from the founding in 1867 of the First Baptist Church in Alabama, where King's movement took hold, to John Kennedy's assassination. Branch provides disturbing glimpses of John Kennedy wavering over integration while manipulating King, and of Robert Kennedy, who authorized FBI wiretaps on King's home and offices. Ralph Abernathy, Bayard Rustin and other leaders are also here, though King holds center-stage for most of the narrative. This stirring, vivid tapestry is the first volume in Branch's *America in the King Years*.

Peace Like a River by Leif Enger

Leif Enger's rhapsodic novel about a father raising his three children in 1960s Minnesota is a breathtaking celebration of family, faith, and America's pioneering spirit. Through the voice of eleven-year-old Reuben, an asthmatic boy obsessed with cowboy stories, *Peace Like a River* tells of the Land family's cross-country search for Reuben's outlaw older brother, who has been controversially charged with murder. Sprinkled with playful and warmhearted nods to biblical tales, classic American novels such as *Huckleberry Finn*, the adventure stories of Robert Louis Stevenson, and the Westerns of Zane Grey, *Peace Like a River* brilliantly incorporates the best elements of all these genres and ultimately earns its own prominent and enduring place on the shelf among them. Reuben Land was born with no air in his lungs, and it was only when his father, Jeremiah, picked him up and commanded him to breathe that his lungs filled. Reuben struggles with debilitating asthma thenceforth, but he is a boy who knows firsthand that life is a gift, and also one who suspects that his father can overturn the laws of nature. When Reuben's older brother, Davy, kills two marauders who have come to harm the family, the town is divided between those who see him as a hero and those who see him as a cold-blooded murderer. On the morning of the trial, Davy escapes from his cell, and when his family finds out they decide to go forth into the unknown in search of him. With Jeremiah -- whose faith is the stuff of legend -- at the helm, the family covers territory far more glorious than even the Badlands, where they search for Davy from their Airstream trailer. By the time the journey is over, they will have traversed boundaries of a different nature entirely. Marked by a soul-expanding sense of place and a love of storytelling, *Peace Like a River* is at once a heroic quest, a tragedy, a romance, and a heartfelt meditation on the possibility of magic in the everyday world.

A Place to Stand by Jimmy Santiago Baca

Anyone who doubts the power of the written word to transform a life will know better after reading poet Jimmy Santiago Baca's wrenching memoir of his troubled youth and the five-year jail stint that turned him around. When he enters New Mexico's Florence State Prison in 1973, convicted on a drug charge, Baca is 21 and has a long history of trouble with the law. There's no reason to think jail will do anything but turn him into a hardened criminal, and standing up for himself with guards and menacing fellow cons quickly gains him a reputation as a troublemaker. But there have already been hints that this turbulent young man is looking for a way out, as he painstakingly spells out a poem from a clerk's college textbook while awaiting trial or unsuccessfully tries to get permission to take classes in prison. When a volunteer from a religious group sends him a letter, contact with the written word unleashes something in Baca, who starts writing letters and poems with the aid of a dictionary. Reading literature shows him possibilities for understanding his painful family background and expressing his feelings. Poetry literally saves him from being a murderer, as Baca stands over another convict with an illegal weapon, ready to finish him off, and hears "the voices of Neruda and Lorca... praising life as sacred and

challenging me: How can you kill and still be a poet?" Baca has a year to go on his sentence, but the reader knows at that point he has made a choice that will alter his destiny. Without softening the brutality of life in jail, Baca expresses great tenderness for the men there who helped him and affirms his commitment to writing poetry for them, "telling the truth about the life that prisoners have to endure."

The Places In Between by Rory Stewart

Stewart, a resident of Scotland, has written for the *New York Times Magazine* and the *London Review of Books*, and he is a former fellow at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. In January 2002, having just spent 16 months walking across Iran, Pakistan, India, and Nepal, Stewart began a walk across Afghanistan from Herat to Kabul. Although the Taliban had been ousted several weeks earlier, Stewart was launching a journey through a devastated, unsettled, and unsafe landscape. The recounting of that journey makes for an engrossing, surprising, and often deeply moving portrait of the land and the peoples who inhabit it. Stewart relates his encounters with ordinary villagers, security officials, students, displaced Taliban officials, foreign-aid workers, and rural strongmen, and his descriptions of the views and attitudes of those he lived with are presented in frank, unvarnished terms. Nation building in Afghanistan remains a work in progress, and this work should help those who wish to understand the complexities of that task.

The Portrait of a Lady by Henry James

When Isabel Archer, a beautiful, spirited American, is brought to Europe by her wealthy Aunt Touchett, it is expected that she will soon marry. But Isabel, resolved to determine her own fate, does not hesitate to turn down two eligible suitors. She then finds herself irresistibly drawn to Gilbert Osmond, who, beneath his veneer of charm and cultivation, is cruelty itself. A story of intense poignancy, Isabel's tale of love and betrayal still resonates with modern audiences.

Possession by A.S. Byatt

Winner of England's Booker Prize and the literary sensation of the year, *Possession* is an exhilarating novel of wit and romance, at once an intellectual mystery and triumphant love story. It is the tale of a pair of young scholars researching the lives of two Victorian poets. As they uncover their letters, journals, and poems, and track their movements from London to Yorkshire—from spiritualist séances to the fairy-haunted far west of Brittany—what emerges is an extraordinary counterpoint of passions and ideas.

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Pride and Prejudice is a novel of manners by Jane Austen, first published in 1813. The story follows the main character, Elizabeth Bennet, as she deals with issues of manners, upbringing, morality, education, and marriage in the society of the landed gentry of the British Regency. Elizabeth is the second of five daughters of a country gentleman living near the fictional town of Meryton in Hertfordshire, near London. Set in England in the early 19th century, *Pride and Prejudice* tells the story of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet's five unmarried daughters after the rich and eligible Mr. Bingley and his status-conscious friend, Mr. Darcy, have moved into their neighborhood. While Bingley takes an immediate liking to the eldest Bennet daughter, Jane, Darcy has difficulty adapting to local society and repeatedly clashes with the second-eldest Bennet daughter, Elizabeth. Though Austen set the story at the turn of the 19th century, it retains a fascination for modern readers, continuing near the top of lists of "most loved books."

Purple Hibiscus by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Fifteen-year-old Kambili and her older brother Jaja lead a privileged life in Enugu, Nigeria. They live in beautiful house, with a caring family, and attend an exclusive missionary school. They're completely shielded from the troubles of the world. Yet, as Kambili reveals in her tender-voiced account, things are less perfect than they appear. Although her Papa is generous and well respected, he is fanatically religious and tyrannical at home—a home that is silent and suffocating. As the country begins to fall apart under a military coup, Kambili and Jaja are sent to their aunt, a university professor outside the city, where they discover a life beyond the confines of their father's authority. Books cram the shelves, curry and nutmeg permeate the air, and their cousins' laughter rings throughout the house. When they return home, tensions within the family escalate, and Kambili must find the

strength to keep her loved ones together. *Purple Hibiscus* is an exquisite novel about the emotional turmoil of adolescence, the powerful bonds of family, and the bright promise of freedom.

A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil, from Tahrir Square to Isis by Robert Worth

The definitive work of literary journalism on the Arab Spring and its troubled aftermath. In 2011, a wave of revolution spread through the Middle East as protesters demanded an end to tyranny, corruption, and economic decay. From Egypt to Yemen, a generation of young Arabs insisted on a new ethos of common citizenship. Five years later, their utopian aspirations have taken on a darker cast as old divides reemerge and deepen. In one country after another, brutal terrorists and dictators have risen to the top. *A Rage for Order* is the first work of literary journalism to track the tormented legacy of what was once called the Arab Spring. In the style of V. S. Naipaul and Lawrence Wright, the distinguished *New York Times* correspondent Robert F. Worth brings the history of the present to life through vivid stories and portraits. We meet a Libyan rebel who must decide whether to kill the Qaddafi-regime torturer who murdered his brother; a Yemeni farmer who lives in servitude to a poetry-writing, dungeon-operating chieftain; and an Egyptian doctor who is caught between his loyalty to the Muslim Brotherhood and his hopes for a new, tolerant democracy. Combining dramatic storytelling with an original analysis of the Arab world today, *A Rage for Order* captures the psychic and actual civil wars raging throughout the Middle East, and explains how the dream of an Arab renaissance gave way to a new age of discord.

Red Dust: A Novel by Gillian Slovo

This remarkable exposition of a Truth Commission amnesty hearing in a backwater South African town underscores that "the full truth" is more complex than court transcript or verdict can ever reveal. South African police brutally tortured and murdered at will in their unfettered efforts to crush the "terrorist" acts of black rebels against apartheid. Now those rebels occupy the higher branches of government while the offending policemen are imprisoned. Sarah Barcant left the dusty, dead-end town of Smitsrivier 14 years ago to become a successful New York City prosecutor, but drops everything to heed the call of hometown mentor and antiapartheid activist Ben Hoffman. Ben represents brilliant legislator Alex Mpondo at the amnesty hearing of former Smitsrivier policeman Dirk Hendricks, who brutally tortured Alex and knows the truth about the murder of his friend Steve Sizela. Steve's body and killer were never found, and Steve's parents push Sarah to use Dirk's hearing to implicate Pieter Muller, another policeman, never charged, who now runs a security firm in Smitsrivier. Slovo (Catnap; *Every Secret Thing*), herself the daughter of antiapartheid activists, skillfully handles Sarah's quandary of returning to face her past and reexamine her life in the light of long-term exile. The reader can almost taste the dust and feel the heat of the stultifying locale; the scatter of words in Afrikaans enhances the absorbing, fast-paced narrative. Amnesty hearings are meant to bring closure to the violent period that ended apartheid by forgiving crimes by former officials, where possible. But this powerful novel full of legal and emotional twists and turns strips bare the torment forever ingrained in victim and jailer alike, a torment that runs through all segments of post-apartheid society.

Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place by Terry Tempest Williams

From 1982 to 1989 Williams, a naturalist in residence at the Utah Museum of Natural History, suffered two traumatic events: her mother's unsuccessful battle with cancer and the flooding of the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge by the rising waters of the Great Salt Lake. Here she attempts to come to terms with the loss of her parent and that of the birds in the refuge by juxtaposing natural history and personal tragedy, alternating her observations on each. In an epilogue that might well serve as the subject of another book, the author also maintains that her mother--and many other people in Utah--probably contracted cancer as a result of radioactive fallout from atmospheric testing of atomic weapons in Nevada in the 1950s and '60s. And she concludes that, even though it is not in the tradition of her Mormon background to question governmental authority, she must actively oppose nuclear tests in the desert. The book is a moving account of personal loss and renewal.

Regeneration by Pat Barker

In 1917, decorated British officer and poet Siegfried Sassoon wrote a declaration condemning the war. Instead of a court-martial, he was sent to a hospital for other "shell-shocked" officers where he was treated by Dr. William Rivers, noted anthropologist and psychiatrist. Author Barker turns these true occurrences into a compelling and brilliant antiwar novel. Sassoon's complete sanity disturbs Dr. Rivers to such a point that he questions his own role in "curing" his patients only to send them back to the slaughter of the war in France. World War I decimated

an entire generation of European men, and the horrifying loss of life and the callousness of the government led to the obliteration of the Victorian ideal. This is an important and impressive novel about war, soldiers, and humanity.

Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro

The Remains of the Day is a profoundly compelling portrait of the perfect English butler and of his fading, insular world postwar England. At the end of his three decades of service at Darlington Hall, Stevens embarks on a country drive, during which he looks back over his career to reassure himself that he has served humanity by serving “a great gentleman.” But lurking in his memory are doubts about the true nature of Lord Darlington’s “greatness” and graver doubts about his own faith in the man he served.

Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People Is Greater Than the People in Power: A Memoir by Wael Ghonim

The revolutions that swept the Middle East in 2011 surprised and captivated the world. Brutal regimes that had been in power for decades were overturned by an irrepressible mass of freedom seekers. Now, one of the figures who emerged during the Egyptian uprising tells the riveting inside story of what happened and shares the keys to unleashing the power of crowds. Wael Ghonim was a little-known, thirty-year-old Google executive in the summer of 2010 when he anonymously launched a Facebook page to protest the death of one Egyptian man at the hands of security forces. The page’s following expanded quickly and moved from online protests to a nonconfrontational movement. The youth of Egypt made history: they used social media to schedule a revolution. The call went out to more than a million Egyptians online, and on January 25, 2011, Cairo’s Tahrir Square resounded with calls for change. Yet just as the revolution began in earnest, Ghonim was captured and held for twelve days of brutal interrogation. After he was released, he gave a tearful speech on national television, and the protests grew more intense. Four days later, the president of Egypt was gone.

Riding the Bus with My Sister: A True Life Journey by Rachel Simon

This perceptive, uplifting chronicle shows how much Simon, a creative writing professor at Bryn Mawr College, had to learn from her mentally retarded sister, Beth, about life, love and happiness. Beth lives independently and is in a long-term romantic relationship, but perhaps the most surprising thing about her, certainly to her (mostly) supportive family, is how she spends her days riding buses. Six days a week (the buses don’t run on Sundays in her unnamed Pennsylvania city), all day, she cruises around, chatting up her favorite drivers, dispensing advice and holding her ground against those who find her a nuisance. Rachel joined Beth on her rides for a year, a few days every two weeks, in an attempt to mend their distanced relationship and gain some insight into Beth’s daily life. She wound up learning a great deal about herself and how narrowly she’d been seeing the world. Beth’s community within the transit system is a much stronger network than the one Rachel has in her hectic world, and some of the portraits of drivers and the other people in Beth’s life are unforgettable. Rachel juxtaposes this with the story of their childhood, including the dissolution of their parents’ marriage and the devastating abandonment by their mother, the effect of which is tied poignantly to the sisters’ present relationship. Although she is honest about the frustrations of relating to her stubborn sister, Rachel comes to a new appreciation of her, and it is a pleasure for readers to share in that discovery.

Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore by Elizabeth Rush

Harvey. Maria. Irma. Sandy. Katrina. We live in a time of unprecedented hurricanes and catastrophic weather events, a time when it is increasingly clear that climate change is neither imagined nor distant—and that rising seas are transforming the coastline of the United States in irrevocable ways.

In this highly original work of lyrical reportage, Elizabeth Rush guides readers through some of the places where this change has been most dramatic, from the Gulf Coast to Miami, and from New York City to the Bay Area. For many of the plants, animals, and humans in these places, the options are stark: retreat or perish in place. Weaving firsthand accounts from those facing this choice—a Staten Islander who lost her father during Sandy, the remaining holdouts of a Native American community on a drowning Isle de Jean Charles, a neighborhood in Pensacola settled by escaped slaves hundreds of years ago—with profiles of wildlife biologists, activists, and other members of the communities both currently at risk and already displaced, *Rising* privileges the voices of those usually kept at the margins.

River of Smoke by Amitav Ghosh

In Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*, the Ibis began its treacherous journey across the Indian Ocean, bound for the cane fields of Mauritius with a cargo of indentured servants. Now, in *River of Smoke*, the former slave ship flounders in the Bay of Bengal, caught in the midst of a deadly cyclone. The storm also threatens the clipper ship Anahita, groaning with the largest consignment of opium ever to leave India for Canton. Meanwhile, the Redruth, a nursery ship, carries horticulturists determined to track down the priceless botanical treasures of China. All will converge in Canton's Fanqui-town, or Foreign Enclave, a powder keg awaiting a spark to ignite the Opium Wars. A spectacular adventure, but also a bold indictment of global avarice, *River of Smoke* is a consuming historical novel with powerful contemporary resonance.

The Road from Coorain by Jill Ker Conway

In a memoir that pierces and delights us, Jill Ker Conway tells the story of her astonishing journey into adulthood — a journey that would ultimately span immense distances and encompass worlds, ideas, and ways of life that seem a century apart.

She was seven before she ever saw another girl child. At eight, still too small to mount her horse unaided, she was galloping miles, alone, across Coorain, her parents' thirty thousand windswept, drought-haunted acres in the Australian outback, doing a "man's job" of helping herd the sheep because World War II had taken away the able-bodied men. She loved (and makes us see and feel) the vast unpeopled landscape, beautiful and hostile, whose uncertain weathers tormented the sheep ranchers with conflicting promises of riches and inescapable disaster. She adored (and makes us know) her large-visioned father and her strong, radiant mother, who had gone willingly with him into a pioneering life of loneliness and bone-breaking toil, who seemed miraculously to succeed in creating a warmly sheltering home in the harsh outback, and who, upon her husband's sudden death when Jill was ten, began to slide — bereft of the partnership of work and love that had so utterly fulfilled her — into depression and dependency. We see Jill, staggered by the loss of her father, catapulted to what seemed another planet — the suburban Sydney of the 1950s and its crowded, noisy, cliquish school life. Then the heady excitement of the University, but with it a yet more demanding course of lessons — Jill embracing new ideas, new possibilities, while at the same time trying to be mother to her mother and resenting it, escaping into drink, pulling herself back, striking a balance. We see her slowly gaining strength, coming into her own emotionally and intellectually -and beginning the joyous love affair that gave wings to her newfound self. Worlds away from Coorain, in America, Jill Conway became a historian and the first woman president of Smith College. Her story of Coorain and the road from Coorain startles by its passion and evocative power, by its understanding of the ways in which a total, deep-rooted commitment to place — or to a dream — can at once liberate and imprison. It is a story of childhood as both Eden and anguish, and of growing up as a journey toward the difficult life of the free.

Rooftops of Tehran by Mahbod Seraji

From "a striking new talent" comes an unforgettable debut novel of young love and coming of age in an Iran headed toward revolution. In this poignant, eye-opening and emotionally vivid novel, Mahbod Seraji lays bare the beauty and brutality of the centuries-old Persian culture, while reaffirming the human experiences we all share. In a middle-class neighborhood of Iran's sprawling capital city, 17-year-old Pasha Shahed spends the summer of 1973 on his rooftop with his best friend Ahmed, joking around one minute and asking burning questions about life the next. He also hides a secret love for his beautiful neighbor Zari, who has been betrothed since birth to another man. But the bliss of Pasha and Zari's stolen time together is shattered when Pasha unwittingly acts as a beacon for the Shah's secret police. The violent consequences awaken him to the reality of living under a powerful despot, and lead Zari to make a shocking choice...

The Round House by Louise Erdrich

Likely to be dubbed the Native American *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Louise Erdrich's moving, complex, and surprisingly uplifting new novel tells of a boy's coming of age in the wake of a brutal, racist attack on his mother. Drawn from real-life statistics about racially inspired attacks on our country's reservations, this tale is forceful but never preachy, thanks in large part to Erdrich's understated but glorious prose and her apparent belief in the redemptive power of storytelling.

A Rumor of War by Phillip Caputo

To call it the best book about Vietnam is to trivialize it . . . *A Rumor of War* is a dangerous and even subversive book, the first to insist—and the insistence is all the more powerful because it is implicit—that the reader ask himself these questions: How would I have acted? To what lengths would I have gone to survive? The sense of self is assaulted, overcome, subverted, leaving the reader to contemplate the deadening possibility that his own moral safety net might have a hole in it. It is a terrifying thought, and *A Rumor of War* is a terrifying book.

Sal Si Puedes (Escape If You Can): Cesar Chavez and the New American Revolution by Peter Matthiessen

In the summer of 1968 Peter Matthiessen met Cesar Chavez for the first time. They were the same age: forty-one. Matthiessen lived in New York City while Chavez lived in Sal Si Puedes, the San Jose barrio where his career as a union organizer took off. This book is Matthiessen's panoramic yet finely detailed account of the three years he spent traveling and working with Chavez. In it, Matthiessen provides a candid look into the many sides of this enigmatic and charismatic leader who lived by the laws of nonviolence. More than thirty years later, *Sal Si Puedes* is less reportage than living history. A whole era comes alive in its pages: the Chicano, Black Power, and antiwar movements; the browning of the labor movement; Chavez's series of hunger strikes; the nationwide boycott of California grapes. When Chavez died in 1993, thousands gathered at his funeral. It was a clear sign of how beloved he was, how important his life had been. A new postscript by the author brings the reader up to date as to the events that have unfolded since the writing of *Sal Si Puedes*. Ilan Stavans's insightful foreword considers the significance of Chavez's legacy for our time. As well as serving as an indispensable guide to the 1960s, this book rejuvenates the extraordinary vitality of Chavez's life and spirit, giving his message a renewed and much-needed urgency.

Salvage the Bones by Jesmyn Ward

A hurricane is building over the Gulf of Mexico, threatening the coastal town of Bois Sauvage, Mississippi, and Esch's father is growing concerned. A hard drinker, largely absent, he doesn't show concern for much else. Esch and her three brothers are stocking food, but there isn't much to save. Lately, Esch can't keep down what food she gets; she's fourteen and pregnant. Her brother Skeetah is sneaking scraps for his prized pitbull's new litter, dying one by one in the dirt. Meanwhile, brothers Randall and Junior try to stake their claim in a family long on child's play and short on parenting. As the twelve days that make up the novel's framework yield to their dramatic conclusion, this unforgettable family—motherless children sacrificing for one another as they can, protecting and nurturing where love is scarce—pulls itself up to face another day. A big-hearted novel about familial love and community against all odds, and a wrenching look at the lonesome, brutal, and restrictive realities of rural poverty, *Salvage the Bones* is muscled with poetry, revelatory, and real.

The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama

Seventeen-year-old Stephen leaves his home in Hong Kong just as the Japanese are poised to invade China. He is sent to Tarumi, a small village in Japan, to recuperate from tuberculosis. His developing friendship with three adults and a young woman his own age brings him to the beginnings of wisdom about love, honor, and loss. Given the potentially interesting subplot (the story of a love triangle doomed by the outbreak of leprosy in the village) and the fascinating period in which the book is set, this second novel by the author of *Women of the Silk* (St. Martin's, 1991) has the potential to be a winner.

Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools by Jonathan Kozol

Kozol believes that children from poor families are cheated out of a future by grossly underequipped, understaffed and underfunded schools in U.S. inner cities and less affluent suburbs. The schools he visited between 1988 and 1990—in burnt-out Camden, N.J., Washington, D.C., New York's South Bronx, Chicago's South Side, San Antonio, Tex., and East St. Louis, Mo., awash in toxic fumes—were "95 to 99 percent nonwhite." Kozol (*Death at an Early Age*) found that racial segregation has intensified since 1954. Even in the suburbs, he charges, the slotting of minority children into lower "tracks" sets up a differential, two-tier system that diminishes poor children's horizons and aspirations. He lets the pupils and teachers speak for themselves, uncovering "little islands of . . . energy and hope." This important, eye-opening report is a ringing indictment of the shameful neglect that has fostered a ghetto school system in America.

Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland by Patrick Radden Keefe

In December 1972, Jean McConville, a thirty-eight-year-old mother of ten, was dragged from her Belfast home by masked intruders, her children clinging to her legs. They never saw her again. Her abduction was one of the most notorious episodes of the vicious conflict known as The Troubles. Everyone in the neighborhood knew the I.R.A. was responsible. But in a climate of fear and paranoia, no one would speak of it. In 2003, five years after an accord brought an uneasy peace to Northern Ireland, a set of human bones was discovered on a beach. McConville's children knew it was their mother when they were told a blue safety pin was attached to the dress--with so many kids, she had always kept it handy for diapers or ripped clothes. Patrick Radden Keefe's mesmerizing book on the bitter conflict in Northern Ireland and its aftermath uses the McConville case as a starting point for the tale of a society wracked by a violent guerrilla war, a war whose consequences have never been reckoned with. The brutal violence seared not only people like the McConville children, but also I.R.A. members embittered by a peace that fell far short of the goal of a united Ireland, and left them wondering whether the killings they committed were not justified acts of war, but simple murders. From radical and impetuous I.R.A. terrorists such as Dolours Price, who, when she was barely out of her teens, was already planting bombs in London and targeting informers for execution, to the ferocious I.R.A. mastermind known as The Dark, to the spy games and dirty schemes of the British Army, to Gerry Adams, who negotiated the peace but betrayed his hardcore comrades by denying his I.R.A. past--*Say Nothing* conjures a world of passion, betrayal, vengeance, and anguish.

Scalpel and the Silver Bear: The First Navajo Woman Surgeon Combines Western Medicine and Traditional Healing by Lori Alvord

The first Navajo woman surgeon combines western medicine and traditional healing. A spellbinding journey between two worlds, this remarkable book describes surgeon Lori Arviso Alvord's struggles to bring modern medicine to the Navajo reservation in Gallup, New Mexico—and to bring the values of her people to a medical care system in danger of losing its heart. Dr. Alvord left a dusty reservation in New Mexico for Stanford University Medical School, becoming the first Navajo woman surgeon. Rising above the odds presented by her own culture and the male-dominated world of surgeons, she returned to the reservation to find a new challenge. In dramatic encounters, Dr. Alvord witnessed the power of belief to influence health, for good or for ill. She came to merge the latest breakthroughs of medical science with the ancient tribal paths to recovery and wellness, following the Navajo philosophy of a balanced and harmonious life, called Walking in Beauty. And now, in bringing these principles to the world of medicine, *The Scalpel and the Silver Bear* joins those few rare works, such as *Healing and the Mind*, whose ideas have changed medical practices—and our understanding of the world.

Schindler's List by Thomas Keneally

Schindler's List is a remarkable work of fiction based on the true story of German industrialist and war profiteer, Oskar Schindler, who, confronted with the horror of the extermination camps, gambled his life and fortune to rescue 1,300 Jews from the gas chambers.

Working with the actual testimony of Schindler's Jews, Thomas Keneally artfully depicts the courage and shrewdness of an unlikely savior, a man who is a flawed mixture of hedonism and decency and who, in the presence of unutterable evil, transcends the limits of his own humanity.

Season of Life: A Football Star, a Boy, a Journey to Manhood by Jeffrey Marx

When Pulitzer-winning investigative reporter Marx was a kid in the 1970s, he was a ballboy for the Baltimore Colts. One of the team captains was Joe Ehrmann, a larger-than-life party guy and star defensive lineman. After the death of his younger brother, Ehrmann changed his life, working in Baltimore's inner city and eventually becoming an ordained minister. Prompted by an article about the demolition of the Colt's legendary Memorial Stadium, Marx reconnected with Ehrmann and became fascinated both with his ministry and his work as a volunteer football coach at a Baltimore private school. This account of Ehrmann's career--and his effect on Marx's life--is inspirational without being preachy. Most amazing are the stories of the team Ehrmann coaches--a football team on which life lessons are more important than tackling fundamentals. The lessons extend to Marx himself, who describes how he was moved by Ehrmann's example to work on his relationship with his father. A sports story, yes, but much more, too.

Separated: Inside an American Tragedy by Jacob Soboroff

In June 2018, Donald Trump's most notorious decision as president had secretly been in effect for months before most Americans became aware of the astonishing inhumanity being perpetrated by their own government. Jacob Soboroff was among the first journalists to expose this reality after seeing firsthand the living conditions of the children in custody. His influential series of reports ignited public scrutiny that contributed to the president reversing his own policy and earned Soboroff the Cronkite Award for Excellence in Political Broadcast Journalism and, with his colleagues, the 2019 Hillman Prize for Broadcast Journalism. But beyond the headlines, the complete, multilayered story lay untold. How, exactly, had such a humanitarian tragedy—now deemed “torture” by physicians—happened on American soil? Most important, what has been the human experience of those separated children and parents? Soboroff has spent the past two years reporting the many strands of this complex narrative, developing sources from within the Trump administration who share critical details for the first time. He also traces the dramatic odyssey of one separated family from Guatemala, where their lives were threatened by narcos, to seek asylum at the U.S. border, where they were separated—the son ending up in Texas, and the father thousands of miles away, in the Mojave desert of central California. And he joins the heroes who emerged to challenge the policy, and who worked on the ground to reunite parents with children. In this essential reckoning, Soboroff weaves together these key voices with his own experience covering this national issue—at the border in Texas, California, and Arizona; with administration officials in Washington, D.C., and inside the disturbing detention facilities. *Separated* lays out compassionately, yet in the starkest of terms, its human toll, and makes clear what is at stake as America struggles to reset its immigration policies post-Trump.

The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America by Jonathan Kozol

Public school resegregation is a "national horror hidden in plain view," writes former educator turned public education activist Kozol (*Savage Inequalities*, *Amazing Grace*). Kozol visited 60 schools in 11 states over a five-year period and finds, despite the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education*, many schools serving black and Hispanic children are spiraling backward to the pre-*Brown* era. These schools lack the basics: clean classrooms, hallways and restrooms; up-to-date books in good condition; and appropriate laboratory supplies. Teachers and administrators eschew creative coursework for rote learning to meet testing and accountability mandates, thereby "embracing a pedagogy of direct command and absolute control" usually found in "penal institutions and drug rehabilitation programs." As always, Kozol presents sharp and poignant portraits of the indignities vulnerable individuals endure. "You have all the things and we do not have all the things," one eight-year-old Bronx boy wrote the author. In another revealing exchange, a cynical high school student tells his classmate, a young woman with college ambitions who was forced into hair braiding and sewing classes, "You're ghetto-so you sew." Kozol discovers widespread acceptance for the notion that "schools in ghettoized communities must settle for a different set of academic and career goals" than schools serving middle-and upper-class children. Kozol tempers this gloom with hopeful interactions between energetic teachers and receptive children in schools where all is not lost. But these "treasured places" don't hide the fact, Kozol argues, that school segregation is still the rule for poor minorities, or that Kozol, and the like-minded politicians, educators and advocates he seeks out, believe a new civil rights movement will be necessary to eradicate it.

She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement by Jodi Kantor and Meghan Twohey

For many years, reporters had tried to get to the truth about Harvey Weinstein's treatment of women. Rumors of wrongdoing had long circulated. But in 2017, when Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey began their investigation into the prominent Hollywood producer for the *New York Times*, his name was still synonymous with power. During months of confidential interviews with top actresses, former Weinstein employees, and other sources, many disturbing and long-buried allegations were unearthed, and a web of onerous secret payouts and nondisclosure agreements was revealed. These shadowy settlements had long been used to hide sexual harassment and abuse, but with a breakthrough reporting technique Kantor and Twohey helped to expose it. But Weinstein had evaded scrutiny in the past, and he was not going down without a fight; he employed a team of high-profile lawyers, private investigators, and other allies to thwart the investigation. When Kantor and Twohey were finally able to convince some sources to go on the record, a dramatic final showdown between Weinstein and the *New York Times* was set in motion. Nothing could have prepared Kantor and Twohey for what followed the publication of their initial Weinstein story on October 5, 2017. Within days, a veritable Pandora's box of sexual harassment and

abuse was opened. Women all over the world came forward with their own traumatic stories. Over the next twelve months, hundreds of men from every walk of life and industry were outed following allegations of wrongdoing. But did too much change—or not enough? Those questions hung in the air months later as Brett Kavanaugh was nominated to the Supreme Court, and Christine Blasey Ford came forward to testify that he had assaulted her decades earlier. Kantor and Twohey, who had unique access to Ford and her team, bring to light the odyssey that led her to come forward, the overwhelming forces that came to bear on her, and what happened after she shared her allegation with the world. In the tradition of great investigative journalism, *She Said* tells a thrilling story about the power of truth, with shocking new information from hidden sources. Kantor and Twohey describe not only the consequences of their reporting for the #MeToo movement, but the inspiring and affecting journeys of the women who spoke up—for the sake of other women, for future generations, and for themselves.

A Shining Thread of Hope: The History of Black Women in America by Darlene Clark Hine

In an extraordinary narrative personalized for easy reading, Hine (Michigan State Univ.), perhaps the leading historian of U.S. black women, and Thompson, editor-in-chief of Facts on File's Encyclopedia of Black Women (LJ 4/15/97), convey the plight and pluck of African American women from their arrival at Jamestown, VA, in 1619 to what the authors describe as a new era at the dawn of the year 2000. Celebrating black women's historical strength, Hine and Thompson accentuate resistance and survival in their 12 chapters. They focus on flesh-and-blood women whose stories of persistence, protest, and progress flow together with famous and unfamiliar names sharing an unbreakable thread spun by faithful and industrious self-reliance. Without peer as a single-volume history of being black and female in America, this book is an inviting opening to the fast-growing scholarship on African American women to which Hine has so richly contributed.

Shop Class As Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work by Matthew B. Crawford

A philosopher/mechanic's wise (and sometimes funny) look at the challenges and pleasures of working with one's hands

Called "the sleeper hit of the publishing season" (*The Boston Globe*), *Shop Class as Soulcraft* became an instant bestseller, attracting readers with its radical (and timely) reappraisal of the merits of skilled manual labor. On both economic and psychological grounds, author Matthew B. Crawford questions the educational imperative of turning everyone into a "knowledge worker," based on a misguided separation of thinking from doing. Using his own experience as an electrician and mechanic, Crawford presents a wonderfully articulated call for self-reliance and a moving reflection on how we can live concretely in an ever more abstract world. *Shop Class as Soulcraft* is a beautiful little book about human excellence and the way it is undervalued in contemporary America.

Shortest Way Home: One Mayor's Challenge and a Model for America's Future by Pete Buttigieg

Once described by the *Washington Post* as "the most interesting mayor you've never heard of," Pete Buttigieg, the thirty-seven-year-old mayor of South Bend, Indiana, has now emerged as one of the nation's most visionary politicians. With soaring prose that celebrates a resurgent American Midwest, *Shortest Way Home* narrates the heroic transformation of a "dying city" (*Newsweek*) into nothing less than a shining model of urban reinvention. Interweaving two narratives—that of a young man coming of age and a town regaining its economic vitality—Buttigieg recounts growing up in a Rust Belt city, amid decayed factory buildings and the steady soundtrack of rumbling freight trains passing through on their long journey to Chicagoland. Inspired by John F. Kennedy's legacy, Buttigieg first left northern Indiana for red-bricked Harvard and then studied at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, before joining McKinsey, where he trained as a consultant—becoming, of all things, an expert in grocery pricing. Then, Buttigieg defied the expectations that came with his pedigree, choosing to return home to Indiana and responding to the ultimate challenge of how to revive a once-great industrial city and help steer its future in the twenty-first century. Elected at twenty-nine as the nation's youngest mayor, Pete Buttigieg immediately recognized that "great cities, and even great nations, are built through attention to the everyday." As *Shortest Way Home* recalls, the challenges were daunting—whether confronting gun violence, renaming a street in honor of Martin Luther King Jr., or attracting tech companies to a city that had appealed more to junk bond scavengers than serious investors. None of this is underscored more than Buttigieg's audacious campaign to reclaim 1,000 houses, many of them abandoned, in 1,000 days and then, even as a sitting mayor, deploying to serve in Afghanistan as a Navy officer. Yet the most personal challenge still awaited Buttigieg, who came out in a South Bend Tribune editorial, just before being reelected with 78 percent of the vote, and then finding Chasten

Glezman, a middle-school teacher, who would become his partner for life. While Washington reels with scandal, *Shortest Way Home*, with its graceful, often humorous, language, challenges our perception of the typical American politician. In chronicling two once-unthinkable stories—that of an Afghanistan veteran who came out and found love and acceptance, all while in office, and that of a revitalized Rust Belt city no longer regarded as “flyover country”—Buttigieg provides a new vision for America’s shortest way home.

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson

In 1960, a woman noticed the birds had stopped singing and their population had severely decreased in her neighborhood. She summoned a friend, biologist/writer Rachel Carson, to investigate this wildlife mystery. Subsequently, in 1962, Rachel's discoveries and efforts were brought to the forefront in her book, *Silent Spring*, which revealed the atrocities of pesticide poisoning. The over-spraying of DDT, dieldrin and other pest killers was poisoning the entire world of living things, humanity included. Rachel's work not only left chemical companies casting about trying to discredit her findings, but, most importantly, prompted an enormous environmental movement which continues today.

Sing, Unburied, Sing by Jesmyn Ward

In Jesmyn Ward’s first novel since her National Book Award–winning *Salvage the Bones*, this singular American writer brings the archetypal road novel into rural twenty-first-century America. An intimate portrait of a family and an epic tale of hope and struggle, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* journeys through Mississippi’s past and present, examining the ugly truths at the heart of the American story and the power—and limitations—of family bonds. Jojo is thirteen years old and trying to understand what it means to be a man. He doesn’t lack in fathers to study, chief among them his Black grandfather, Pop. But there are other men who complicate his understanding: his absent White father, Michael, who is being released from prison; his absent White grandfather, Big Joseph, who won’t acknowledge his existence; and the memories of his dead uncle, Given, who died as a teenager. His mother, Leonie, is an inconsistent presence in his and his toddler sister’s lives. She is an imperfect mother in constant conflict with herself and those around her. She is Black and her children’s father is White. She wants to be a better mother but can’t put her children above her own needs, especially her drug use. Simultaneously tormented and comforted by visions of her dead brother, which only come to her when she’s high, Leonie is embattled in ways that reflect the brutal reality of her circumstances. When the children’s father is released from prison, Leonie packs her kids and a friend into her car and drives north to the heart of Mississippi and Parchman Farm, the State Penitentiary. At Parchman, there is another thirteen-year-old boy, the ghost of a dead inmate who carries all of the ugly history of the South with him in his wandering. He too has something to teach Jojo about fathers and sons, about legacies, about violence, about love.

The Sixth Extinction by Elizabeth Kolbert

Over the last half-billion years, there have been Five mass extinctions, when the diversity of life on earth suddenly and dramatically contracted. Scientists around the world are currently monitoring the sixth extinction, predicted to be the most devastating extinction event since the asteroid impact that wiped out the dinosaurs. This time around, the cataclysm is us. In prose that is at once frank, entertaining, and deeply informed, *New Yorker* writer Elizabeth Kolbert tells us why and how human beings have altered life on the planet in a way no species has before. Interweaving research in half a dozen disciplines, descriptions of the fascinating species that have already been lost, and the history of extinction as a concept, Kolbert provides a moving and comprehensive account of the disappearances occurring before our very eyes. She shows that the sixth extinction is likely to be mankind's most lasting legacy, compelling us to rethink the fundamental question of what it means to be human.

Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson

This is the kind of book where you can smell and hear and see the fictional world the writer has created, so palpably does the atmosphere come through. Set on an island in the straits north of Puget Sound, in Washington, where everyone is either a fisherman or a berry farmer, the story is nominally about a murder trial. But since it's set in the 1950s, lingering memories of World War II, internment camps and racism helps fuel suspicion of a Japanese-American fisherman, a lifelong resident of the islands. It's a great story, but the primary pleasure of the book is Guterson's renderings of the people and the place.

Snow Hunters by Paul Yoon

Snow Hunters traces the extraordinary journey of Yohan, who defects from his country at the end of the Korean War, leaving his friends and family behind to seek a new life on the coast of Brazil. Throughout his years there, four people slip in and out of his life: Kiyoshi, the Japanese tailor for whom he works; Peixe, the groundskeeper at the town church; and two vagrant children named Santi and Bia. Yohan longs to connect with these people, but to do so he must let go of his traumatic past. In *Snow Hunters*, Yoon proves that love can dissolve loneliness, that hope can wash away despair, and that a man who has lost a country can find a new home. This is a heartrending story of second chances, told with unerring elegance and tenderness.

The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music by Steve Lopez

Scurrying back to his office one day, Lopez, a columnist for the *L.A. Times*, is stopped short by the ethereal strains of a violin. Searching for the sound, he spots a homeless man coaxing those beautiful sounds from a battered two-string violin. When the man finishes, Lopez compliments him briefly and rushes off to write about his newfound subject, Nathaniel Ayers, the homeless violinist. Over the next few days, Lopez discovers that Nathaniel was once a promising classical bass student at Juilliard, but that various pressures—including being one of a few African-American students and mounting schizophrenia—caused him to drop out. Enlisting the help of doctors, mental health professionals and professional musicians, Lopez attempts to help Nathaniel move off Skid Row, regain his dignity, develop his musical talent and free himself of the demons induced by the schizophrenia (at one point, Lopez arranges to have Ayers take cello lessons with a cellist from the L.A. Symphony). Throughout, Lopez endures disappointments and setbacks with Nathaniel's case, questions his own motives for helping his friend and acknowledges that Nathaniel has taught him about courage and humanity. With self-effacing humor, fast-paced yet elegant prose and unsparing honesty, Lopez tells an inspiring story of heartbreak and hope.

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down by Anne Fadiman

Lia Lee was born in 1981 to a family of recent Hmong immigrants, and soon developed symptoms of epilepsy. By 1988 she was living at home but was brain dead after a tragic cycle of misunderstanding, overmedication, and culture clash: "What the doctors viewed as clinical efficiency the Hmong viewed as frosty arrogance." *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* is a tragedy of Shakespearean dimensions, written with the deepest of human feeling.

The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz by Erik Larson

On Winston Churchill's first day as prime minister, Adolf Hitler invaded Holland and Belgium. Poland and Czechoslovakia had already fallen, and the Dunkirk evacuation was just two weeks away. For the next twelve months, Hitler would wage a relentless bombing campaign, killing 45,000 Britons. It was up to Churchill to hold his country together and persuade President Franklin Roosevelt that Britain was a worthy ally—and willing to fight to the end. In *The Splendid and the Vile*, Erik Larson shows, in cinematic detail, how Churchill taught the British people "the art of being fearless." It is a story of political brinkmanship, but it's also an intimate domestic drama, set against the backdrop of Churchill's prime-ministerial country home, Chequers; his wartime retreat, Ditchley, where he and his entourage go when the moon is brightest and the bombing threat is highest; and, of course, 10 Downing Street in London. Drawing on diaries, original archival documents, and once-secret intelligence reports—some released only recently—Larson provides a new lens on London's darkest year through the day-to-day experience of Churchill and his family: his wife, Clementine; their youngest daughter, Mary, who chafes against her parents' wartime protectiveness; their son, Randolph, and his beautiful, unhappy wife, Pamela; Pamela's illicit lover, a dashing American emissary; and the advisers in Churchill's "Secret Circle," to whom he turns in the hardest moments. *The Splendid and the Vile* takes readers out of today's political dysfunction and back to a time of true leadership, when, in the face of unrelenting horror, Churchill's eloquence, courage, and perseverance bound a country, and a family, together.

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel

Kirsten Raymonde will never forget the night Arthur Leander, the famous Hollywood actor, had a heart attack on stage during a production of *King Lear*. That was the night when a devastating flu pandemic arrived in the city, and within weeks, civilization as we know it came to an end. Twenty years later, Kirsten moves between the settlements of the altered world with a small troupe of actors and musicians. They call themselves The Traveling

Symphony, and they have dedicated themselves to keeping the remnants of art and humanity alive. But when they arrive in St. Deborah by the Water, they encounter a violent prophet who will threaten the tiny band's existence. And as the story takes off, moving back and forth in time, and vividly depicting life before and after the pandemic, the strange twist of fate that connects them all will be revealed.

Still Me by Christopher Reeve

Its poignant jacket depicting Reeve in his wheelchair, back to the camera, facing a hillside cast in dreamy greens and purples will by itself propel this book into readers' hands. The words behind the picture are equally potent, however. Reeve has produced a memoir that's outspoken, wise and tremendously moving. The contours of Reeve's career are well known: the meteoric rise in the late 1970s from obscurity to superstardom as Superman; years of celebrity followed by lesser roles and fame; the riding accident that left Reeve a quadriplegic; the comeback through directing HBO's *Into the Gloaming*; the work on behalf of the disabled and spinal cord research. Reeve covers it all, shuttling back and forth in time, giving just enough detail about his earlier years including a frank assessment of his parents and upbringing and lightly enjoyable anecdotes of his relationships with Robin Williams, Katharine Hepburn and other luminaries to background the book's main act: the accident and its aftermath. Writing in a clean, even matter-of-fact style that renders his words all the more devastating for their lack of bathos, Reeve reveals the intimacies of his plight: the confusion and terror as he learned of his situation; a disorienting out-of-body experience in an operating room; the humiliating adjustment to reliance upon others in order to eat, breathe, live; the shift of the center of gravity of his being from self-service to the serving of others. No doubt, Reeve is "still me" but readers of his beautifully composed book will see that he is now also more than that through nearly unimaginable suffering and effort, he has transformed a charmed life into one blessed to be a true profile in courage.

Storming Heaven by Denise Giardina

Four strong, entirely different voices evoke the passion and the pain of unionizing the coal mines of Kentucky and West Virginia in the early 20th century. The canvas is broad, the action complex but even minor characters quicken to life in this memorable, beautifully written novel. The inhabitants of the hills of Appalachia see their beloved land stolen by the coal companies; forced to work in the mines, they are cheated out of their pay. Families starve, die of malaria and dysentery and slowly, almost against their will, begin the fearsome job of fighting back. In 1921, an army of 10,000 workers marches on a single town. The coal companies, the police and finally the federal government close in; hundreds are killed and the man who masterminded the attack is shot. As fast paced and compulsively readable as a thriller, this novel never overlooks the gentler pleasure of living on the land, falling in love, raising a family. Stunning sensory images sear scenes on the mind's eye. Giardina has written one of those rare books that portrays a small world with impeccable clarity while telling an exciting story in vigorous, elegant prose.

A Strangeness in My Mind by Orhan Pamuk

Arriving in Istanbul as a boy, Mevlut Karataş is enthralled by both the old city that is disappearing and the new one that is fast being built. He becomes a street vendor, like his father, hoping to strike it rich, but luck never seems to be on Mevlut's side. He spends three years writing love letters to a girl he has seen just once, only to elope by mistake with her sister. Although he grows to cherish his wife and the family they have together, Mevlut stumbles toward middle age as everyone around him seems to be reaping the benefits of a rapidly modernizing Turkey. Told through the eyes of a diverse cast of characters, in *A Strangeness in My Mind* Nobel-prize-winning author Orhan Pamuk paints a brilliant tableau of life among the newcomers who have changed the face of Istanbul over the past fifty years.

Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right by Arlie Russell Hochschild

In *Strangers in Their Own Land*, the renowned sociologist Arlie Hochschild embarks on a thought-provoking journey from her liberal hometown of Berkeley, California, deep into Louisiana bayou country—a stronghold of the conservative right. As she gets to know people who strongly oppose many of the ideas she famously champions, Hochschild nevertheless finds common ground and quickly warms to the people she meets—among them a Tea Party activist whose town has been swallowed by a sinkhole caused by a drilling accident—people whose concerns are actually ones that all Americans share: the desire for community, the embrace of family, and hopes

for their children. *Strangers in Their Own Land* goes beyond the commonplace liberal idea that these are people who have been duped into voting against their own interests. Instead, Hochschild finds lives ripped apart by stagnant wages, a loss of home, an elusive American dream—and political choices and views that make sense in the context of their lives. Hochschild draws on her expert knowledge of the sociology of emotion to help us understand what it *feels* like to live in “red” America. Along the way she finds answers to one of the crucial questions of contemporary American politics: Why do the people who would seem to benefit most from “liberal” government intervention abhor the very idea?

Strength in What Remains by Tracy Kidder

In *Strength in What Remains*, Tracy Kidder gives us the story of one man’s inspiring American journey and of the ordinary people who helped him, providing brilliant testament to the power of second chances. Deo arrives in the United States from Burundi in search of a new life. Having survived a civil war and genocide, he lands at JFK airport with two hundred dollars, no English, and no contacts. He ekes out a precarious existence delivering groceries, living in Central Park, and learning English by reading dictionaries in bookstores. Then Deo begins to meet the strangers who will change his life, pointing him eventually in the direction of Columbia University, medical school, and a life devoted to healing. Kidder breaks new ground in telling this unforgettable story as he travels with Deo back over a turbulent life and shows us what it means to be fully human.

Strong in the Rain: Surviving Japan’s Earthquake, Tsunami, and Fukushima Nuclear Disaster by Lucy Birmingham and David McNeill

In March of 2011, a 9.0 earthquake struck off the northeastern coast of Japan, unleashing a tsunami onto the densely populated coast. Over 19,000 people would be left dead, or missing, and the disaster triggered the world’s worst nuclear crisis since Chernobyl: a triple meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear plant. As the world offered support, people everywhere wondered how the Japanese, facing such horrific destruction, were able to exhibit such calm, selflessness, and fortitude in picking up the pieces. Blending history, science, and gripping storytelling, *Strong in the Rain* vividly explores the country beyond the headlines, as well as the personal and national stories behind the earthquake. Following the narratives of six individuals, including a worker in the Fukushima nuclear plant who returned to work during the meltdown and the mayor of a coastal town who stayed round the clock on the job without knowing the fate of his family, it offers a glimpse of the surprising ways the Japanese people stood strong in the face of disaster

The Submission by Amy Waldman

Amy Waldman has performed a rare and dangerous feat in writing an airtight, multi-viewed, highly readable post-9/11 novel. When a Muslim architect wins a blind contest to design a Ground Zero Memorial, a city of eleven million people takes notice. Waldman, a former bureau chief for the *New York Times*, explores a diversity of viewpoints around this fictional event, bringing in politicians, businessmen, journalists, activists, and normal people whose lives--whether by happenstance, choice, or even due to their country of origin--get caught up in the controversy. Incredibly, she manages to keep all the balls in the air without ever fumbling. The story is moving and keeps the pages turning, but there are also bigger themes at work: of individuals versus groups; about the purpose of art, commerce, government, and journalism in society; of how people respond to grief and terror. The result is honest, compelling, and breathtaking.

The Surrendered by Chang-rae Lee

Chang-Rae Lee on *The Surrendered*

The inspiration for *The Surrendered* has its roots in a project I worked on more than twenty years ago, while I was still in college. I was taking a seminar on modern Korean history, and I decided that I would conduct an interview with my father to fulfill the writing assignment, conceiving a reporter-at-large-type piece that would offer personal testimony and narrative set against a historical backdrop. I wasn't sure if he would agree. My father was twelve years old on the eve of the Korean War, and although over the years I had asked him a number of times about his experiences, his responses were typically vague and hurried; he never seemed to want to talk about that time, only briefly mentioning that his sister had died during the war from an untreated bout of pneumonia. But since I was taking a course with a special focus on Korea, he agreed to speak in more detail about that period. My father's family was originally from Pyongyang, now the capital of North Korea, and they had joined the throngs of

refugees who were heading south in an attempt to get behind the line of American forces. He first recounted a story about his favorite older cousin, who was pregnant and just about to give birth as the rest of the extended family was frantically packing up and leaving. My father was dispatched to tell his cousin that everyone was departing—explosions could be heard in the distance—yet even though she and her husband desperately wanted to go, she had already started her labors. She couldn't be moved. Everybody soon left, and that was last time the cousin and her husband were seen alive; to this day no one knows what happened to them, whether they perished or survived the war and ended up living in North Korea. Telling that story of his cousin seemed to break the grip of something on my father. He recounted again that his sister had died of pneumonia during the refugee march, then added, casually, that in fact his younger brother had died during their travels, too. This disclosure surprised me. I knew that he had lost a brother, this from asking him, as children often will, about how many siblings he had, matching the number against my uncles and aunts, but I remembered his saying that his brother had died in a "subway accident." I didn't think there was a subway in either Pyongyang or Seoul during his childhood, so I asked him when his brother had died, and how. My father told me that in fact his brother had been killed not by a subway car but by a boxcar of a train full of refugees. They were among the hundreds who filled the cars. The car holding the rest of their family was packed tight, so he and his brother had to sleep on top of the boxcar. In the middle of the night the train halted violently, and his brother, who was eight years old, fell off, the train then lurching forward for a short distance. My father jumped down and went back and found his brother, whose leg had been amputated by the wheels of the train. My father carried him back to the car, to the rest of their family, as the blood—and his life—ran out of him. I've been haunted by that story since I heard it, not only by the horror of the accident but also by the picture of my father as a boy, a boy who had to experience his brother's death so directly and egregiously. I was struck, too, by how unperturbed my father had always seemed to me, this cheerful, optimistic man who certainly didn't appear to be haunted by anything. But, of course, this was not quite true. The events of the war had stayed with him, and always would. In recent years I began to consider writing a novel about that time, and what happened to my father and his brother kept coming back to me. I finally decided to try to write that scene, wondering whether a larger story might be instituted. Naturally the details changed quite drastically as I began to write, the story expanding in every direction, developing its own world and aims, and soon enough it was not my father's story at all. But the kernel of what had happened grew to become the first chapter of *The Surrendered*, which for me is not so much a war novel as it is a story concerned with the effects of mass conflict on the human psyche and spirit, the private odysseys that those who have experienced conflict must endure.

Sweetness in the Belly by Camilla Gibb

Like *Brick Lane* and *The Kite Runner*, Camilla Gibb's widely praised new novel is a poignant and intensely atmospheric look beyond the stereotypes of Islam. After her hippie British parents are murdered, Lilly is raised at a Sufi shrine in Morocco. As a young woman she goes on pilgrimage to Harar, Ethiopia, where she teaches Qur'an to children and falls in love with an idealistic doctor. But even swathed in a traditional headscarf, Lilly can't escape being marked as a foreigner. Forced to flee Ethiopia for England, she must once again confront the riddle of who she is and where she belongs.

A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki

In Tokyo, sixteen-year-old Nao has decided there's only one escape from her aching loneliness and her classmates' bullying. But before she ends it all, Nao first plans to document the life of her great grandmother, a Buddhist nun who's lived more than a century. A diary is Nao's only solace—and will touch lives in ways she can scarcely imagine. Across the Pacific, we meet Ruth, a novelist living on a remote island who discovers a collection of artifacts washed ashore in a Hello Kitty lunchbox—possibly debris from the devastating 2011 tsunami. As the mystery of its contents unfolds, Ruth is pulled into the past, into Nao's drama and her unknown fate, and forward into her own future. Full of Ozeki's signature humor and deeply engaged with the relationship between writer and reader, past and present, fact and fiction, quantum physics, history, and myth, *A Tale for the Time Being* is a brilliantly inventive, beguiling story of our shared humanity and the search for home.

A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens

It was the time of the French Revolution — a time of great change and great danger. It was a time when injustice was met by a lust for vengeance, and rarely was a distinction made between the innocent and the guilty. Against this tumultuous historical backdrop, Dickens' great story of unsurpassed adventure and courage unfolds.

The Testaments by Margaret Atwood

More than 15 years after the events of *The Handmaid's Tale*, the theocratic regime of the Republic of Gilead maintains its grip on power, but there are signs it is beginning to rot from within. At this crucial moment, the lives of three radically different women converge, with potentially explosive results. Two have grown up as part of the first generation to come of age in the new order. The testimonies of these two young women are joined by a third: Aunt Lydia. Her complex past and uncertain future unfold in surprising and pivotal ways. With *The Testaments*, Margaret Atwood opens up the innermost workings of Gilead, as each woman is forced to come to terms with who she is, and how far she will go for what she believes.

There Are No Children Here by Alex Kotlowitz

The devastating story of brothers Lafayette and Pharoah Rivers, children of the Chicago ghetto, is powerfully told here by Kotlowitz, a Wall Street Journal reporter who first met the boys in 1985 when they were 10 and seven, respectively. Their family includes a mother, a frequently absent father, an older brother and younger triplets. We witness the horrors of growing up in an ill-maintained housing project tyrannized by drug gangs and where murders and shootings frequently occur. Lafayette tries to cope by stifling his emotions and turning himself into an automaton, while Pharoah first attempts to regress into early childhood and then finds a way out by excelling at school. Kotlowitz's affecting report does not have a "neat and tidy ending. . . . It is, instead, about a beginning, the dawning of two lives."

There There by Tommy Orange

Tommy Orange's "groundbreaking, extraordinary" (*The New York Times*) *There There* is the "brilliant, propulsive" (*People Magazine*) story of twelve unforgettable characters, Urban Indians living in Oakland, California, who converge and collide on one fateful day. It's "the year's most galvanizing debut novel" (*Entertainment Weekly*). As we learn the reasons that each person is attending the Big Oakland Powwow—some generous, some fearful, some joyful, some violent—momentum builds toward a shocking yet inevitable conclusion that changes everything. Jacquie Red Feather is newly sober and trying to make it back to the family she left behind in shame. Dene Oxendene is pulling his life back together after his uncle's death and has come to work at the powwow to honor his uncle's memory. Opal Viola Victoria Bear Shield has come to watch her nephew Orvil, who has taught himself traditional Indian dance through YouTube videos and will to perform in public for the very first time. There will be glorious communion, and a spectacle of sacred tradition and pageantry. And there will be sacrifice, and heroism, and loss. *There There* is a wondrous and shattering portrait of an America few of us have ever seen. It's "masterful . . . white-hot . . . devastating" (*The Washington Post*) at the same time as it is fierce, funny, suspenseful, thoroughly modern, and impossible to put down. Here is a voice we have never heard—a voice full of poetry and rage, exploding onto the page with urgency and force. Tommy Orange has written a stunning novel that grapples with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and profound spirituality, and with a plague of addiction, abuse, and suicide.

They Can't Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America's Racial Justice Movement by Wesley Lowery

Conducting hundreds of interviews during the course of over one year reporting on the ground, *Washington Post* writer Wesley Lowery traveled from Ferguson, Missouri, to Cleveland, Ohio; Charleston, South Carolina; and Baltimore, Maryland; and then back to Ferguson to uncover life inside the most heavily policed, if otherwise neglected, corners of America today. In an effort to grasp the magnitude of the repose to Michael Brown's death and understand the scale of the problem police violence represents, Lowery speaks to Brown's family and the families of other victims other victims' families as well as local activists. By posing the question, "What does the loss of any one life mean to the rest of the nation?" Lowery examines the cumulative effect of decades of racially biased policing in segregated neighborhoods with failing schools, crumbling infrastructure and too few jobs. Studded with moments of joy, and tragedy, *They Can't Kill Us All* offers a historically informed look at the standoff between the police and those they are sworn to protect, showing that civil unrest is just one tool of resistance in

the broader struggle for justice. As Lowery brings vividly to life, the protests against police killings are also about the black community's long history on the receiving end of perceived and actual acts of injustice and discrimination. *They Can't Kill Us All* grapples with a persistent if also largely unexamined aspect of the otherwise transformative presidency of Barack Obama: the failure to deliver tangible security and opportunity to those Americans most in need of both.

This Child Will Be Great: Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa's First Woman President by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf *Forbes* lists Sirleaf, the 23rd president of Liberia and the first elected female president on the African continent, among the 100 Most Powerful Women in 2008. In and out of government, in and out of exile, but consistent in her commitment to Liberia, Sirleaf in her memoir reveals herself to be among the most resilient, determined and courageous as well. She writes with modesty in a calm and measured tone. While her account includes a happy childhood and an unhappy marriage, the book is politically, not personally, focused as she (and Liberia) go through the disastrous presidencies of Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor. Sirleaf's training as an economist and her employment (e.g., in banking, as minister of finance in Liberia, and in U.N. development programs) informs the perspective from which she views internal Liberian history (e.g., the tensions between the settler class and the indigenous people) and Liberia's international relations. Although her focus is thoroughly on Liberia, the content is more widely instructive, particularly her account of the role of the Economic Community of West African States.

The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet by David Mitchell

David Mitchell reinvents himself with each book, and it's thrilling to watch. His novels like *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas* spill over with narrators and language, collecting storylines connected more in spirit than in fact. In *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, he harnesses that plenitude into a more traditional form, a historical novel set in Japan at the turn into the 19th century, when the island nation was almost entirely cut off from the West except for a tiny, quarantined Dutch outpost. Jacob is a pious but not unappealing prig from Zeeland, whose self-driven duty to blurt the truth in a corrupt and deceitful trading culture, along with his headlong love for a local midwife, provides the early engine for the story, which is confined at first to the Dutch enclave but crosses before long to the mainland. Every page is overfull with language, events, and characters, exuberantly saturated in the details of the time and the place but told from a knowing and undeniably modern perspective. It's a story that seems to contain a thousand worlds in one.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

A Thousand Splendid Suns is a breathtaking story set against the volatile events of Afghanistan's last thirty years -- from the Soviet invasion to the reign of the Taliban to post-Taliban rebuilding -- that puts the violence, fear, hope and faith of this country in intimate, human terms. It is a tale of two generations of characters brought jarringly together by the tragic sweep of war, where personal lives -- the struggle to survive, raise a family, find happiness -- are inextricable from the history playing out around them.

Propelled by the same storytelling instinct that made *The Kite Runner* a beloved classic, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is at once a remarkable chronicle of three decades of Afghan history and a deeply moving account of family and friendship. It is a striking, heartwrenching novel of an unforgiving time, an unlikely friendship, and an indestructible love -- a stunning accomplishment.

To Be a Friend Is Fatal: The Fight to Save the Iraqis America Left Behind by Kirk Johnson

In January 2005, Kirk Johnson, then twenty-four, arrived in Baghdad as USAID's only Arabic-speaking American employee. Despite his opposition to the war, Johnson felt called to civic duty and wanted to help rebuild Iraq. Appointed as USAID's first reconstruction coordinator in Fallujah, he traversed the city's IED-strewn streets, working alongside idealistic Iraqi translators—young men and women sick of Saddam, filled with Hollywood slang, and enchanted by the idea of a peaceful, democratic Iraq. It was not to be. As sectarian violence escalated, Iraqis employed by the US coalition found themselves subject to a campaign of kidnapping, torture, and assassination. On his first brief vacation, Johnson, swept into what doctors later described as a “fugue state,” crawled onto the ledge outside his hotel window and plunged off. He would spend the next year in an abyss of depression, surgery, and PTSD—crushed by having failed in Iraq. One day, Johnson received an email from an Iraqi friend, Yaghdan: *People are trying to kill me and I need your help*. After being identified by a militiaman, Yaghdan had emerged from his house to find the severed head of a dog and a death threat. That email

launched Johnson's now seven-year mission to get help from the US government for Yaghdan and thousands of abandoned Iraqis like him. The List Project has helped more than 1,500 Iraqis find refuge in America. *To Be a Friend Is Fatal* is Kirk W. Johnson's unforgettable portrait of the human rubble of war and his efforts to redeem a shameful chapter of American history.

The Tortilla Curtain by T. Corghessan Boyle

Topanga Canyon is home to two couples on a collision course. Los Angeles liberals Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher lead an ordered sushi-and-recycling existence in a newly gated hilltop community: he a sensitive nature writer, she an obsessive realtor. Mexican illegals Candido and America Rincon desperately cling to their vision of the American Dream as they fight off starvation in a makeshift camp deep in the ravine. And from the moment a freak accident brings Candido and Delaney into intimate contact, these four and their opposing worlds gradually intersect in what becomes a tragicomedy of error and misunderstanding.

Transatlantic by Colum McCann

McCann's stunning sixth novel is a brilliant tribute to his loamy, lyrical and complicated Irish homeland, and an ode to the ties that, across time and space, bind Ireland and America. The book begins with three transatlantic crossings, each a novella within a novel: Frederick Douglas's 1845 visit to Ireland; the 1919 flight of British aviators Alcock and Brown; and former US senator George Mitchell's 1998 attempt to mediate peace in Northern Ireland. McCann then loops back to 1863 to launch the saga of the women we've briefly met throughout Book One, beginning with Irish housemaid Lily Duggan, whose bold escape from her troubled homeland cracks open the world for her daughter and granddaughter. The language is lush, urgent, chiseled and precise; sometimes languid, sometimes kinetic. At times, it reads like poetry, or a dream. Choppy sentences. Two-word declaratives. Arranged into stunning, jagged tableaux. Bleak, yet hopeful. (Describing Lily's first view of America: "New York appeared like a cough of blood.") The finale is a melancholy set piece that ties it all together--an unopened letter, "passed from daughter to daughter, and through a succession of lives," becomes the book's mysterious token, an emblem of a world grown smaller. McCann reminds us that life is hard, and it is a wonder, and there is hope.

The Translator by Daoud Hari

Daoud, a Zaghawa tribesman in northern Darfur, fled his village, which was under attack by Sudanese militiamen, in 2003. His brother was killed and his family driven into exile across Sudan. Lamenting the demise of old traditions that called for the settlement of disputes among ethnic groups with peaceable dinners in one another's homes, Daoud fought back in his efforts as a translator to help document the carnage in his native land. In this first-person account, Daoud recalls imprisonment in Egypt, suffering in refugee camps, and efforts by ordinary Sudanese to hold onto families and hope in the face of genocide. Daoud worked as a translator for a British filmmaker and for award-winning reporters with the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, and BBC. As a translator for UN investigators of genocide, Daoud listened to stories told slowly and quietly, feeling emotions the tellers dared not let themselves feel. Daoud writes beautifully and simply, offering insight, relaying the analysis of the reporters he worked with, and demonstrating the power of a man emotionally vested in the story being told.

The True American: Murder and Mercy in Texas by Anand Giridharadas

The True American tells the story of Raisuddin Bhuiyan, a Bangladesh Air Force officer who dreams of immigrating to America and working in technology. But days after 9/11, an avowed "American terrorist" named Mark Stroman, seeking revenge, walks into the Dallas minimart where Bhuiyan has found temporary work and shoots him, maiming and nearly killing him. Two other victims, at other gas stations, aren't so lucky, dying at once. *The True American* traces the making of these two men, Stroman and Bhuiyan, and of their fateful encounter. It follows them as they rebuild shattered lives—one striving on Death Row to become a better man, the other to heal and pull himself up from the lowest rung on the ladder of an unfamiliar country. Ten years after the shooting, an Islamic pilgrimage seeds in Bhuiyan a strange idea: if he is ever to be whole, he must reenter Stroman's life. He longs to confront Stroman and speak to him face to face about the attack that changed their lives. Bhuiyan publicly forgives Stroman, in the name of his religion and its notion of mercy. Then he wages a legal and public-relations campaign, against the State of Texas and Governor Rick Perry, to have his attacker spared from the death penalty. Ranging from Texas's juvenile justice system to the swirling crowd of pilgrims at the Hajj in Mecca; from a biker bar to an immigrant mosque in Dallas; from young military cadets in Bangladesh to elite paratroopers

in Israel; from a wealthy household of chicken importers in Karachi, Pakistan, to the sober residences of Brownwood, Texas, *The True American* is a rich, colorful, profoundly moving exploration of the American dream in its many dimensions. Ultimately it tells a story about our love-hate relationship with immigrants, about the encounter of Islam and the West, about how—or whether—we choose what we become.

The Underground Girls of Kabul: In Search of a Hidden Resistance in Afghanistan by Jenny Nordberg

An investigative journalist uncovers a hidden custom that will transform your understanding of what it means to grow up as a girl. In Afghanistan, a culture ruled almost entirely by men, the birth of a son is cause for celebration and the arrival of a daughter is often mourned as misfortune. A *bacha posh* (literally translated from Dari as “dressed up like a boy”) is a third kind of child – a girl temporarily raised as a boy and presented as such to the outside world. Jenny Nordberg, the reporter who broke the story of this phenomenon for the *New York Times*, constructs a powerful and moving account of those secretly living on the other side of a deeply segregated society where women have almost no rights and little freedom.

The Underground Girls of Kabul is anchored by vivid characters who bring this remarkable story to life: Azita, a female parliamentarian who sees no other choice but to turn her fourth daughter Mehran into a boy; Zahra, the tomboy teenager who struggles with puberty and refuses her parents’ attempts to turn her back into a girl; Shukria, now a married mother of three after living for twenty years as a man; and Nader, who prays with Shahed, the undercover female police officer, as they both remain in male disguise as adults. At the heart of this emotional narrative is a new perspective on the extreme sacrifices of Afghan women and girls against the violent backdrop of America’s longest war. Divided into four parts, the book follows those born as the unwanted sex in Afghanistan, but who live as the socially favored gender through childhood and puberty, only to later be forced into marriage and childbirth. *The Underground Girls of Kabul* charts their dramatic life cycles, while examining our own history and the parallels to subversive actions of people who live under oppression everywhere.

The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, the #1 *New York Times* bestseller from Colson Whitehead, a magnificent tour de force chronicling a young slave's adventures as she makes a desperate bid for freedom in the antebellum South

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is hell for all the slaves, but especially bad for Cora; an outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is coming into womanhood—where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.

In Whitehead’s ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor—engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora and Caesar’s first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city’s placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels. Forced to flee again, Cora embarks on a harrowing flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

Like the protagonist of *Gulliver’s Travels*, Cora encounters different worlds at each stage of her journey—hers is an odyssey through time as well as space. As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the unique terrors for black people in the pre-Civil War era, his narrative seamlessly weaves the saga of America from the brutal importation of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. *The Underground Railroad* is at once a kinetic adventure tale of one woman’s ferocious will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share.

An Unnecessary Woman by Rabih Alameddine

Seventy-two-year-old Beirut native Aaliya Sobhi, living a solitary life, has always felt herself unnecessary. The father who adored her died young, and her remarried mother focused attention on Aaliya’s half-brothers, leaving her to describe herself as “my family’s appendix, its unnecessary appendage,” an attitude reinforced by her Lebanese culture. Divorced at 20 after a negligible marriage, she lived alone and began her life’s work of translating the novels she most loved into Arabic from other translations, then simply storing them, unread, in her apartment. Sustained by her “blind lust for the written word” and surrounded by piles of books, she anticipates beginning a new translation project each year until disaster appears to upend her life. But these are just the bare

bones of a plot. The richness here is in Aaliya's first-person narration, which veers from moments in her life to literature to the wars that have wracked her beloved native city during her lifetime. Studded with quotations and succinct observations, this remarkable novel by Alameddine is a paean to fiction, poetry, and female friendship.

The Unraveling: High Hopes and Missed Opportunities in Iraq by Emma Sky

When Emma Sky volunteered to help rebuild Iraq after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003, she had little idea what she was getting in to. Her assignment was only supposed to last three months. She went on to serve there longer than any other senior military or diplomatic figure, giving her an unrivaled perspective of the entire conflict. As the representative of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Kirkuk in 2003 and then the political advisor to US General Odierno from 2007–2010, Sky was valued for her knowledge of the region and her outspoken voice. She became a tireless witness to American efforts to transform a country traumatized by decades of war, sanctions, and brutal dictatorship; to insurgencies and civil war; to the planning and implementation of the surge and the subsequent drawdown of US troops; to the corrupt political elites who used sectarianism to mobilize support; and to the takeover of a third of the country by the Islamic State. With sharp detail and tremendous empathy, Sky provides unique insights into the US military as well as the complexities, diversity, and evolution of Iraqi society. *The Unraveling* is an intimate insider's portrait of how and why the Iraq adventure failed and contains a unique analysis of the course of the war. Highlighting how nothing that happened in Iraq after 2003 was inevitable, Sky exposes the failures of the policies of both Republicans and Democrats, and the lessons that must be learned about the limitations of power.

The Vagrants by Yiyun Li

In luminous prose, award-winning author Yiyun Li weaves together the lives of unforgettable characters who are forced to make moral choices, and choices for survival, in China in the late 1970s. As morning dawns on the provincial city of Muddy River, a spirited young woman, Gu Shan, once a devoted follower of Chairman Mao, has renounced her faith in Communism. Now a political prisoner, she is to be executed for her dissent. While Gu Shan's distraught mother makes bold decisions, her father begins to retreat into memories. Neither of them imagines that their daughter's death will have profound and far-reaching effects, in Muddy River and beyond. Among the characters affected are Kai, a beautiful radio announcer who is married to a man from a powerful family; Tong, a lonely seven-year-old boy; and Nini, a hungry young girl. Beijing is being rocked by the Democratic Wall Movement, an anti-Communist groundswell designed to move the country toward a more enlightened and open society, but the government backlash will be severe. In this spellbinding novel, the brilliant Yiyun Li gives us a powerful and beautiful portrait of human courage and despair in dramatic times.

Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott by Margaret Hope Bacon

The compelling story of Lucretia Mott, whose life of constant battle never betrayed her Quaker pacifism. She fought slavery, poverty, war, and the low status of women in nineteenth century society.

A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail by Bill Bryson

Returning to the U.S. after 20 years in England, Iowa native Bryson decided to reconnect with his mother country by hiking the length of the 2100-mile Appalachian Trail. Awed by merely the camping section of his local sporting goods store, he nevertheless plunges into the wilderness and emerges with a consistently comical account of a neophyte woodsman learning hard lessons about self-reliance. Bryson carries himself in an irresistibly bewildered manner, accepting each new calamity with wonder and hilarity. He reviews the characters of the AT (as the trail is called), from a pack of incompetent Boy Scouts to a perpetually lost geezer named Chicken John. Most amusing is his cranky, crude and inestimable companion, Katz, a reformed substance abuser who once had single-handedly "become, in effect, Iowa's drug culture." The uneasy but always entertaining relationship between Bryson and Katz keeps their walk interesting, even during the flat stretches. Bryson completes the trail as planned, and he records the misadventure with insight and elegance. He is a popular author in Britain and his impeccably graceful and witty style deserves a large American audience as well.

Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement by John Lewis

John Lewis is an authentic American hero, a modest man from the most humble of beginnings who left a rural Alabama cotton farm 40 years ago and strode into the forefront of the civil rights movement. One of the young

people who brought the teachings of Ghandi and King to the lunch counters of Nashville in 1960, Lewis suffered taunts and threats, beatings and arrests. He spoke at the historic 1963 March on Washington and became chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. The nation, tuned to the nightly news, watched in horror as state troopers clubbed him viciously, fracturing his skull as he led a march in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Today, he's the only member of Congress who can be proud of having been carried off to jail more than 40 times. With the help of a collaborator, journalist Michael D'Orso, this remarkable man has written a truly remarkable book. *Walking with the Wind* is a deeply moving personal memoir that skillfully balances the intimate and touching recollections of the deeply thoughtful Lewis with the intense national drama that was the civil rights movement.

War by Sebastian Junger

War is insanely exciting.... Don't underestimate the power of that revelation, warns bestselling author and *Vanity Fair* contributing editor Junger (*The Perfect Storm*). The war in Afghanistan contains brutal trauma but also transcendent purpose in this riveting combat narrative. Junger spent 14 months in 2007–2008 intermittently embedded with a platoon of the 173rd Airborne brigade in Afghanistan's Korengal Valley, one of the bloodiest corners of the conflict. The soldiers are a scruffy, warped lot, with unkempt uniforms—they sometimes do battle in shorts and flip-flops—and a ritual of administering friendly beatings to new arrivals, but Junger finds them to be superlative soldiers. Junger experiences everything they do—nerve-racking patrols, terrifying roadside bombings and ambushes, stultifying weeks in camp when they long for a firefight to relieve the tedium. Despite the stress and the grief when buddies die, the author finds war to be something of an exalted state: soldiers experience an almost sexual thrill in the excitement of a firefight—a response Junger struggles to understand—and a profound sense of commitment to subordinating their self-interests to the good of the unit. Junger mixes visceral combat scenes—raptly aware of his own fear and exhaustion—with quieter reportage and insightful discussions of the physiology, social psychology, and even genetics of soldiering. The result is an unforgettable portrait of men under fire.

War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy

Often called the greatest novel ever written, *War and Peace* is at once an epic of the Napoleonic Wars, a philosophical study, and a celebration of the Russian spirit. Tolstoy's genius is seen clearly in the multitude of fully realized and equally memorable characters that populate this massive chronicle. Out of this complex narrative emerges a profound examination of the individual's place in the historical process, one that makes it clear why Thomas Mann praised Tolstoy for his Homeric powers and placed *War and Peace* in the same category as the *Iliad*: "To read him . . . is to find one's way home . . . to everything within us that is fundamental and sane."

War on Peace: The End of Diplomacy and the Decline of American Influence by Ronan Farrow

US foreign policy is undergoing a dire transformation, forever changing America's place in the world. Institutions of diplomacy and development are bleeding out after deep budget cuts; the diplomats who make America's deals and protect its citizens around the world are walking out in droves. Offices across the State Department sit empty, while abroad the military-industrial complex has assumed the work once undertaken by peacemakers. We're becoming a nation that shoots first and asks questions later. In an astonishing journey from the corridors of power in Washington, DC, to some of the most remote and dangerous places on earth—Afghanistan, Somalia, and North Korea among them—acclaimed investigative journalist Ronan Farrow illuminates one of the most consequential and poorly understood changes in American history. His firsthand experience as a former State Department official affords a personal look at some of the last standard bearers of traditional statecraft, including Richard Holbrooke, who made peace in Bosnia and died while trying to do so in Afghanistan. Drawing on newly unearthed documents, and richly informed by rare interviews with warlords, whistle-blowers, and policymakers—including every living former secretary of state from Henry Kissinger to Hillary Clinton to Rex Tillerson—*War on Peace* makes a powerful case for an endangered profession. Diplomacy, Farrow argues, has declined after decades of political cowardice, shortsightedness, and outright malice—but it may just offer America a way out of a world at war.

Warriors Don't Cry by Melba Patillo Beals

One of the nine black teenagers who integrated Little Rock's Central High School in 1957 here recounts that traumatic year with drama and detail. Beals, who is now a communications consultant, relies on her own diary from that era and notes made by her English teacher mother—as well as dubiously recreated dialogue—to tell not

only of the ugly harassment she was subjected to but also of the impressive dignity of a 15-year-old forced to grow up fast. Arkansas governor Orval Faubus set the tone of the time by resisting integration until a federal judge ordered it. Although Beals was assigned a federal soldier for protection, the young integrationist was still attacked and prevented from engaging in school activities. She recalls stalwart black friends like Minniejean, who was suspended, and a white classmate who surreptitiously kept her informed of the segregationists' tactics. Beals looks back on her Little Rock experiences as "ultimately a positive force" that shaped her life. "The task that remains," she concludes, "is to cope with our interdependence."

The Watch by Joydeep Roy-Bhattacharya

Following a desperate night-long battle, a group of beleaguered soldiers in an isolated base in Kandahar are faced with a lone woman demanding the return of her brother's body. Is she a spy, a black widow, a lunatic, or is she what she claims to be: a grieving young sister intent on burying her brother according to local rites? Single-minded in her mission, she refuses to move from her spot on the field in full view of every soldier in the stark outpost. Her presence quickly proves dangerous as the camp's tense, claustrophobic atmosphere comes to a boil when the men begin arguing about what to do next. Joydeep Roy-Bhattacharya's heartbreaking and haunting novel, *The Watch*, takes a timeless tragedy and hurls it into present-day Afghanistan. Taking its cues from the Antigone myth, Roy-Bhattacharya brilliantly recreates the chaos, intensity, and immediacy of battle, and conveys the inevitable repercussions felt by the soldiers, their families, and by one sister. The result is a gripping tour through the reality of this very contemporary conflict, and our most powerful expression to date of the nature and futility of war.

We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy by Ta-Nehisi Coates

"We were eight years in power" was the lament of Reconstruction-era black politicians as the American experiment in multiracial democracy ended with the return of white supremacist rule in the South. In this sweeping collection of new and selected essays, Ta-Nehisi Coates explores the tragic echoes of that history in our own time: the unprecedented election of a black president followed by a vicious backlash that fueled the election of the man Coates argues is America's "first white president." But the story of these present-day eight years is not just about presidential politics. This book also examines the new voices, ideas, and movements for justice that emerged over this period—and the effects of the persistent, haunting shadow of our nation's old and unreconciled history. Coates powerfully examines the events of the Obama era from his intimate and revealing perspective—the point of view of a young writer who begins the journey in an unemployment office in Harlem and ends it in the Oval Office, interviewing a president.

We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda by Philip Gourevitch

What courage must it have required to research and write this book? And who will read such a ghastly chronicle? Gourevitch, who reported from Rwanda for the *New Yorker*, faces these questions up front: "The best reason I have come up with for looking more closely into Rwanda's stories is that ignoring them makes me even more uncomfortable about existence and my place in it." The stories are unrelentingly horrifying and filled with "the idiocy, the waste, the sheer wrongness" of one group of Rwandans (Hutus) methodically exterminating another (Tutsis). With 800,000 people killed in 100 days, Gourevitch found many numbed Rwandans who had lost whole families to the machete. He discovered a few admirable characters, including hotelier Paul Rusesabagina, who, "armed with nothing but a liquor cabinet, a phone line, an internationally famous address, and his spirit of resistance," managed to save refugees in his Hotel des Milles Collines in Kigali. General Paul Kagame, one of Gourevitch's main sources in the new government, offers another bleak and consistent voice of truth. But failure is everywhere. Gourevitch excoriates the French for supporting the Hutus for essentially racist reasons; the international relief agencies, which he characterizes as largely devoid of moral courage; and the surrounding countries that preyed on the millions of refugees, many fleeing the consequences of their part in the killings. As the Rwandans try to rebuild their lives while awaiting the slow-moving justice system, the careful yet passionate advocacy of reporters like Gourevitch serves to remind both Rwandans and others that genocide occurred in this decade while the world looked on.

What Is the What by Dave Eggers

Valentino Achak Deng, real-life hero of this engrossing epic, was a refugee from the Sudanese civil war—the bloodbath before the current Darfur bloodbath—of the 1980s and 90s. In this fictionalized memoir, Eggers (*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*) makes him an icon of globalization. Separated from his family when Arab militia destroy his village, Valentino joins thousands of other “Lost Boys,” beset by starvation, thirst and man-eating lions on their march to squalid refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya, where Valentino pieces together a new life. He eventually reaches America, but finds his quest for safety, community and fulfillment in many ways even more difficult there than in the camps: he recalls, for instance, being robbed, beaten and held captive in his Atlanta apartment. Eggers's limpid prose gives Valentino an unaffected, compelling voice and makes his narrative by turns harrowing, funny, bleak and lyrical. The result is a horrific account of the Sudanese tragedy, but also an emblematic saga of modernity—of the search for home and self in a world of unending upheaval.

Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America by Paul Tough

What would it take? That was the question that Geoffrey Canada found himself asking. What would it take to change the lives of poor children—not one by one, through heroic interventions and occasional miracles, but in big numbers, and in a way that could be replicated nationwide? The question led him to create the Harlem Children's Zone, a ninety-seven-block laboratory in central Harlem where he is testing new and sometimes controversial ideas about poverty in America. His conclusion: if you want poor kids to be able to compete with their middle-class peers, you need to change everything in their lives—their schools, their neighborhoods, even the child-rearing practices of their parents. *Whatever It Takes* is a tour de force of reporting, an inspired portrait not only of Geoffrey Canada but also of the parents and children in Harlem who are struggling to better their lives, often against great odds. Carefully researched and deeply affecting, this is a dispatch from inside the most daring and potentially transformative social experiment of our time.

Where Men Win Glory: The Odyssey of Pat Tillman by Jon Krakauer

The bestselling author of *Into the Wild*, *Into Thin Air*, and *Under the Banner of Heaven* delivers a stunning, eloquent account of a remarkable young man's haunting journey.

Like the men whose epic stories Jon Krakauer has told in his previous bestsellers, Pat Tillman was an irrepressible individualist and iconoclast. In May 2002, Tillman walked away from his \$3.6 million NFL contract to enlist in the United States Army. He was deeply troubled by 9/11, and he felt a strong moral obligation to join the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Two years later, he died on a desolate hillside in southeastern Afghanistan. Though obvious to most of the two dozen soldiers on the scene that a ranger in Tillman's own platoon had fired the fatal shots, the Army aggressively maneuvered to keep this information from Tillman's wife, other family members, and the American public for five weeks following his death. During this time, President Bush repeatedly invoked Tillman's name to promote his administration's foreign policy. Long after Tillman's nationally televised memorial service, the Army grudgingly notified his closest relatives that he had “probably” been killed by friendly fire while it continued to dissemble about the details of his death and who was responsible.

In *Where Men Win Glory*, Jon Krakauer draws on Tillman's journals and letters, interviews with his wife and friends, conversations with the soldiers who served alongside him, and extensive research on the ground in Afghanistan to render an intricate mosaic of this driven, complex, and uncommonly compelling figure as well as the definitive account of the events and actions that led to his death. Before he enlisted in the army, Tillman was familiar to sports aficionados as an undersized, overachieving Arizona Cardinals safety whose virtuosity in the defensive backfield was spellbinding. With his shoulder-length hair, outspoken views, and boundless intellectual curiosity, Tillman was considered a maverick. America was fascinated when he traded the bright lights and riches of the NFL for boot camp and a buzz cut. Sent first to Iraq—a war he would openly declare was “illegal as hell”—and eventually to Afghanistan, Tillman was driven by complicated, emotionally charged, sometimes contradictory notions of duty, honor, justice, patriotism, and masculine pride, and he was determined to serve his entire three-year commitment. But on April 22, 2004, his life would end in a barrage of bullets fired by his fellow soldiers. Krakauer chronicles Tillman's riveting, tragic odyssey in engrossing detail highlighting his remarkable character

and personality while closely examining the murky, heartbreaking circumstances of his death. Infused with the power and authenticity readers have come to expect from Krakauer's storytelling, *Where Men Win Glory* exposes shattering truths about men and war.

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So, in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life--until the unthinkable happens. Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps.

Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania by Frank Bruni

Over the last few decades, Americans have turned college admissions into a terrifying and occasionally devastating process, preceded by test prep, tutors, all sorts of stratagems, all kinds of rankings, and a conviction among too many young people that their futures will be determined and their worth established by which schools say yes and which say no. That belief is wrong. It's cruel. And in *Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be*, Frank Bruni explains why, giving students and their parents a new perspective on this brutal, deeply flawed competition and a path out of the anxiety that it provokes. Bruni, a bestselling author and a columnist for the *New York Times*, shows that the Ivy League has no monopoly on corner offices, governors' mansions, or the most prestigious academic and scientific grants. Through statistics, surveys, and the stories of hugely successful people who didn't attend the most exclusive schools, he demonstrates that many kinds of colleges--large public universities, tiny hideaways in the hinterlands--serve as ideal springboards. And he illuminates how to make the most of them. What matters in the end are a student's efforts in and out of the classroom, not the gleam of his or her diploma.

Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do by Claude Steele

Acclaimed social psychologist Claude Steele offers an insider's look at his groundbreaking findings on stereotypes and identity. Through dramatic personal stories, Claude Steele shares the experiments and studies that show, again and again, that exposing subjects to stereotypes—merely reminding a group of female math majors about to take a math test, for example, that women are considered naturally inferior to men at math—impairs their performance in the area affected by the stereotype. Steele's conclusions shed new light on a host of American social phenomena, from the racial and gender gaps in standardized test scores to the belief in the superior athletic prowess of black men. Steele explicates the dilemmas that arise in every American's life around issues of identity, from the white student whose grades drop steadily in his African American Studies class to the female engineering students deciding whether or not to attend predominantly male professional conferences. *Whistling Vivaldi* offers insight into how we form our senses of identity and ultimately lays out a plan for mitigating the negative effects of "stereotype threat" and reshaping American identities.

White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson

As Ferguson, Missouri, erupted in August 2014, and media commentators across the ideological spectrum referred to the angry response of African Americans as "black rage," historian Carol Anderson wrote a remarkable op-ed in *The Washington Post* suggesting that this was, instead, "white rage at work. With so much attention on the flames," she argued, "everyone had ignored the kindling." Since 1865 and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, every time African Americans have made advances towards full participation in our democracy, white reaction has fueled a deliberate and relentless rollback of their gains. The end of the Civil War and Reconstruction was greeted with the Black Codes and Jim Crow; the Supreme Court's landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was met with the shutting down of public schools throughout the South while taxpayer dollars financed segregated white private schools; the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 triggered a coded but powerful response, the so-called Southern Strategy and the War on Drugs that disenfranchised millions of African Americans while propelling presidents Nixon and Reagan into the White

House, and then the election of America's first black President, led to the expression of white rage that has been as relentless as it has been brutal. Carefully linking these and other historical flashpoints when social progress for African Americans was countered by deliberate and cleverly crafted opposition, Anderson pulls back the veil that has long covered actions made in the name of protecting democracy, fiscal responsibility, or protection against fraud, rendering visible the long lineage of white rage. Compelling and dramatic in the unimpeachable history it relates, *White Rage* will add an important new dimension to the national conversation about race in America.

"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" by Beverly Daniel Tatum

This insightful exploration of the varieties of Americans' experience with race and racism in everyday life would be an excellent starting point for the upcoming national conversations on race that President Clinton and his appointed commission will be conducting this fall. Tatum, a developmental psychologist (Mt. Holyoke Coll.) with a special interest in the emerging field of racial-identity development, is a consultant to school systems and community groups on teaching and learning in a multicultural context. Not only has she studied the distinctive social dynamics faced by black youth educated in predominantly white environments, but since 1980, Tatum has developed a course on the psychology of racism and taught it in a variety of university settings. She is also a black woman and a concerned mother of two, and she draws on all these experiences and bases of knowledge to write a remarkably jargon-free book that is as rigorously analytical as it is refreshingly practical and drives its points home with a range of telling anecdotes. Tatum illuminates "why talking about racism is so hard" and what we can do to make it easier.

A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order by Richard Haass

Things fall apart; the center cannot hold. The rules, policies, and institutions that have guided the world since World War II have largely run their course. Respect for sovereignty alone cannot uphold order in an age defined by global challenges from terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons to climate change and cyberspace. Meanwhile, great power rivalry is returning. Weak states pose problems just as confounding as strong ones. The United States remains the world's strongest country, but American foreign policy has at times made matters worse, both by what the U.S. has done and by what it has failed to do. The Middle East is in chaos, Asia is threatened by China's rise and a reckless North Korea, and Europe, for decades the world's most stable region, is now anything but. As Richard Haass explains, the election of Donald Trump and the unexpected vote for "Brexit" signals that many in modern democracies reject important aspects of globalization, including borders open to trade and immigrants. In *A World in Disarray*, Haass argues for an updated global operating system—call it world order 2.0—that reflects the reality that power is widely distributed and that borders count for less. One critical element of this adjustment will be adopting a new approach to sovereignty, one that embraces its obligations and responsibilities as well as its rights and protections. Haass also details how the U.S. should act towards China and Russia, as well as in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. He suggests, too, what the country should do to address its dysfunctional politics, mounting debt, and the lack of agreement on the nature of its relationship with the world. *A World in Disarray* is a wise examination, one rich in history, of the current world, along with how we got here and what needs doing. Haass shows that the world cannot have stability or prosperity without the United States, but that the United States cannot be a force for global stability and prosperity without its politicians and citizens reaching a new understanding.

The World Is Flat 3.0: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century by Thomas L. Friedman

Thomas L. Friedman is not so much a futurist, which he is sometimes called, as a presentist. His aim in *The World Is Flat*, as in his earlier, influential *Lexus and the Olive Tree*, is not to give you a speculative preview of the wonders that are sure to come in your lifetime, but rather to get you caught up on the wonders that are already here. The world isn't going to be flat, it *is* flat, which gives Friedman's breathless narrative much of its urgency, and which also saves it from the Epcot-style polyester sheen that futurists--the optimistic ones at least--are inevitably prey to. What Friedman means by "flat" is "connected": the lowering of trade and political barriers and the exponential technical advances of the digital revolution that have made it possible to do business, or almost anything else, instantaneously with billions of other people across the planet. This in itself should not be news to anyone. But the news that Friedman has to deliver is that just when we stopped paying attention to these developments--when the dot-com bust turned interest away from the business and technology pages and when 9/11 and the Iraq War turned all eyes toward the Middle East--is when they actually began to accelerate. Globalization 3.0, as he

calls it, is driven not by major corporations or giant trade organizations like the World Bank, but by individuals: desktop freelancers and innovative startups all over the world (but especially in India and China) who can compete--and win--not just for low-wage manufacturing and information labor but, increasingly, for the highest-end research and design work as well. (He doesn't forget the "mutant supply chains" like Al-Qaeda that let the small act big in more destructive ways.) Friedman has embraced this flat world in his own work, continuing to report on his story after his book's release and releasing an unprecedented hardcover update of the book a year later with 100 pages of revised and expanded material. What's changed in a year? Some of the sections that opened eyes in the first edition--on China and India, for example, and the global supply chain--are largely unaltered. Instead, Friedman has more to say about what he now calls "uploading," the direct-from-the-bottom creation of culture, knowledge, and innovation through blogging, podcasts, and open-source software. And in response to the pleas of many of his readers about how to survive the new flat world, he makes specific recommendations about the technical and creative training he thinks will be required to compete in the "New Middle" class. As before, Friedman tells his story with the catchy slogans and globe-hopping anecdotes that readers of his earlier books and his *New York Times* columns know well, and he holds to a stern sort of optimism. He wants to tell you how exciting this new world is, but he also wants you to know you're going to be trampled if you don't keep up with it. A year later, one can sense his rising impatience that our popular culture, and our political leaders are not helping us keep pace.

Yellow Bird: Oil, Murder and a Woman's Search for Justice in Indian Country by Sierra Crane Murdoch

When Lissa Yellow Bird was released from prison in 2009, she found her home, the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota, transformed by the Bakken oil boom. In her absence, the landscape had been altered beyond recognition, her tribal government swayed by corporate interests, and her community burdened by a surge in violence and addiction. Three years later, when Lissa learned that a young white oil worker, Kristopher "KC" Clarke, had disappeared from his reservation worksite, she became particularly concerned. No one knew where Clarke had gone, and few people were actively looking for him. *Yellow Bird* traces Lissa's steps as she obsessively hunts for clues to Clarke's disappearance. She navigates two worlds—that of her own tribe, changed by its newfound wealth, and that of the non-Native oilmen, down on their luck, who have come to find work on the heels of the economic recession. Her pursuit of Clarke is also a pursuit of redemption, as Lissa atones for her own crimes and reckons with generations of trauma. *Yellow Bird* is an exquisitely written, masterfully reported story about a search for justice and a remarkable portrait of a complex woman who is smart, funny, eloquent, compassionate, and—when it serves her cause—manipulative. Drawing on eight years of immersive investigation, Sierra Crane Murdoch has produced a profound examination of the legacy of systematic violence inflicted on a tribal nation and a tale of extraordinary healing.

Yellow Dirt: An American Story of a Poisoned Land and a People Betrayed by Judy Pasternak

In the 1940s, when the U.S. government was embarking on developing atomic weapons, it discovered huge uranium deposits in Navajo territory covering parts of Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona. Mines constructed there yielded uranium that would be used in the Manhattan Project and eventually in the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Navajo themselves saw little of the huge profits from uranium but as workers and land dwellers would suffer radiation exposure four times that of the Japanese targeted by the A-bomb. Award-winning environmental journalist Pasternak follows four generations of Navajo families, from the patriarch who warned against violating the land to those tempted by the prospects of jobs and money. She chronicles the cultural stoicism that prohibited them from complaining for so long about the alarming rates of cancer deaths, the betrayal of trust by corporate and government interests, the growing awareness of the tragedy visited on them in the name of national security, and the efforts to fight for restoration. A stunning look at a shameful chapter in American history with long-lasting implications for all Americans concerned with environmental justice.

The Yellow House by Sarah M. Broom

A brilliant, haunting and unforgettable memoir from a stunning new talent about the inexorable pull of home and family, set in a shotgun house in New Orleans East. In 1961, Sarah M. Broom's mother Ivory Mae bought a shotgun house in the then-promising neighborhood of New Orleans East and built her world inside of it. It was the height of the Space Race and the neighborhood was home to a major NASA plant—the postwar optimism seemed assured. Widowed, Ivory Mae remarried Sarah's father Simon Broom; their combined family would

eventually number twelve children. But after Simon died, six months after Sarah's birth, the Yellow House would become Ivory Mae's thirteenth and most unruly child. A book of great ambition, Sarah M. Broom's *The Yellow House* tells a hundred years of her family and their relationship to home in a neglected area of one of America's most mythologized cities. This is the story of a mother's struggle against a house's entropy, and that of a prodigal daughter who left home only to reckon with the pull that home exerts, even after the Yellow House was wiped off the map after Hurricane Katrina. *The Yellow House* expands the map of New Orleans to include the stories of its lesser known natives, guided deftly by one of its native daughters, to demonstrate how enduring drives of clan, pride, and familial love resist and defy erasure. Located in the gap between the "Big Easy" of tourist guides and the New Orleans in which Broom was raised, *The Yellow House* is a brilliant memoir of place, class, race, the seeping rot of inequality, and the internalized shame that often follows. It is a transformative, deeply moving story from an unparalleled new voice of startling clarity, authority, and power.

English 12

Dear Rising Seniors:

Congratulations on completing your junior year! I hope that you are enjoying your summer and that, even while embracing all that summer has to offer, you are looking forward to your senior year at North Shore.

What would a summer be without reading? There's no need for you to answer this question. However, I would like to share the summer reading assignment for English 12 with you. As was the case with English 11, you'll have a choice of texts to read. Please select one of the texts that appears on the following pages. I also have provided the publisher's description of each book.

I urge you to be an active reader who reads with a pen in hand. Mark up your text. This will help you in the fall, as you will have opportunities to return to whichever text you read throughout your experience in English 12.

As you read, I would like for you to think about an idea that Toni Morrison presented in her Nobel Address, which she delivered in 1993 after being awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature: "The vitality of language lies in its ability to limn the actual, imagined and possible lives of its speakers, readers, writers. Although its poise is sometimes in displacing experience, it is not a substitute for it. It arcs toward the place where meaning may lie." Think about what Toni Morrison means in this quotation and how it might connect to your text. (If you're not certain what the word "limn" means, look it up!!)

After you finish reading your text, please write a letter to me in which you (1) present your response to the text that you read and (2) discuss passages in the text where the language seems "to limn the actual, imagined and possible lives of its speakers, readers, writers." Remember, a response to a text is not a summary ... focus instead on whether you liked or disliked the text (and why), whether you would recommend the text (and why), questions the text raised for you, and/or connections you established while reading (personal connections, connections to other texts, and/or connections to the world).

Your letter should be at least two pages, double spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, one inch margins. Please focus on organizing your ideas logically and expressing your ideas clearly. I am eager to understand your key points!

Please send your letter to me via email (dgrossman@nscds.org) by Wednesday, Aug. 25, 2021.

If you have any questions about this assignment or any of the texts, please feel free to reach out to me via email.

I hope that you enjoy whichever text you read and that you have a terrific summer. I'm looking forward to seeing you in the fall!

Mr. Grossman

English 12 Summer Reading

Fiction:

In the Time of the Butterflies (Julia Alvarez)

It is November 25, 1960, and three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Nor does it explain that the sisters were among the leading opponents of Gen. Rafael Leónidas Trujillo's dictatorship. It doesn't have to. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas--the Butterflies.

In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters--Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé--speak across the decades to tell their own stories, from secret crushes to gunrunning, and to describe the everyday horrors of life under Trujillo's rule. Through the art and magic of Julia Alvarez's imagination, the martyred Butterflies live again in this novel of courage and love, and the human costs of political oppression.

Autobiography of Red (Anne Carson)

The award-winning poet reinvents a genre in a stunning work that is both a novel and a poem, both an unconventional re-creation of an ancient Greek myth and a wholly original coming-of-age story set in the present. Geryon, a young boy who is also a winged red monster, reveals the volcanic terrain of his fragile, tormented soul in an autobiography he begins at the age of five. As he grows older, Geryon escapes his abusive brother and affectionate but ineffectual mother, finding solace behind the lens of his camera and in the arms of a young man named Herakles, a cavalier drifter who leaves him at the peak of infatuation. When Herakles reappears years later, Geryon confronts again the pain of his desire and embarks on a journey that will unleash his creative imagination to its fullest extent. By turns whimsical and haunting, erudite and accessible, richly layered and deceptively simple, *Autobiography of Red* is a profoundly moving portrait of an artist coming to terms with the fantastic accident of who he is.

The Artist of Disappearance (Anita Desai)

Set in modern India, these three novellas move beyond the cities to places still haunted by the past, and to characters who are, each in their own way, masters of self-effacement. An unnamed government official is called upon to inspect a faded mansion of forgotten treasures where he discovers a surprise "relic." A translator blurs the line between writer and translator, and in so doing risks unraveling her desires and achievements. In the title novella, a hermit hidden away in the woods with a secret is discovered by a film crew, which compels him to withdraw even further until he magically disappears.

Rich and evocative, remarkable in their clarity and sensuous in their telling, these novellas remind us of the extraordinary yet delicate power of this pre-eminent writer.

The Kite Runner (Khalid Hosseini)

The unforgettable, heartbreaking story of the unlikely friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father's servant, caught in the tragic sweep of history, *The Kite Runner* transports readers to Afghanistan at a tense and crucial moment of change and destruction. A powerful story of friendship, it is also about the power of reading, the price of betrayal, and the possibility of redemption; and an exploration of the power of fathers over sons—their love, their sacrifices, their lies.

Since its publication in 2003, *The Kite Runner* has become a beloved, one-of-a-kind classic of contemporary literature, touching millions of readers, and launching the career of one of America's most treasured writers.

The Interpreter of Maladies (Jhumpa Lahiri)

This stunning debut collection unerringly charts the emotional journeys of characters seeking love beyond the barriers of nations and generations. In stories that travel from India to America and back again, Lahiri speaks with universal eloquence to everyone who has ever felt like a foreigner.

Let the Great World Spin (Colum McCann)

In the dawning light of a late-summer morning, the people of lower Manhattan stand hushed, staring up in disbelief at the Twin Towers. It is August 1974, and a mysterious tightrope walker is running, dancing, leaping

between the towers, suspended a quarter mile above the ground. In the streets below, a slew of ordinary lives become extraordinary in bestselling novelist Colum McCann's stunningly intricate portrait of a city and its people. *Let the Great World Spin* is the critically acclaimed author's most ambitious novel yet: a dazzlingly rich vision of the pain, loveliness, mystery, and promise of New York City in the 1970s.

Corrigan, a radical young Irish monk, struggles with his own demons as he lives among the prostitutes in the middle of the burning Bronx. A group of mothers gather in a Park Avenue apartment to mourn their sons who died in Vietnam, only to discover just how much divides them even in grief. A young artist finds herself at the scene of a hit-and-run that sends her own life careening sideways. Tillie, a thirty-eight-year-old grandmother, turns tricks alongside her teenage daughter, determined not only to take care of her family but to prove her own worth. Elegantly weaving together these and other seemingly disparate lives, McCann's powerful allegory comes alive in the unforgettable voices of the city's people, unexpectedly drawn together by hope, beauty, and the "artistic crime of the century."

A sweeping and radical social novel, *Let the Great World Spin* captures the spirit of America in a time of transition, extraordinary promise, and, in hindsight, heartbreaking innocence. Hailed as a "fiercely original talent" (San Francisco Chronicle), award-winning novelist McCann has delivered a triumphantly American masterpiece that awakens in us a sense of what the novel can achieve, confront, and even heal.

Station Eleven (Emily St. John Mandel)

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel is a bold vision of a dystopian future, frighteningly real, perfect for fans of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.

What was lost in the collapse: almost everything, almost everyone, but there is still such beauty.

One snowy night in Toronto famous actor Arthur Leander dies on stage whilst performing the role of a lifetime.

That same evening a deadly virus touches down in North America. The world will never be the same again.

Twenty years later Kirsten, an actress in the Travelling Symphony, performs Shakespeare in the settlements that have grown up since the collapse. But then her newly hopeful world is threatened.

If civilization was lost, what would you preserve? And how far would you go to protect it?

The Memory Police (Yoko Ogawa)

A haunting Orwellian novel about the terrors of state surveillance, from the acclaimed author of *The Housekeeper and the Professor*.

On an unnamed island, objects are disappearing: first hats, then ribbons, birds, roses. . . . Most of the inhabitants are oblivious to these changes, while those few able to recall the lost objects live in fear of the draconian Memory Police, who are committed to ensuring that what has disappeared remains forgotten. When a young writer discovers that her editor is in danger, she concocts a plan to hide him beneath her floorboards, and together they cling to her writing as the last way of preserving the past. Powerful and provocative, *The Memory Police* is a stunning novel about the trauma of loss.

Swing Time (Zadie Smith)

An ambitious, exuberant new novel moving from North West London to West Africa, from the multi-award-winning author of *White Teeth* and *On Beauty*.

Two brown girls dream of being dancers—but only one, Tracey, has talent. The other has ideas: about rhythm and time, about black bodies and black music, what constitutes a tribe, or makes a person truly free. It's a close but complicated childhood friendship that ends abruptly in their early twenties, never to be revisited, but never quite forgotten, either.

Tracey makes it to the chorus line but struggles with adult life, while her friend leaves the old neighborhood behind, traveling the world as an assistant to a famous singer, Aimee, observing close up how the one percent live.

But when Aimee develops grand philanthropic ambitions, the story moves from London to West Africa, where diaspora tourists travel back in time to find their roots, young men risk their lives to escape into a different future, the women dance just like Tracey—the same twists, the same shakes—and the origins of a profound inequality are not a matter of distant history, but a present dance to the music of time.

Memoirs/Nonfiction:

Wave (Somali Deraniyagala)

In 2004, at a beach resort on the coast of Sri Lanka, Sonali Deraniyagala and her family—parents, husband, sons—were swept away by a tsunami. Only Sonali survived to tell their tale. This is her account of the nearly incomprehensible event and its aftermath.

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek (Annie Dillard)

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek is the story of a dramatic year in Virginia's Roanoke Valley, where Annie Dillard set out to chronicle incidents of "beauty tangled in a rapture with violence."

Dillard's personal narrative highlights one year's exploration on foot in the Virginia region through which Tinker Creek runs. In the summer, she stalks muskrats in the creek and contemplates wave mechanics; in the fall, she watches a monarch butterfly migration and dreams of Arctic caribou. She tries to con a coot; she collects pond water and examines it under a microscope. She unties a snake skin, witnesses a flood, and plays King of the Meadow with a field of grasshoppers. The result is an exhilarating tale of nature and its seasons.

What You Have Heard is True (Carolyn Forché)

What You Have Heard is True is a devastating, lyrical, and visionary memoir about a young woman's brave choice to engage with horror in order to help others. Written by one of the most gifted poets of her generation, this is the story of a woman's radical act of empathy, and her fateful encounter with an intriguing man who changes the course of her life.

Carolyn Forché is twenty-seven when the mysterious stranger appears on her doorstep. The relative of a friend, he is a charming polymath with a mind as seemingly disordered as it is brilliant. She's heard rumors from her friend about who he might be: a lone wolf, a communist, a CIA operative, a sharpshooter, a revolutionary, a small coffee farmer, but according to her, no one seemed to know for certain. He has driven from El Salvador to invite Forché to visit and learn about his country. Captivated for reasons she doesn't fully understand, she accepts and becomes enmeshed in something beyond her comprehension.

Together they meet with high-ranking military officers, impoverished farm workers, and clergy desperately trying to assist the poor and keep the peace. These encounters are a part of his plan to educate her, but also to learn for himself just how close the country is to war. As priests and farm-workers are murdered and protest marches attacked, he is determined to save his country, and Forché is swept up in his work and in the lives of his friends. Pursued by death squads and sheltering in safe houses, the two forge a rich friendship, as she attempts to make sense of what she's experiencing and establish a moral foothold amidst profound suffering.

This is the powerful story of a poet's experience in a country on the verge of war, and a journey toward social conscience in a perilous time.

Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight (Alexandra Fuller)

Though it is a diary of an unruly life in an often inhospitable place, Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight is suffused with Fuller's endearing ability to find laughter, even when there is little to celebrate. Fuller's debut is unsentimental and unflinching but always captivating. In wry and sometimes hilarious prose, she stares down disaster and looks back with rage and love at the life of an extraordinary family in an extraordinary time.

From 1972 to 1990, Alexandra Fuller—known to friends and family as Bobo—grew up on several farms in southern and central Africa. Her father joined up on the side of the white government in the Rhodesian civil war, and was often away fighting against the powerful black guerilla factions. Her mother, in turn, flung herself at their African life and its rugged farm work with the same passion and maniacal energy she brought to everything else. Though she loved her children, she was no hand-holder and had little tolerance for neediness. She nurtured her daughters in other ways: She taught them, by example, to be resilient and self-sufficient, to have strong wills and strong opinions, and to embrace life wholeheartedly, despite and because of difficult circumstances. And she instilled in Bobo, particularly, a love of reading and of storytelling that proved to be her salvation.

Alexandra Fuller writes poignantly about a girl becoming a woman and a writer against a backdrop of unrest, not just in her country but in her home. But Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight is more than a survivor's story. It is the story of one woman's unbreakable bond with a continent and the people who inhabit it, a portrait lovingly realized and deeply felt.

Begin Again (Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.)

Begin Again is one of the great books on James Baldwin and a powerful reckoning with America's ongoing failure to confront the lies it tells itself about race. Just as in Baldwin's "after times," argues Eddie S. Glaude Jr., when

white Americans met the civil rights movement's call for truth and justice with blind rage and the murders of movement leaders, so in our moment were the Obama presidency and the birth of Black Lives Matter answered with the ascendance of Trump and the violent resurgence of white nationalism.

In these brilliant and stirring pages, Glaude finds hope and guidance in Baldwin as he mixes biography—drawn partially from newly uncovered Baldwin interviews—with history, memoir, and poignant analysis of our current moment to reveal the painful cycle of Black resistance and white retrenchment. As Glaude bears witness to the difficult truth of racism's continued grip on the national soul, *Begin Again* is a searing exploration of the tangled web of race, trauma, and memory, and a powerful interrogation of what we must ask of ourselves in order to call forth a new America.

H is for Hawk (Helen Macdonald)

When Helen Macdonald's father died suddenly on a London street, she was devastated. An experienced falconer—Helen had been captivated by hawks since childhood—she'd never before been tempted to train one of the most vicious predators, the goshawk. But in her grief, she saw that the goshawk's fierce and feral temperament mirrored her own. Resolving to purchase and raise the deadly creature as a means to cope with her loss, she adopted Mabel, and turned to the guidance of *The Once and Future King* author T.H. White's chronicle *The Goshawk* to begin her challenging endeavor. Projecting herself "in the hawk's wild mind to tame her" tested the limits of Macdonald's humanity and changed her life.

Heart-wrenching and humorous, this book is an unflinching account of bereavement and a unique look at the magnetism of an extraordinary beast, with a parallel examination of a legendary writer's eccentric falconry. Obsession, madness, memory, myth, and history combine to achieve a distinctive blend of nature writing and memoir from an outstanding literary innovator.

Blood at the Root (Patrick Phillips)

Forsyth County, Georgia, at the turn of the twentieth century, was home to a large African American community that included ministers and teachers, farmers and field hands, tradesmen, servants, and children. But then in September of 1912, three young black laborers were accused of raping and murdering a white girl. One man was dragged from a jail cell and lynched on the town square, two teenagers were hung after a one-day trial, and soon bands of white "night riders" launched a coordinated campaign of arson and terror, driving all 1,098 black citizens out of the county. The charred ruins of homes and churches disappeared into the weeds, until the people and places of black Forsyth were forgotten.

National Book Award finalist Patrick Phillips tells Forsyth's tragic story in vivid detail and traces its long history of racial violence all the way back to antebellum Georgia. Recalling his own childhood in the 1970s and '80s, Phillips sheds light on the communal crimes of his hometown and the violent means by which locals kept Forsyth "all white" well into the 1990s. In precise, vivid prose, *Blood at the Root* delivers a "vital investigation of Forsyth's history, and of the process by which racial injustice is perpetuated in America" (Congressman John Lewis).

The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee (David Treuer)

A sweeping history—and counter-narrative—of Native American life from the Wounded Knee massacre to the present.

The received idea of Native American history—as promulgated by books like Dee Brown's mega-bestselling 1970 *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*—has been that American Indian history essentially ended with the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee. Not only did one hundred fifty Sioux die at the hands of the U. S. Cavalry, the sense was, but Native civilization did as well.

Growing up Ojibwe on a reservation in Minnesota, training as an anthropologist, and researching Native life past and present for his nonfiction and novels, David Treuer has uncovered a different narrative. Because they did not disappear—and not despite but rather because of their intense struggles to preserve their language, their traditions, their families, and their very existence—the story of American Indians since the end of the nineteenth century to the present is one of unprecedented resourcefulness and reinvention.

In *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee*, Treuer melds history with reportage and memoir. Tracing the tribes' distinctive cultures from first contact, he explores how the depredations of each era spawned new modes of survival. The devastating seizures of land gave rise to increasingly sophisticated legal and political maneuvering that put the lie to the myth that Indians don't know or care about property. The forced assimilation of their children at government-run boarding schools incubated a unifying Native identity. Conscription in the US military and the

pull of urban life brought Indians into the mainstream and modern times, even as it steered the emerging shape of self-rule and spawned a new generation of resistance. *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee* is the essential, intimate story of a resilient people in a transformative era.

The Hare with Amber Eyes (Edmund de Waal)

Edmund de Waal is a world-famous ceramicist. Having spent thirty years making beautiful pots—which are then sold, collected, and handed on—he has a particular sense of the secret lives of objects. When he inherited a collection of 264 tiny Japanese wood and ivory carvings, called netsuke, he wanted to know who had touched and held them, and how the collection had managed to survive.

And so begins this extraordinarily moving memoir and detective story as de Waal discovers both the story of the netsuke and of his family, the Ephrussis, over five generations. A nineteenth-century banking dynasty in Paris and Vienna, the Ephrussis were as rich and respected as the Rothschilds. Yet by the end of the World War II, when the netsuke were hidden from the Nazis in Vienna, this collection of very small carvings was all that remained of their vast empire.