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You've Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at
Musselman Library

Musselman Library

Summer 2005

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Musselman Library
Gettysburg College

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You've Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at Musselman Library (2005)

Abstract

Each year Musselman Library asks Gettysburg College faculty, staff, and administrators to help create a suggested summer reading list to inspire students and the rest of our campus community to take time in the summer to sit back, relax, and read. These summer reading picks are guaranteed to offer much adventure, drama, and fun!

Keywords

Musselman Library, summer reading, fiction, non-fiction

Disciplines

Library and Information Science

Comments

Found on Musselman Library's website at <http://www.gettysburg.edu/library/information/general/browsing/index.dot>.

You've gotta read this!!



Summer Reading @ Musselman Library

“Give me books, fruit, French wine and fine
weather and a little music out of doors,
played by someone I do not know.”

~ John Keats

Summer 2005



Finally! The long, cold winter is behind us. As the warm days of summer approach and you look ahead to lazing away those endless summer evenings, be sure to stack up on “must read” material. Need a few recommendations to give your bookshelf a boost? Look no further!

Musselman Library asked Gettysburg College faculty, staff and administrators for their top choices of great summertime reading. In the following pages, you’ll find everything from poetry to modern day fairy tales, mysteries to memoirs...surely something for everyone. Choose a bunch and enjoy the months ahead. We’ll look forward to seeing you in the fall!

*From the staff at Musselman Library
April 2005*

Organized alphabetically by faculty/administrator/staff member:

Lidia HwaSoon Anchisi, French & Italian

Title: *Prince of the Clouds* (original Italian title: *Principe Delle Nuvole*) by Gianni Riotta

"Loved it!" ~ Lidia HwaSoon Anchisi

Charlotte Armster, German / Women's Studies

Title: *The Family Silver: A Memoir of Depression and Inheritance* by Sharon O'Brien

Title: *Hey, Waitress! The USA from the Other Side of the Tray* by Alison Owings

"I would recommend the following two books: *The Family Silver: A Memoir of Depression and Inheritance* by Sharon O'Brien, and *Hey, Waitress! The USA from the Other Side of the Tray* by Alison Owings. Have fun reading." ~ Charlotte Armster

Martha Arterberry, Provost's Office / Psychology

Title: *Population 485: Meeting your Neighbors One Siren at a Time* by Michael Perry

"I usually read fiction, but I liked this nonfiction work because it made me think about the things that matter. Michael Perry returns to the small town where he grew up in northwestern Wisconsin after a 10 year absence. He connects with the town and his family through his experiences as a volunteer fire fighter and EMT. Between calls, he shares with the reader his new understanding of a sense of place and community, and he reflects on the important things in life. Described as 'quietly devastating', it will leave you thinking." ~ Martha Arterberry

Bela Bajnok, Mathematics

Title: *Prague: A Novel* by Arthur Phillips

"This fascinating and ambitious novel describes a year in the lives of five young people (four Americans and one Canadian) in the early nineteen-nineties in Budapest, Hungary. They ended up there mostly by chance; to various degrees they try to chase their fortunes, seek adventure, fulfill scholarly interests, witness history in the making, and, ultimately, to find themselves and their place in the world. It's a thought provoking and entertaining novel that left me wondering about the future of these characters." ~ Bela Bajnok

Lisa Becker, Information Technology

Title: *Envy* by Sandra Brown

"I recommend *Envy* by Sandra Brown. I just couldn't put down this book. A disabled writer engages in a game of revenge and things get complicated when the executive's wife falls for the writer. It definitely keeps your interest up to the last page." ~ Lisa Becker

Chris Benecke, Development

Title: *The Art of Eating* by M. F. K. Fisher

Title: *Gaudy Night* by Dorothy Sayers

"There are two books on my summer [and anytime] chill-out reading list, both well-thumbed volumes.

The first is *The Art of Eating*, a four volume paperback compilation of M. F. K. Fisher works: *An Alphabet for Gourmets*, *Serve it Forth*, *How to Cook A Wolf*, and *The Gastronomical Me*. It's been a beloved companion on many vacations, for the joy of the food descriptions, the travel descriptions, the sheer beauty of her prose.

The second is *Gaudy Night* by Dorothy Sayers. Sayers is the one mystery writer that I have re-read closing in on dozens of times, just for the characters, and because I'm an irredeemable Anglophile and irredeemable mystery lover. The Harriet Vane-Peter Wimsey novels are the best, and this one weaves into the mystery the problem of loyalties to oneself, to one's work, to one's loved ones." ~ Chris Benecke

Michael Birkner, History

Title: *All the King's Men* by Robert Penn Warren

"I first read Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men* during the summer between my sophomore and junior years of college. As a student of political history, I knew that Warren's book had something to do with the career of the late Louisiana political boss, Huey P. Long. But I had no idea that the book was not meant as a roman a clef about Long so much as it was a meditation on human nature, power, and 'the awful responsibility of Time.' The book transfixed me, not least because Willie Stark's story was so compelling and in some respects so ambiguous. Was he a tragic hero or a brutal demagogue who deserved what he got? Historians are still debating that question. Because answering the question demands value judgments as much as evidence, there is unlikely to be a final word any time soon.

I loved *All the King's Men* in a way I have loved few other books. And I revisit it periodically, because there was no way that on a fast first read I was going to get everything out of it that Robert Penn Warren was offering. But among the lessons I grasped early on and have never unlearned include two in particular: the pervasiveness of human sinfulness and the need to be careful what you wish for; you just might get it, and regret it.

All the King's Men can be read as a ripping good story about a politician's rise, accomplishment, greed for more and more power, and his fall. It can be mined for its historical connections, its timeless wisdom, too, and for the most memorable lines; but that's for the second reading, and third, in the cold-weather months." ~ Michael Birkner

Gabor Boritt, Civil War Institute

Title: *Busted Flush* by Brad Smith

Title: *The Deserter: Murder at Gettysburg, A Homer Kelly Mystery* by Jane Langton

"If you like reading fiction about Gettysburg today: Brad Smith, *Busted Flush* (New York: Henry Holt, 2005). A colleague, Alex Rowland, recommended it and I'm half way through and it is lots of fun in spite of (because of?) a main character is one Klaus Gabor, who teaches at Gettysburg's institution of higher learning and is supposed to be a great expert on Lincoln. 'He delights in mangling the mother tongue,' being 'a mad Hungarian professor.' Or as another figure in the book describes him. 'he a cool m...f.....' (You need to be forewarned, *Busted Flush* does not use ellipses.)

Or, if you like mysteries, Jane Langton's *The Deserter: Murder at Gettysburg, A Homer Kelly Mystery* (New York: St. Martin's, 2003), also combines the present with 1863 and has academics in it."

~ Gabor Boritt

Bob Bornstein, Psychology

Title: *Agnes Browne Trilogy* by Brendan O'Carroll

"Brendan O'Carroll's Agnes Browne trilogy--*The Mammy*, *The Chisellers*, and *The Granny*--tells the story of a single mother struggling to raise her children in working-class Dublin during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. I know, it sounds like Frank McCourt all over again, but it's not. O'Carroll is a skilled storyteller, and unlike *Angela's Ashes* you won't need Prozac to get through this. Quite the opposite, in fact: Alongside the many setbacks and disappointments that Agnes Browne endures are some scenes that are truly laugh-out-loud funny." ~ Bob Bornstein

Kathy Cain, Psychology

Title: *The Map of Love* by Ahdaf Soueif

"*The Map of Love* tells two stories. The first plot concerns Isabel and Amal, two modern women, one living in New York and one in Cairo. They find a trunk containing journals kept by Isabel's grandmother, Englishwoman Anna Winterbourne. The second plot describes Anna's journey to Egypt in 1901 and her developing relationship with an Egyptian nationalist. The three women's stories together address numerous themes, including love, family, the legacy of colonialism, and the ways in which the past and present connect. This book is a gripping, evocative, and satisfying read in its own right, but it also provides insight into the ways that Egyptian and western cultures have met over the past century." ~ Kathy Cain

Ralph Cavaliere, Biology

Title: *Pompeii: A Novel* by Robert Harris

"My favorite novel this year. The story takes place along the Bay of Naples, Italy, involves nine towns around the Amalfi Coast and a quarter of a million residents. The time is August 22-26 A.D. 79, and culminates with the destruction of much of the area, including Pompeii and Herculaneum by the massive eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Marcus Attilius Primus, a young engineer, is in charge of Aqua Augusta, the huge 60 mile aqueduct that supplies water to the towns along the bay. Unaware that it is the pre-eruption of Vesuvius that is responsible for a recent disruption of water flow along the aqueduct, he sets out for the north of Pompeii to repair the damages. The novel is loaded with factual information regarding the eruption of Vesuvius and the aftermath of the destruction of Pompeii. And of course, it is laced with violence, corruption, decency, honesty and love." ~ Ralph Cavaliere

Nancy Chambers, Development

Title: *Snow in August* by Pete Hamill

"A modern-day fairy tale set in Brooklyn in 1946, the protagonist is an eleven-year-old Irish boy who befriends a Jewish rabbi who is Polish refugee. There are heroes and villains, Brooklyn Dodger baseball, and miracles of various sorts. Pete Hamill uses wonderful imagery in his writing, and once you start reading it you won't be able to put it down!" ~ Nancy Chambers

Agnès Collet, French & Italian

Title: *Comme un Roman* by Daniel Pennac

“Here is my suggestion for the students who want to read a French essay (easy language level) about... reading: ‘Comme un roman,’ by Daniel Pennac, ed. Gallimard, 1992. It’s an original essay that can be easily read ‘as a novel’ as its title indicates, that is especially targeting young people, and that leads a thought about readers and reading: observing the contemporary state of and the intercourse with reading and so, begins originally with the statement of ‘the right not to read!’ It did not change my life but I think it’s a ‘must-read.’” ~ Agnes Collet

John Commito, Environmental Studies

Title: *I am Charlotte Simmons* by Tom Wolfe

“This year I go against my urge to avoid popular books. I recommend Tom Wolfe’s *I am Charlotte Simmons*. It’s no *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. Hell, it’s no *Bonfire of the Vanities*. But it’s still a fast, funny, almost dead-on depiction of college life that will resonate with Gettysburg students, faculty, and staff. Wolfe seems to be relying on stereotypes of dumb jocks, slacker fraternity dudes, and breathtakingly shallow sorority chicks, but he upends these easy portrayals over and over again. Plus, the sex scenes are good, even when the sex is bad. Academic novels are usually about faculty woes. Wolfe gives the students their turn in this one, and in doing so he teaches us teachers a thing or two about the complexity, ambiguity, and sadness in young people’s lives.” ~ John Commito

Don Cooney, Development

Title: *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* by David Brooks

Title: *On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) in the Future Tense* by David Brooks

“The *New York Times* columnist and self-styled ‘comic sociologist’ explores the puzzling phenomena of modern bourgeois America and comes up with plausible explanations for such curious trends as the popularity of golf and plains states voting Republican. The combination of critical eye and well-turned phrase makes for thoroughly enjoyable, if sometimes frightening, reading. These are useful survival tools for liberally educated persons living in the USA, a country where NASCAR races are the best-attended sporting events and Branson, Missouri is one of the top tourist attractions.” ~ Don Cooney

Nancy Cushing-Daniels, Spanish / Interdisciplinary Studies

Title: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

“This is the most recent book I read, and I think everyone should read. It was so sad, it broke my heart over and over again, but is beautifully written, and gave me a really useful framework for all I have heard and read about Afghanistan over the last few years.” ~ Nancy Cushing-Daniels

Title: *Caramelo* by Sandra Cisneros

“I LOVE this book!! It is a wonderful, realistic, and at time hilarious story describing the intricacies of family life, and what happens when that family is spread out between two countries, and many sub-cultures. The descriptions are quite possibly the best I have ever read – Cisneros can describe the objects in a room in such a way that you feel like you know everyone who lives in the house, and would swear you have been there. It is also a really important book for understanding Mexican/American relations, and the issues that so many immigrants to this country deal with, including their inner struggles for identity.”
~ Nancy Cushing-Daniels

Pamela Dalrymple, Civil War Institute
Title: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

“This is an epic tale of fathers and sons, and of friendship and betrayal. Not only is this a great story, it also gives you a better understanding of life in Afghanistan and the hardships the people of this country have had to endure from the Soviet invasion to the Taliban rule.”
~ Pamela Dalrymple

Roy Dawes, Political Science
Title: *Publish and Perish: Three Tales of Tenure and Terror* by James Hynes

“I can't think of a better way to unwind from the stress of the school year than these short works of macabre academic satire. No one is safe in these novellas! Fun to read, even if horror stories aren't your cup of tea (they certainly aren't mine).” ~ Roy Dawes

Veronique Delesalle, Biology / Environmental Studies
Title: *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* by Jared Diamond

“Jared Diamond continues where his previous book ended, exploring why human societies self-destruct and how we can avoid falling into that abyss. Beyond the obvious importance of environmental sustainability, Diamond is a great writer, making this an enjoyable read on a bleak topic!” ~ Veronique Delesalle

Felicia Else, Visual Arts
Title: *Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling* by Ross King

“This is a well-researched but entertainingly written book on one of the most important artists and artworks of Western Civilization, Michelangelo and his painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. King weaves together a variety of historical material, including papal history, artist's workshops, the development of cannon warfare and even Michelangelo's own family troubles, to present an engaging and informed story.” ~ Felicia Else

Kay Etheridge, Biology
Title: *Death at La Fenice* by Donna Leon
Title: *Death in a Strange Country* by Donna Leon

“For some delightful mysteries I would recommend the series by Donna Leon. These are set in contemporary Venice, which certainly adds to the atmosphere, but it is her main character (police Commissario Guido Brunetti) and his relationships with co-workers and family that give the series even more interest and some humor. The first book in the series is *Death at La Fenice*, and the second is *Death in a Strange Country*. If you have ever been to Venice, you will love them even more. If you have not, you will probably start planning a trip.” ~ Kay Etheridge

Kris Eysell, Psychology

Title: *The Magician's Assistant* by Ann Patchett

Title: *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett

"After my book group read *Bel Canto* I became captivated by the author and found *The Magician's Assistant* very touching. Found a widow by her AIDS-afflicted husband, the protagonist discovers that he had a family of origin he had always denied. Meeting that family leads to her (and members of her husband's family's) redemption. A beautiful book." ~ Kris Eysell

Jeffrey Gabel, Majestic Theater

Title: *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

"Set in Barcelona between the World Wars, it's a coming of age story about a young man who becomes swept up in a web of political intrigue and love surrounding the murder of a mysterious novelist. Zafon's writing is gorgeous and evocative. Every page contains a sentence that is so beautifully crafted that you want to embroider it on a pillow." ~ Jeffrey Gabel

Dan Gilbert, Management

Title: *Splendid Solution: Jonas Salk and the Conquest of Polio* by Jeffrey Kluger

"*Splendid Solution* is a wonderful read. It is primarily a biography of Jonas Salk and the race to find a vaccine to prevent polio. One of Salk's biggest rivals was Dr. Albert Sabin, who discovered a vaccine using a live version of the virus. Salk's vaccine used a dead virus to encourage the human body to develop antibodies; this was an unorthodox scientific strategy at that time. If you're a baby boomer, you'll remember getting the Salk or Sabin vaccine via sugar cube or inoculation. If not, enjoy this exciting story of the race to prevent polio." ~ Dan Gilbert

Title: *Life Support: Three Nurses on the Front Lines* by Suzanne Gordon

"*Life Support* focuses on the invisibility of nursing, and how nursing has long been undervalued. Suzanne Gordon follows three RNs from the Boston's Beth Israel Hospital. *Life Support* offers a look at what nurses do for patients and their families. One of the nurses actually rides a bike to various home visits. It examines the medical professions two juxtaposing worlds, the palliative care given by nurses alongside the more male-dominated 'militaristic' model of medical care." ~ Dan Gilbert

Tina Grim, Civil War Institute

Title: *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult

"This book deals with the controversial issue of a 13-year-old girl named Anna (who is conceived solely for the purpose of serving as a bone marrow donor for her sister) who hires a lawyer to sue her parents for the right to make decisions about her own body. Not only did I find the subject itself fascinating, both legally and morally, but I loved how well the book was written, giving you different perspectives from the various characters. Unexpected plot twists add to the enjoyment of the book, which will keep you riveted until the end. I highly recommend this book, but caution you to be prepared to experience a full range of emotions...and don't forget the tissues, you'll need them!" ~ Tina Grim

Jenny Hansen, Philosophy

Title: *I am Charlotte Simmons* by Tom Wolfe

"If you have a voyeuristic interest in what your undergrads are up to outside of class, then you cannot pass this book up. You follow the transformation (and some might argue corruption) of Charlotte Simmons who leaves her modest Christian family in Appalachia to a 'highly-selective college' somewhere in Pennsylvania. She has to learn how to deal with being 'sexiled' as well as how to avoid lecherous fraternity boys." ~ Jenny Hansen

Title: *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides

"This book is an odyssey of gender identity. The protagonist tells the tale of her Greek-American family (as well as their dirty little secrets) as a means to figure out who he/she is." ~ Jenny Hansen

Pierre Hecker, English

Title: *Lamp of the Body* by Maggie Smith

"Many of you will already be familiar with Maggie Smith, last year's Emerging Writer. What you may not yet know first hand, however, is what an extraordinary poet she is. Her newly published collection, *Lamp of the Body*, is bold, moving, and razor sharp. Full disclosure: she's a friend of mine. But don't hold that against her. These vivid and inspiring poems are not to be missed." ~ Pierre Hecker

William Honeychurch, Sociology & Anthropology

Title: *The Decipherment of Linear B* by John Chadwick

"This is the story of how Michael Ventris, in his spare time, methodically deciphered the 'code' of an unknown script called Linear B using his understanding of the logic of languages and writing. The language of the script turned out to be an archaic form of Greek (pre-Homeric) which allowed scholars to delve into a world of texts on the Classical World completely unknown at that time. It's a lively 'detective-like' story about discovering the past and very inspiring in the way that it demonstrates the power of thought and curiosity!" ~ William Honeychurch

Mark Hopkins, Economics

Title: *Straight Man* by Richard Russo

"It's an insightful, if fictional peek inside professors' lives and departmental politics in a small Pennsylvania College, and without a doubt one of the funniest books I've ever read." ~ Mark Hopkins

Molly Hutton, Visual Arts

Title: *Lucky Girls* by Nell Freudenberger

"*Lucky Girls* is a book of five wonderfully written, subtle, and often compelling short stories most of which revolve around young women living as expatriates in Southeast Asia and India. These women are all in a sense attempting to reconcile their status as Americans with their intense love for and absorption with their 'temporary' homes on another continent—their situations producing some profound insights into the concepts of home, family, love, and friendship." ~ Molly Hutton

Deb Hydock, Dining Services

Title: *Running with Scissors: A Memoir* by Augusten Burroughs

"If you ever had any concerns about how you were raised, or just want to read an interesting and sometimes humorous book, then read *Running with Scissors: A Memoir*, by Augusten Burroughs. This is a memoir by the child of an alcoholic Father and psychotic Mother, who gives his guardianship to her psychiatrist. He lives his bizarre teenage years with this family who lets the children do whatever they want. They use valium and play with an electro-shock machine while a host of 'patients' live in the house, including a pedophile. He quits school in his early teen years with the permission of the psychiatrist and his mother. Somehow, he makes it through this strange up-bringing to become a highly successful advertising executive on Wall Street, which is continued in his next memoirs, *Dry*. When I finished this book, I thanked my parents for giving me a normal life." ~ Deb Hydock

Florence Ramond Journey, French & Italian Department

Title: *Zia Summer* by Rudolfo Anaya

Title: *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

"2 books (very different!): one is *Zia Summer* by Rudolfo Anaya (1995). It is a mystery that takes place in Albuquerque. This chicano novel is a wonderful read and we follow eagerly the main detective, Sonny Baca, through the Hispanic community. The other is *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2003). This is a first novel, with the gripping story of a fifteen-year-old young woman who seemingly leads the perfect life in Nigeria but slowly becomes aware of the complexity of the world in the course of the novel." ~ Florence Ramond Journey

Milan Karol, Development

Title: *Bitten: True Medical Stories of Bites and Stings* by Pamela Nagami

"Ever wonder what happens when a person comes in contact with flesh eating bacteria, a killer infectious disease, or any number of poisonous or predatory creepy-crawlies? The medical case studies in this book will both fascinate and frighten. It's just the thing to read while enjoying the great outdoors on a warm summer day..." ~ Milan Karol

Jean LeGros, Development

Title: *So Many Books, So Little Time: A Year of Passionate Reading* by Sara Nelson

"An enjoyable and witty read for all bibliophiles." ~ Jean LeGros

Joe Lynch, Alumni Relations

Title: *My Losing Season* by Pat Conroy

"If you've ever played a team sport and/or are a fan of Conroy's work, this is a great read. It's an autobiographical account of his senior season as point guard for The Citadel in the mid 1960s, but bounces around to all periods of his life, giving stark insight to his childhood, adolescence and adulthood. It's certainly painful at times, but his power with the pen and memory for detail of things that happened 40 years ago make it a pleasure to read." ~ Joe Lynch

Larry Marschall, Physics

Title: *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* by Jared Diamond

“This is sequel to Diamond’s Pulitzer Prize winning *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, which described how geographical factors helped determine the rise of Europe’s industrial civilization and hindered the growth of great empires in other areas of the world. In this equally thought-provoking book, Diamond, a professor of geography at the University of California, Los Angeles, argues that geography also plays an essential role in the collapse of civilizations great and small. Chance—in the form of climate change, for instance—can cause farms to fail and economies to crumble. But for many societies, mortal wounds are self-inflicted, caused by runaway population or reckless damage to the environment.”

~ Larry Marschall

Title: *On the Wing: To the Edge of the Earth with the Peregrine Falcon* by Alan Tennant

“Bird-watching has never been this exciting. In a rickety single-engine plane piloted by a feisty old barnstormer, Alan Tennant chased a radio-tagged falcon from Texas right up to its summer home in the Canadian Arctic and back to its summer home in the jungles of Central America. Filled with detailed lore on the biology and ecology of birds of prey, this is simultaneously an informative book of natural history and an adventure story that will keep readers turning pages eagerly as Tennant and his friend George Vose struggle to keep on course and in the air.” ~ Larry Marschall

Robin Molison, College Bookstore

Title: *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren

“This title is excellent for anyone who has ever asked themselves ‘What on earth am I here for?’ It has touched my life and given me a fresh new outlook on how even the seemingly ‘wrong’ things that happen in life have there special purpose in building character, strength, and wisdom to help others. More than how we act; how we react will have an even greater impact on people and society around us. With its ‘Chapter a Day’ format (no more than that), it was for me; the perfect read for my jammed packed days...”

~ Robin Molison

Ken Mott, Political Science

Title: *The 9/11 Commission Report: The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* by National Commission on Terrorist Attacks

“Don’t misunderstand me, I am not a strong advocate of cozying up to official U.S. Government documents on the beach! But if you’re concerned about terrorist attacks and our government’s response to them, this is a must read. You’ll be surprised and delighted, as I was, to discover that the Report is remarkably well written and organized. Out of it have already come some notable changes in the way we do business in Washington. Note, too, that our own Fred Fielding, ’61, was one of the ten Commission members.” ~ Ken Mott

Sheila Mulligan, English

Title: *The Execution: A Novel* by Hugo Wilcken

“I recommend *The Execution* by Hugo Wilcken, which is a thriller and a literary painting, and as compassionate as it is deadly.” ~ Sheila Mulligan

Donna Perry, Sociology & Anthropology
Title: *Empire Falls* by Richard Russo

“This book is great! Starts out a bit slow, but shapes up into a fascinating family saga that flashes from present to past, spiced up with a bit of mystery that revolves around thoughtful characters. Ask Jean Potuchek--this book gives a great picture of life in Maine! The book has, as sub-themes, the topics of social class and deindustrialization, so it paired up well with *The Blind Assassin* (by Margaret Atwood), another *fabulous* book that I'd recommend.” ~ Donna Perry

Jonelle Pool, Education
Title: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

“A novel set in modern Afghanistan, the plot is rich with the contrast of the monarchy, and the revolution after the Russian invasion, but it also gives insights into the culture and relationships of the characters. More than once I was disturbed by the events in this book, but I could not put it down and afterwards, I couldn't forget!” ~ Jonelle Pool

Jan Powers, English / Asian Studies
Title: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

“*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini is a terrific novel: a *bildungsroman* set in Afghanistan, an eye-opening lesson about Central Asian prejudice, a story of emigration and young love, and an exciting contemporary quest for a lost boy. This novel tells us much about Afghanistan that we should have known before we went to war there, but *The Kite Runner* will also keep you turning pages to discover why people care about each other and how they resolve old guilt -- and these are universal concerns.”
~ Jan Powers

Sarah Principato, Environmental Studies
Title: *Interpreter of Maladies* by Jhumpa Lahiri.

“This book won the Pulitzer Prize, and it is a wonderful collection of short stories — perfect for summer reading. I really enjoyed all of the interesting characters and their adventures in India and the US. The only problem is that I wish the stories kept going!” ~ Sarah Principato

Julie Ramsey, College Life
Title: *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela

“Right now I am re-reading Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom* in anticipation of a trip to South Africa this summer. This is a modern day story of incredible fortitude, resilience and commitment to freedom by one of the most influential people of our time. The transformation of the South African society that Mandela describes in his autobiography is amazing and inspiring.” ~ Julie Ramsey

GailAnn Rickert, Academic Advising

Title: *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* by George Lakoff

“Lakoff is a professor of linguistics and has written extensively on metaphor. I count Lakoff’s insights into metaphor and reasoning among the top 5 intellectual influences of my own little life.” ~ GailAnn Rickert

Title: *The Known World*, by Edward P. Jones

“A moving, disturbing, and insightful story.” ~ GailAnn Rickert

Michael Ritterson, German

Title: *Death in Danzig* by Stefan Chwin (translated by Philip Boehm)

Title: *The Swimmer* by Zsuzsa Bánk (translated by Margot B. Dembo)

Title: *Second Space: New Poems*, by Czeslaw Milosz (translated by the author and Robert Hass)

“There are several – okay, a whole bunch – of books I’d recommend, either because I know and love them or because I think it urgent to read them myself but haven’t yet. So I’ll compromise. This is one that I’m just now reading, and both the above criteria apply: *Death in Danzig*, by Stefan Chwin (Harcourt, 2004). The title of the original Polish novel is *Hanemann*, the name of one principal character, but translator Philip Boehm’s rendering of it almost urges comparison with Thomas Mann’s 1912 novella, *Death in Venice*. The setting – even the central character – of the story is the Baltic port city of Danzig (Gdańsk) in the early spring of 1945, the eve of its fall to the Soviet Army. As Gustav Aschenbach cannot leave Venice, so Hanemann cannot leave the besieged Danzig. This isn’t light reading, but it is masterful, evocative writing. Since I don’t know Polish, I have only Chwin’s reputation at home to gauge the original by, but Boehm’s translation is a gem in its own right.

Two other recommendations...

The Swimmer, by Zsuzsa Bánk, trans. Margot Bettauer Dembo (Harcourt, 2005).

Second Space: New Poems, by Czeslaw Milosz, trans. the author and Robert Hass (Ecco, 2004).”

~ Michael Ritterson

Marta Robertson, Music

Title: *Sleeping with Schubert* by Bonnie Marson

“I’ve always aspired to a warped sense of humor....maybe I’ve arrived with this laugh-aloud choice. I was hooked by the end of the opening paragraph:

The day I became a genius I locked the keys in the car with the motor running. This minor delay served its cosmic purpose, I suppose, delivering me right on time for my transformation at the spiritual launch site—women’s shoes at Nordstrom.

Clearly not a musicological treatise on Schubert, this book is about a modern lawyer and mediocre pianist who becomes inhabited by Schubert and the havoc, hilarity, and passion that is wreaked upon her life in the process.” ~ Marta Robertson

William Rosenbach, Management

Title: *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't* by Jim Collins

“This is simply the best book on leadership and business practices to come out in several years. It’s very readable, and non-academic.” ~ William Rosenbach

Ann Sauve, Psychology

Title: *I Capture the Castle* by Dodie Smith

"*I Capture the Castle* is a story of a family written through the daughter's journal entries. Originally published in 1948 by the author of *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*, it is an interesting look at life in mid-twentieth century England and provides a good glimpse of the fascination with cultural differences between the American and English, along with a reflection on society's changing views of women. An interesting read, in my opinion!" ~ Ann Sauve

Tim Shannon, History

Title: *Blue Highways: A Journey into America* by William Least Heat-Moon

"Who hasn't wanted to hit the road in a beat-up van with a few hundred dollars in your pocket? Summer is a great time to travel, but if time and money won't allow it, you can at least live the experience vicariously. This book got me hooked on travel narratives many years ago, and it remains one of my favorites of the genre." ~ Tim Shannon

Dustin Smith, English

Title: *Letters to a Young Poet* by Rainer Maria Rilke

"...a perennial favorite, and always an inspiration: a call to solitude." ~ Dustin Smith

Ralph Sorensen, Biology

Title: *Body and Soul* by Frank Conroy

"This is one of the few novels I have read twice. I was captivated by the story of Claude Rawlings, a piano prodigy whose love and mastery of his instrument pulls him out of dire poverty and into the society world of New York City. While the life of Claude is gripping enough, Conroy's dialogue on piano music from inside the mind of the performer is even more compelling. As one who struggles to learn the rudiments of the piano, I treasure this revelation." ~ Ralph Sorensen

Sharon Stephenson, Physics

Title: *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri

"The young Jhumpa Lahiri picked up a Pulitzer a few years back for her clear and memorable fiction. Her latest novel, *The Namesake*, deals with the transitions immigrants face in America, in this case a Bengali family from Calcutta. The character development is outstanding for such a slim (and therefore beach-worthy) novel. It's recently available as a paperback. An 'A' in my rating system = a must read!" ~ Sharon Stephenson

Peter Stitt, *Gettysburg Review* / English

Title: *A Rage in Harlem* by Chester Himes

Title: *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality* by Brian Greene

Title: *Absolute Friends* by John Le Carre

"*A Rage in Harlem* by Chester Himes is wonderful in every way, especially for its humor, and *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality* by Brian Greene is probably the best science book for the general reader of the last year. But the prize goes to *Absolute Friends*, a brilliant new novel by John Le Carre, his best in years after a string of impressive near misses. You will love it." ~ Peter Stitt

Jocelyn Swigger, Music

Title: *Cryptonomicon* by Neal Stephenson

"This sprawling, satisfying read follows three main characters: a WWII codebreaker, a WWII marine, and the codebreaker's hacker grandson. Part adventure, part romance, part coming-of-age story, it does an especially good job of explaining mathematical and computer processes in intelligent layman's terms. It's both the forerunner and the sequel to the enormous (and also enjoyable) *Baroque Cycle*, which features the these characters' grandparents and various European heads of state, so there's plenty more to read if this hooks you." ~ Jocelyn Swigger

Don Tannenbaum, Political Science

Title: *Shrub: The Short but Happy Political Life of George W. Bush* by Molly Ivins and Lou Dubose

"It's one of those books that is perhaps more relevant today than when it was published."
~ Don Tannenbaum

Kerr Thompson, Spanish

Title: *How the Irish Saved Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe* by Thomas Cahill

"A book I enjoyed recently is Thomas Cahill's *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. It's a fascinating history of the development of Irish civilization and of European civilization during the Middle Ages. I liked it so much I read—and enjoyed—several of Cahill's other books: *The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels*, *Desire of the Everlasting Hills: The World Before and After Jesus*, *Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: Why the Greeks Matter*, and *Pope John XXIII*. I recommend them all!" ~ Kerr Thompson

Jay Turner, History / Environmental Studies

Title: *The Plot Against America* by Philip Roth

"What if the U.S. had sympathized with the Nazis during World War II? That is the premise of Roth's Pulitzer-prize winning novel, *The Plot Against America*. While Roth takes liberty with historical events, in doing so, he emphasizes the contingency of history. This frightening novel follows one family's journey through a very different America in the early 1940s." ~ Jay Turner

Janelle Wertzberger, Musselman Library

Title: *March* by Geraldine Brooks

"Geraldine Brooks' latest work (just published March 2005) takes its cue from the classic American work by Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*. While Alcott's work focuses on Marmee and the four March girls, Brooks' historical novel tells the story of Mr. March while he is away serving as a chaplain with a Civil War regiment. *March* is grittier than *Little Women* and may prompt you to read the classic again, as Brooks gives us another perspective on those characters we know so well (especially Marmee). Pairing the two novels is a summer reading treat – or the foundation of an assignment in Women's Studies!" ~ Janelle Wertzberger

Kate Will, President

Title: *Americans' Favorite Poems: The Favorite Poem Project Anthology* edited by Robert Pinsky and Maggie Dietz

"For summer reading I would recommend *Americans' Favorite Poems: The Favorite Poem Project Anthology* (2000) edited by former poet laureate Robert Pinsky (and Maggie Dietz). This book is accessible and easy to approach, the poems are wonderful, and each is introduced with a short paragraph by the person (from the American public) who nominated it as her or his favorite poem and why. The poems emerge from a broad range of writers (from Lao Tzu to Dickinson)—and you get to hear why someone loves that particular poem. All are delightful." ~ Kate Will