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

Musselman Library

Summer 2006

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Musselman Library
Gettysburg College

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You've Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at Musselman Library (2006)

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

**"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed,
and some few to be chewed and digested."
~ Francis Bacon**

Summer 2006



Another summer is upon us! It's time to kick back and enjoy the sunny days to come. And nothing sounds better than a glass of iced tea and a pile of books on your coffee table just waiting to be gobbled up during a warm and lazy Saturday afternoon.

Need a few reading suggestions? Look no further! Musselman Library asked Gettysburg College faculty/staff/administrators for their favorite reads of the year. In the next few pages you'll find recommended titles on rogue economists, poetry, baseball statistics, Jewish literature, and more. Surely something for everyone. Enjoy a happy and safe summer. We'll see you in August!

*From the staff at Musselman Library
May 2006*

Organized alphabetically by faculty/administrator/staff member:

Sharon Birch, Instructional Technology

Title: *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth* by Chris Ware

“Over the past few years the library has added many excellent graphic novels to its collection. These are not comic books – these are art and story combined in exciting ways. Jimmy Corrigan is by far one of the best graphic novels out there. It is visually and graphically amazing. The story charts the life of a man up against the backdrop of many generations of his family. To quote Publisher’s weekly: ‘Ware’s graphically inventive, wonderfully realized novel-in-comics follows the sad fortunes of four generations of phlegmatic, defeated men while touching on themes of abandonment, social isolation and despair within the sweeping depiction of Chicago’s urban transformation over the course of a century.’ Enjoy!” ~ Sharon Birch

Michael Birkner, History

Title: *They Have Their Exits* by Airey Neave

“Although World War II factors into most of the classes I teach, I confess that I’m no military historian nor a military history buff -- not even close. Yet the book that grabbed me most in the past year was a World War II account of derring-do. Airey Neave, an Oxford graduate, was serving as a young British officer in France during the chaotic weeks leading to Hitler’s conquest. Neave was wounded, captured, and imprisoned. His memoir, *They Have Their Exits*, tells this story, at the heart of which lies a series of unsuccessful escape attempts. Undaunted, Neave did finally escape from the notorious Colditz Prison, in a series of nervewracking moves that beg for Hollywood treatment. So much could have gone wrong! Following his successful escape from Colditz, Neave made his way back to England, where he was redeployed as an intelligence officer for the remainder of the war. Neave became a popular author and successful politician in England post World War II, running successfully for Parliament several times and helping to manage Margaret Thatcher’s campaign for Prime Minister in 1979. The irony is that Neave (who had numerous close calls as a soldier) was killed shortly after Mrs. Thatcher gained power, the victim of an IRA bomb.” ~ Michael Birkner

Mike Bishop, Dining Services

Title: *Don’t Stop the Carnival* by Herman Wouk.

“This is an excellent summer time read about a man who lives in the New York City fast life and decides to give it up and by a hotel in the Caribbean. We would all like to give it up some times. This is an excellent read and I highly recommend it.” ~ Mike Bishop

Gabor Boritt, History

Title: *The Lecturer’s Tale* by James Hynes

“If you like spoofing academia, here is a fun novel.” ~ Gabor Boritt

Kathy Cain, Psychology / Provost's Office

Title: *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith

"This book, the first in a series of seven, tells the story of Precious Ramotswe, who starts a detective agency in Botswana with funds acquired from the sale of her late father's cattle. Mma Ramotswe is wise, funny, and 'traditionally built.' Using both standard detective methods and keen human understanding, she solves cases for various people who appear at the agency. Her friends and sometime helpers include Mr. J. L. B. Matekoni, proprietor of Tlokweng Road Speedy Motors, and Mma Makutsi, who achieved a grade of 97 percent at the Botswana Secretarial College. At one level the story is light and quick-moving, at another it is a reflection on life's choices and dilemmas, and at another level, as one reviewer said, it is a 'love song to Africa.' Although the book can be read in a day, you will remember it for long after you finish it. You will feel as though you have traveled to Botswana and made a new community of friends, and your life will be a bit richer and happier for having made the journey."

~ Kathy Cain

Ralph Cavaliere, Biology

Title: *With Liberty and Justice for All: A Life Spent Protecting the Right to Choose* by Kate Michelman

"Thirty years after the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision (1973), the struggle for a woman's right to choose the fate of her pregnancy still rages on. Kate Michelman, former president of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), tells a compelling story of 'a life spent protecting the right to choose.' Today, the battle lines are again drawn for the never ending clash between proponents of Pro-Choice and Anti-Choice (Pro-Life) on the simple question, 'Who decides?'" ~ Ralph Cavaliere

Gary Ciocco, Philosophy

Title: *The Long Ball: The Summer of '75—Spaceman, Catfish, Charlie Hustle, and the Greatest World Series Ever Played* by Tom Adelman

"For anyone who was a baseball fan in 1975, or during the 70's at all (or today), *The Long Ball* is a great chronicle of that legendary season and World Series. It has incredible tidbits of knowledge and anecdotes—some of which, according to reviews I've read, some readers claim must not be true—so it has some controversy as well!" ~ Gary Ciocco

Nan Cohen, English

Title: *After: Poems* by Jane Hirshfield

"This new book of poetry by American poet Hirshfield appears as calm as a still pond, but what depths it has! Some of these poems will stay with you for years ('In a Room with Five People, Six Grievs,' for example). If you read one book of poetry this summer, make it this one—though why not read more?" ~ Nan Cohen

John Commito, Environmental Studies

Title: *The Long Emergency: Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century* by James Howard Kunstler

"Kunstler received a great deal of press several years ago for his controversial and semi-brilliant screech, *The Geography of Nowhere*, which argued that America's modern built environment is ugly, inefficient, dehumanizing, and an environmental disaster. His new book discusses the plight of the industrialized world – no, our entire, interconnected world – after oil production peaks and begins to decline. I hear you saying, 'What, me worry about something that ain't gonna happen in my lifetime?' Kunstler builds a compelling case against this Bush Lite indifference. He marshals evidence that shows we have already reached the peak. What will life be like on the downward slide? In Kunstler's view, scary. Very, very scary." ~ John Commito

Nancy Cushing-Daniels, Spanish

Title: *Malena is a Tango Name (Malena es un nombre de tango)* by Almudena Grandes

"I read this book originally about ten years ago, when it first came out, and just recently read it again, loving it every bit as much as the first time. The protagonist of the book, Malena, is about my age, and was in her early twenties during the post-Franco transition years (1979-1982) as was I. Perhaps that is why this book is so special to me. Most of the book takes place in Madrid, which is one of my favorite places in the world, and it deals with different generations of a family, my favorite book topic. Malena's family has a lot of secrets, stemming back to her ancestor's exploits in América, and it is fascinating to see how the knowledge of these secrets affects Malena and the decisions she makes in her life. Through her family members' experiences, readers find out a lot of the 'dirty little secrets' about the Spanish Civil War and the last years of Franco's reign (1972-1975). She is also a twin, and by the end of the book a single mother. So, I highly recommend this book to anyone who loves Spain, Spanish history, is interested in family politics, is a twin or a 'non-traditional' mother, and wants an engaging book with lots of sex, drugs and rock roll to take to the beach this summer!" ~ Nancy Cushing-Daniels

Pamela Dalrymple, Civil War Institute

Title: *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* by Lisa See

"This fascinating novel set in remote 19th century China details the story of lifelong friends Lily and Snow Flower. From an almost too graphic description of foot binding to the secret language (nu shu) that dates back 1,000 years, you learn of the culture and traditions of this time period. The life lessons of love and forgiveness examined through their relationship will remain with you long after you finish this story."
~ Pamela Dalrymple

Roy Dawes, Political Science

Title: *New Orleans, Mon Amour: Twenty Years of Writings from the City* by Andrei Codrescu

I think what people in other cities find hard to understand is just how much New Orleanians love their city....Everybody in New Orleans loves the food, the music, and our sense of time (slow time) that's peculiar to us and us only. (from Andrei Codrescu's *New Orleans, Mon Amour*)

"These essays span the twenty years Codrescu (a transplanted Transylvanian) has lived in New Orleans, including a few selections written post-Katrina. If you've been to New Orleans and loved it (as many do), you'll enjoy this book. Why is New Orleans so seductive? Why do I always have to re-adjust after my frequent visits? Will New Orleans ever be the same? Codrescu's perspective is enlightening and entertaining." ~ Roy Dawes

Kristen Eyssell, Psychology

Title: *The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss.

"I enthusiastically nominate *The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss. Two quirky characters (one in his 80s, the other a preteen) are woven together in complex and endearing ways, each dealing with loneliness and trauma. It is beautifully rendered, moving, and...existential." ~ Kristen Eyssell

Ann Fender, Economics

Title: *The Last Gentleman Adventurer: Coming of Age in the Arctic* by Edward Beauclerk Maurice

“Clark Crowell, knowing from his wife Pat about my interest in the Hudson’s Bay Company, loaned us this charming memoir of time spent in the early 1930s as an employee of the Company on and about Baffin Island. It’s part coming-of-age story, part intercultural interaction as the English teen-aged employee Maurice meets the Company’s Inuit (Eskimo in his day) customers, part survival story, and part business history – and all beautifully written. Maurice lived in the Arctic for only a few years before returning to a war clouded England, but the fond memories of his exacting experiences remained with him for a lifetime. He was in his 90s when he completed the book and died about the time it was published.” ~ Ann Fender

Tina Gebhart, Visual Arts

Title: *Organizing for the Creative Person: Right-Brain Styles for Conquering Clutter, Mastering Time, and Reaching Your Goals* by Dorothy Lehmkuhl and Dolores Cotter Lamping

“Filing cabinets scare me. Always have. As an artist and natural ‘pile maker,’ finding this book was a blessing to me several years ago. I don’t have to be the kind of organized as I had always tried to force myself to be. This book showed me the way to embrace the way my mind works and use it to be effective in my world.

I find that too many of my students have a hard time with managing their time and staying ‘on top of things.’ We have a summit meeting about this as part of my course, and for some of them it’s a matter of

- Day planners not working for them.
- Calendars that they don’t look at.
- Dozens of Post-It notes that become invisible wallpaper.
- Not knowing how to break down a large project into manageable (and schedulable) pieces.
- Trying endlessly to use organization methods that are ineffective for their mental style (learning differentiation).
- Or simply having been over-parented (or over-prepschooled) enough that they simply never had to develop skills in this area until very recently....and don’t even know where to start.

I recommend this book to many of my students, as well as simply introducing them to some ideas contained therein. It has made a difference for at least some of them already.” ~ Tina Gebhart

Darren Glass, Mathematics

Title: *The Numbers Game: Baseball’s Lifelong Fascination with Statistics* by Alan Schwarz

“Schwarz’ book is nominally about the evolution of baseball statistics from the invention of the box score in 1845 to the internet and ESPN driven world we now live in. Schwarz uses this prism to discuss the history of baseball, publishing, computers, and life in the United States over the last century and a half. For anyone who is interested in baseball, statistics, or baseball statistics this book is a must read. And anyone who doesn’t think they are interested in these topics would probably change their mind after spending some time with Schwarz’ intelligent, well-researched, and often quite funny stories.”
~ Darren Glass

Scott Hancock, History / African American Studies

Title: *Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality* by Donald Miller

“It is a funny and honest look at what it means—or should mean—to be a follower of Jesus Christ in the United States today.” ~ Scott Hancock

Eleanor Hogan, Asian Studies

Title: *State of Fear* by Michael Crichton

"It's a page-turning thriller ... with footnotes, and a bibliography (surprise!) If you are interested in environmental studies, or wonder why we live in fear of global warming, you might find this thought-provoking *and* entertaining. A bonus: I never wanted to correct Crichton's grammar, not once! So all in all, it is a good read. If you read *Da Vinci Code* and wanted to look up references but never did, this novel cites them for you. I haven't checked up on Crichton yet, but I will." ~ Eleanor Hogan

Mark Hopkins, Economics

Title: *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner

"The field of economics was once famously defined as 'what economists do.' However, most people have little understanding of what economists actually do. *Freakonomics* is a highly entertaining read, and helps to dispel the myth that economics is really quite as dismal a science as people have come to believe." ~ Mark Hopkins

Title: *The Emperor of Ocean Park* by Stephen L. Carter

"*The Emperor of Ocean Park* was written by Yale Law School professor Stephen Carter and is the fictional story of...what else? A law professor at a prestigious Ivy League school in the small, sea-side city of Elm Harbor. Carter manages to mix mystery, romance, murder, politics, infidelity and chess in tale that begins with the sudden & suspicious death of the protagonist's father, a famous judge and failed Supreme Court nominee, and the desperate interest several powerful and dangerous people have over his father's 'arrangements.' The plot is engaging, but the real value in the book lies in the singular perspective Carter offers on the legal profession, public policy and the lives of upper-middle class African Americans that will challenge everything you ever learned from *Claire Huxtable*." ~ Mark Hopkins

Molly Hutton, Schmucker Art Gallery

Title: *Winner of the National Book Award* by Jincy Willett.

"Yes, that is the title of the book. It's so darkly funny you will feel guilty loving it. The novel is about two very different Rhode Island twin sisters, one of whom is reading the newly released biography/exposé of her sister while simultaneously narrating for us the "true" story of her twin's life." ~ Molly Hutton

Debra Hydock, Dining Services

Title: *Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog* by John Grogan.

"Full of humor, you'll be laughing out loud at this true story of raising a 95 pound lab who had a mind of his own. Just one of his antics included licking his way out of a heavy duty metal crate. Marley flunked out of obedience school, ate jewelry, and stole your heart." ~ Debra Hydock

Kathleen Iannello, Political Science

Title: *Perfect Madness: Motherhood in the Age of Anxiety* by Judith Warner

"The book provides a political, historical and cultural analysis of why motherhood in America is not well supported, resulting in enormous anxiety for today's women. I believe it is the most important book written in the last decade on the subject of power and motherhood." ~ Kathleen Iannello

Florence Ramond Journey, French & Italian

Title: *Stolen Lives: Twenty Years in a Desert Jail* by Malika Oufkir

"Not exactly your typical beach book but a gripping narrative all the same. Malika Oufkir, the daughter of General Oufkir, a young woman who was raised with Moroccan King Mohammed V's daughter, saw her life come to a stop after her father's failed coup against King Hassan II when she was only nineteen. Her account of the 20 'stolen' years that she spent with her mother and brothers and sisters in squalid prison cells is fascinating. Indeed, even if some questions remain unanswered—such as General Oufkir's role in the assassination of Mehdi Ben Barka—the reader will react to the idea that a wife and children must pay for the crimes of their husband and father." ~ Florence Ramond Journey

Milan Karol, Development & Alumni Relations

Title: *The Long Emergency: Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century* by James Howard Kunstler

"Take a break from your carefree summer with a peek into a dystopian future caused by the rapid disappearance of cheap oil. This book has it all: energy crises, armed conflict over dwindling resources, natural disasters, social upheaval on a global scale, and more! A good book for the pessimist in each of us. And you thought \$3 per gallon at the gas pump was bad... just wait!" ~ Milan Karol

Kim Kupperman, *Gettysburg Review*

Title: *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World* by Tracy Kidder

"Tracy Kidder writes an in-depth, compelling portrait of Dr. Paul Farmer, a man who has redefined public health by tirelessly providing health care to the poor in Haiti, Peru, Cuba, and Russia. Kidder's prose is lucid. Farmer's philosophy that 'the only real nation is humanity' underlies his startling and crystalline understanding of how foreign policy, public health, wealth and poverty intertwine to cause epidemics of infectious diseases such as TB and AIDS." ~ Kim Kupperman

Jennifer Leigh, Management

Title: *Our Babies, Ourselves: How Biology and Culture Shape the Way We Parent* by Meredith F. Small

"The reason I find this book so compelling is that it examines birth and early infancy from two points of view: cultural anthropology and evolutionary biology. Small's perspective of nature and culture results in a critical analysis of contemporary U.S. childrearing practices we consider 'normal.' A must read for parents, grandparents, and those interested in children." ~ Jennifer Leigh

Larry Marschall, Physics & Astronomy

Title: *Rowing to Latitude: Journeys Along the Arctic's Edge* by Jill Fredston

"Every summer for many years, author Jill Fredston and her husband head for the coldest waters of the world to spend several months rowing small boats among the icebergs. They've circumnavigated Spitzbergen, covered the entire Northwest Coast of North America from Vancouver to the Arctic Ocean, visited much of the coast of Greenland, gone around Norway to Finland, and cruised the entire length of the Yukon River. If you can't imagine why they would prefer to camp with polar bears than spend their nights at Motel 6, this is not the book for you. But if you appreciate cool summer reading about unusual adventures in remarkable places, you will love this!" ~ Larry Marschall

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

"On a foggy morning just after World War II a young boy is taken by his father, an antiquarian book seller in Barcelona, to a decrepit mansion on a sidestreet near the heart of the city. Inside is the vast 'Cemetery of Forgotten Books,' where abandoned volumes are preserved so that the collective memory of humanity will not fade. As is the rule in this exotic place, the boy must adopt a book – or rather it adopts him: 'The Shadow of the Wind' by Julian Carax. Reading it, the boy is enthralled, but when he looks for other works by the same author, he finds there are none. A shadowy figure has been buying all known copies of Carax's work...and burning them. The hunt for Carax leads the boy into a tangled web of murder, arson, romance, and political intrigue. This is a marvelous book, beautifully written and plotted (in contrast with *The DaVinci Code*, with which it has been compared) – and it will keep you from falling asleep at the beach!" ~ Larry Marschall

Dorothy Moore, Spanish

Title: *Giovanni's Room* by James Baldwin

"I've recently 'discovered' James Baldwin. 'Discovered' – like I dug him up or something. Ha! I recommend *Giovanni's Room*, by James Baldwin. It is so beautifully written, you will be desperate to turn the page and at the same time itching to go back and read passages again, and again, and again." ~ Dorothy Moore

Midori Morris, Asian Studies

Title: *Silence* by Endo Shusaku

"Story when Christianity first appeared in Japan in 17th century." ~ Midori Morris

Title: *Takasebune* by Mori Ogai, original in Japanese, translated by Burton Watson

"A story of a criminal who 'killed' his sick brother. You can see how it is told in a non-Christian context." ~ Midori Morris

Ken Mott, Political Science

Title: *American Gospel: God, the Founding Fathers, and the Making of a Nation* by Jon Meacham

"*American Gospel* is a just published, highly readable and balanced account of the spiritual foundation and early days of the American Republic, Meacham's book couldn't come at a more propitious time. Our public policy discourse is awash in claims and counter-claims about whether we are a 'Christian Nation,' and this book helps to set the record straight. The early history of the relationship of religion and politics has become a serious part of our current dialogue, and if you want to join in, I'd urge you to start here. *American Gospel* is a great primer." ~ Ken Mott

George Muschamp, Theatre Arts

Title: *Parallel Worlds: A Journey Through Creation, Higher Dimensions, and the Future of the Cosmos* by Michio Kaku and *The Spontaneous Fulfillment of Desire: Harnessing the Infinite Power of Coincidence* by Deepak Chopra

“...two recent books that are among the very best I have read in the past 2-3 years.” ~ George Muschamp

Paula Olinger, Spanish

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

“It’s a wonderful page turner set in Barcelona in the 50’s. The plot centers on books, love, and the evils of Franco’s regime.” ~ Paula Olinger

Jonelle Pool, Education

Title: *Shadow Divers: The True Adventure of Two Americans Who Risked Everything to Solve One of the Last Mysteries of World War II* by Robert Kurson

“This book took me places I will likely never go! It made my flight from San Diego to Baltimore seem like fifteen minutes!

A true story that reads like fiction, *Shadow Divers*, honors the efforts of the common man to understand history. In 1991, recreational deep wreck divers discover a WWII German U boat in the deeps of the North Atlantic, 60 miles off the New Jersey coast. No historical accounts reported even the possibility of a German U-Boat coming that close to the United States shoreline. In their quest to explore and understand the circumstances of the wreck, they risk everything to unlock the puzzle, rewriting history in the process.

I understand that Nova aired a documentary on this story that was so popular it was repeated several times and now I’m watching for it. If you like adventure and intrigue set in an historical context, you will really enjoy this book.” ~ Jonelle Pool

Jan Powers, Women’s Studies / Interdisciplinary Studies / Asian Studies

Title: *The Map of Love* by Ahdaf Soueif

“Ahdaf Soueif is an Egyptian writer, and her novel was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1999. An absorbing double love story, it functions simultaneously in two centuries as a young American woman goes to Egypt and discovers notebooks and journals revealing the secret of her ancestor’s romance with an Egyptian nationalist. Historical detail, magnificent description, and political analysis are very much a part of the contemporary story, as well as of the letters and journal entries from an earlier time. It’s one of those novels that you wish wouldn’t come to an end, so rich is the tapestry of characters, places, and sensory perceptions.” ~ Jan Powers

Sarah Principato, Environmental Studies

Title: *Adventure Divas: Searching the Globe for a New Kind of Heroine* by Holly Morris

“I highly recommend *Adventure Divas* by Holly Morris. This book takes you all over the world searching for ‘divas’ from Cuba to India to New Zealand to Iran (and more). It is an adventurous and fun book, and it contains the story behind creating the associated documentary series, which aired on PBS. To learn more about ‘divas,’ read this book!” ~ Sarah Principato

Kathryn Rhett, English

Title: *Abide With Me* by Elizabeth Strout

"I recommend *Abide With Me*, the new novel by Elizabeth Strout, author of *Amy and Isabelle*, for summer reading. This novel, about a new minister in a small town who suffers a tragedy, is so accurate and wise about the dynamics of small town living that I laughed in recognition. Peoples' expectations of each other, how gossip works, the jolt of self-realization, and how people abide in spite of everything are some of the subjects Strout takes on. While some of the content is sad, Strout's terrific writing makes it a joy to read from sentence to sentence, and to consider as an artful whole story." ~ Kathryn Rhett

Rajmohan Ramanathapillai, Philosophy

Title: *Funny Boy* by Shyam Selvadurai

"Shyam is a Sri Lanka author who lives in Toronto. This book won the governor's award some time ago in Canada. It is a book about a boy who wants to wear a sari and has a growing awareness of him being different from the rest of the family. This is a powerful story about how the violent ethnic riots in Sri Lanka affected ordinary people and how he survived as a gay boy and a minority Tamil in the uncertain world. It is a complex but moving story. I highly recommend it." ~ Rajmohan Ramanathapillai

Charlie Saltzman, English

Titles: *One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer* by Nathaniel Fick and *Nell Gwyn: Mistress to a King* by Charles Beauclerk

"Two recent--and very different--books have appealed to me: the first is *One Bullet Away*, the account of his service as a marine platoon leader in Afghanistan and Iraq by Nathaniel Fick, a Dartmouth classics major. The other is Beauclerk's *Nell Gwyn*, an entertaining account of that distinguished lady and of the court and times of Charles II." ~ Charlie Saltzman

Stephanie Sanders, Telecommunications

Title: *One for the Money* by Janet Evanovich

"This is an excellent book about a girl named Stephanie Plum, who becomes a Bounty Hunter after loosing her job, her car, and almost her apartment! After you read this one you will want to read the other books in the series! I highly recommend this series they are fast reads and you will get a good laugh out of each one!" ~ Stephanie Sanders

Tim Shannon, History

Title: *Assassination Vacation* by Sarah Vowell

"Vowell writes better history than 99% of the academic historians out there. In this book, she spends her off-time visiting sites associated with the assassinations of Lincoln, Garfield (the President, not the cat), and McKinley. Along the way, she reconstructs the oddball personalities, tragic figures, and twists of fate that connected these events to each other. Her appreciation for the absurd and arcane complements her always insightful reflections on the role of historic places in our public life. Added bonus: she packs it all into less than 300pp.! Leave the doorstep biographies behind this summer and bring this book along on your summer travels." ~ Tim Shannon

Ralph Sorensen, Biology

Title: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon

“A murder mystery of sorts told by the protagonist, a 15-year old autistic boy. Despite the dangers, the story does not drift into sentimentality, simplistic analysis, nor bad taste. The sure and empathic tone of the author is a remarkable revelation of another way the world might be perceived.” ~ Ralph Sorensen

Ashlyn Sowell, Development & Alumni Relations

Title: *The Little Friend* by Donna Tartt

“It is the story of a little girl who decides to try and find her brother’s killer. Her 9 year old brother was hanged in a tree in the yard when she was just a baby. The setting is rural Mississippi and the cast of characters ranges from her once affluent family including several great aunts, to a family of local hoodlums including a snake handling born again preacher. The character development is very detailed and colorful and the suspense is slow to unwind, but intense. The ending is unexpected. Hope others may enjoy it!” ~ Ashlyn Sowell

Sharon Stephenson, Physics & Astronomy

Title: *Absalom, Absalom!* by William Faulkner

“Murder, suicide, racial identity, fantastic family issues, and the extraordinary construct that is the ‘Southern Reputation’ are all part of this hefty novel. I consider it the best murder mystery of all time. As a Mississippi native, I was told how to best enjoy Faulkner, and I will now finally disclose the secret to you. First, Faulkner must be read in the summer, when the heat and humidity ensure a certain mood. Second, in order to get used to the dense and unique style of writing, your *first* Faulkner is best experienced as a read-aloud.” ~ Sharon Stephenson

Jocelyn Swigger, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

Title: *The Traveler* by John Twelve Hawks

“A fun, intricate thriller with a dangerous heroine and a healthy dose of paranoia—the author, like his characters, lives ‘off the grid,’ with no credit card numbers or addresses or EZ-passes. The heroine is a reluctant Harlequin, bodyguard to a Traveler. Travelers go from this dimension to other ones, and that’s where most of humanity’s artistic and innovative ideas come from. An evil secret society has long been controlling the world, trying to stop innovation.” ~ Jocelyn Swigger

Title: *Julie and Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment Kitchen* by Julie Powell

“Funny and wise and delicious. The author had a mid-life crisis when she turned thirty and decided to cook all the recipes in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* by Julia Child. The book is about cooking but also about marriage and life and New York City.” ~ Jocelyn Swigger

Don Tannenbaum, Political Science

Title: *Night* by Elie Wiesel (New Edition)

“Elie Wiesel is the world’s most notable Holocaust survivor. He is the author of more than forty books, and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. In his ‘Preface’ to this new translation Wiesel writes, ‘If in my lifetime I was to write only one book, this would be the one.’ It is a work that asks more questions than it answers, yet it has the power to move every thoughtful reader to horror, to wonder, to admiration for this young man who was forced into premature adulthood by his terrible experience.” ~ Don Tannenbaum

Kerr Thompson, Spanish

Title: *The Undercover Economist: Exposing Why the Rich Are Rich, the Poor Are Poor—and Why You Can Never Buy a Decent Used Car!* by Tim Harford

“This book is an engaging and sometimes eye-opening look at economic patterns behind familiar phenomena. (Did you know, for example, that it costs computer manufacturers more to produce cheaper machines than the ones they charge top price for?) Somewhat like Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner’s *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, Harford’s book is not as dazzling initially and even seems a little slow at first, but in the long run it’s a good—in my view, better—read.” ~ Kerr Thompson

Kevin Wilson, Psychology

Title: *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* by Malcolm Gladwell

“This is a great book that deals with our ability to form opinions, make judgments, and draw conclusions about our world in the ‘blink’ of an eye. The field of psychology has long been interested in these sorts of fast, automatic, seemingly unconscious thought processes and Gladwell does a great job not only of tying together work from vastly different areas of psychology to make his case, but also of showing just how prevalent these forms of decision making are in our daily lives.” ~ Kevin Wilson

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Books for Discussion

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- *A Simple Story* by S.Y. Agnon
- *The Lover* by A.B. Yehoshua
- *The Mind-Body Problem* by Rebecca Goldstein

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To register or to find out more about participating, contact Janelle Wertzberger (jwertzbe@gettysburg.edu, 337-7010).

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