Summer 2014

You've Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at Musselman Library (2014)

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You’ve Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at Musselman Library (2014)

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 the campus community to take time in the summer to sit back, relax, and read.

In addition to a plethora of fiction, non-fiction, and film picks, this year's edition includes the following special sections:

- *Nordic Noir* (recommendations by Sunni DeNicola)
- *Great Reads from Guelzo* (history recommendations by Dr. Allen Guelzo)
- *Isherwood's Insights into World War I* (by Dr. Ian Isherwood)
- *Udden's Outtakes* (Dr. Jim Udden's film and TV recommendations)

Also new in 2014: Musselman Library is making dozens of the recommended titles available as Overdrive ebooks. View Overdrive titles from the 2014 YGRT list, or browse our entire Overdrive ebook collection.

Keywords
Musselman Library, summer reading, fiction, non-fiction, film

Disciplines
Library and Information Science
You’ve Gotta Read This!
Cover photograph taken at Brighton Beach, Victoria, Australia
Courtesy of Robin Wagner
Dear Reader,

Even with the clearing of skies, rising of temperatures, and approach of vacation days, it can be difficult to transition from work mode to personal mode, from meeting demands to making creative and enriching use of free time. But nothing makes that transition quicker and easier than getting lost in a book. A good book is a challenge and a pleasure, a workout for the intellect and food for the soul, a window on harsh reality and an escape into another world. In the following pages, Musselman Library offers more than 200 examples, collected from the faculty and staff of Gettysburg College, of the best that books — and only books — can do.

Among the recommendations are novels based on history, and histories as exciting as any novel; narratives focusing on the miracles people can achieve, and on the pain they can inflict (including several pertinent to this year’s World War I centennial). Alongside the literary picks are suggestions aimed at fans of film and television — globe-spanning options that encompass comedy and crime, art and intrigue, documentary and fantasy.

Throughout, we see boys and girls come of age, men and women change and grow, leaders make history and societies make war. We read adventures set in the distant past and in the speculative future. We learn about competing world-views and innovative strategies for managing global crisis. We laugh at the absurdity of life and fall mute before its tragedy.

No matter your style, taste, or areas of interest, you’ll find them satisfied by these offerings. So take your pick, tune out the noise, and soon it will be just you, your book, and the world you share.

From the staff of Musselman Library

May 2014

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The 100-year-old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared
by Jonas Jonasson

As you can imagine, a centenarian who climbs out the window (on his 100th birthday, no less) might be a pretty interesting character. And “character” is an understatement for the protagonist in this novel. Allan Karlsson has lived an incredible life, full of chance encounters with interesting and important figures. As his journey continues outside of that window, we learn about this wonderful man, his acquaintances, and his life.

Jennifer Cole, Academic Advising

1Q84 by Haruki Murakami

If you like a book you can’t put down and wish the story would just go on forever, then this is the book for you. A suspense story in a futuristic Tokyo, this book is also an interesting exploration of modern Japan as experienced by its two main characters, Tengo and Aomame. Great summer reading!

Isabel Valiela, Spanish / Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

The All-Girl Filling Station’s Last Reunion by Fannie Flagg

The first pages set readers’ expectations for suspense, surprises and a great deal of humor. Within a tangled mix of times and spaces is nestled the major theme of self-identity. A very gentle heroine hears the message, “You are not who you think you are,” which, of course, instantly reminds the reader of the curse of The Castle of Otranto and gets us ready for action.

The adventures involved in discovering the heroines’ true identities include learning about the WASPS of WWII. WASPS were women flyers who served for, not in, the Army Air Force. The author provides facts and numbers but also, and more important
for the story, personal experiences. Some are hilarious; some are tragic. “Hey. That’s life,” the second, outrageous and stormy heroine might say. She is a perfect foil for tentative, gentle heroine number one, and the two finally meet and make a perfect pair: salt and pepper or sun and sky or socks and shoes.

Although well known for *Fried Green Tomatoes*, I think this latest book by Fannie Flagg is the more enjoyable “read.” It demonstrates a really finely-honed balance of so many ingredients. Yum.

Carol Small, Art and Art History

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**Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

Chimamanda is a phenomenal writer! *Americanah* is the incredibly descriptive, and often laugh-out-loud, account of a Nigerian student’s experiences as an international student in America; it follows her life from Nigeria, to America, and back home again. I hope you love this book as much as I did!

Daisy Chebbet, Counseling Services

Through the eyes of Ifemelu and Obinze, two young Nigerians whose lives take them to two different continents, the novel offers a multifaceted exploration of race in Nigeria, Britain and the United States. This engrossing book considers issues like immigration, diaspora, community and home, delving into the contradictions of the diasporic experience and into the complexity of the concept of blackness.

Radost Rangelova, Spanish

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**The Art Forger by B.A. Shapiro**

Available in the wonderful Browsing Room of Musselman Library, this book was recommended to me by one of the librarians. It is a great summer read. It has art, art thefts, art forgery, and romance. It will hold your interest. All you need is to spread your towel by the pool, grab this book and pour yourself a glass of vino.

Patti Lawson, Government and Community Relations
**The Art of Hearing Heartbeats** by Jan-Philipp Sendker

This is a beautiful love story told like no other. Julia travels to Burma to try to uncover the reason for her father's sudden disappearance. What she discovers is a story of unimaginable hardship, resilience, and passion that will stay with you for a long time.

*Pam Dalrymple, Civil War Institute (retired)*

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**At Night We Walk In Circles** by Daniel Alarcón

In an unnamed Latin American country reminiscent of the author's native Peru, Nelson, a young actor, joins the political theater troupe Diciembre. Led by Héctor Núñez, the troupe performs a subversive political play in a series of small towns. As the novel progresses, an elusive narrator guides us on their journey, back into the men's past, through clues to a mystery, and into a story that masterfully intertwines theater and life, art and reality.

*Radost Rangelova, Spanish*

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**Augustus** by John Williams


*Dusty Smith, English*

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**Beatrice and Virgil** by Yann Martel

Some books are good; some books are challenging. I don't know which this book is. I do know that this is a very ambitious book about a donkey, a monkey, and a struggling writer that is trying to say something about coming to terms with unspeakable horrors, in this case the Holocaust. Some will like it; some will hate it. I thought it was easily better than 90% of the books out there and at less than 250 pages, the cost is pretty low.

*Kurt Andresen, Physics*
**Blasphemy by Sherman Alexie**

This is a fairly new collection of stories, mixing some old favorites with new pieces. I’m a short-story kind of gal. I love an awesome read with truly extraordinary characters, something to take me outside of myself for a brief moment. Sherman Alexie just may be my favorite author. I love the way he mixes the mundane with the spiritual, the earth with the sky, and laughter with heartbreak.

Jackie Milingo, Physics

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**Bleak House by Charles Dickens**

Ok, this might be a tough sell, given its nearly 1000-page length, but *Bleak House* would make a great summer’s reading. Aside from being Dickens’ masterpiece, it’s simply one of the great novels written during the 19th century. It combines social satire and humor, mystery and tragedy. Its scope is vast, examining as it does the lives of dozens of characters who range from aristocrats to the homeless. If all that were not enough, *Bleak House* is especially relevant to our situation in the 21st century. At a time when we are all painfully aware of the deep economic divisions in our own country, of the 99% and the 1%, Dickens shines a light on the consequences of a society that turns a blind eye to the poverty that exists alongside middle-class comfort and upper-class wealth. As a bonus, I have a present for anyone who finishes the novel and sends me their impressions of it!

Suzanne Flynn, English

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**The Book Thief by Markus Zusak**

A young orphan, Liesel, adapts to her new life with her adoptive family in pre-WWII Germany, during which time she learns to read and develops a love for books. After the Night of Broken Glass, a Jewish man takes refuge in Liesel’s basement, and they share their love of stories. However, as political tensions rise and violence escalates, Liesel’s life and feelings towards the power of words take a dramatic turn.

Cathy Bain, Civil War Era Studies

(continued)
The Book Thief is an emotional roller coaster from beginning to end — in the best way possible. Set in Nazi Germany during the escalation of WWII, and narrated by Death, the book tells the story of a young girl’s relationship with her foster parents, the colorful characters she meets in her neighborhood, and her newly-acquired love of reading. Read it before you see the movie!

Nikki Rhoads, Communications and Marketing

The Bookman's Tale: A Novel of Obsession by Charlie Lovett

Anyone interested in rare books, the keeping and sharing of books, Shakespeare, intrigue, suspense, seduction and murder, will enjoy this read. The author is a former bookseller as is the progenitor of the book who is searching for the person in a portrait and discovers a marvelous Shakespearean mystery. I must say it is a bit ironic that I read the book on my Kindle.

Karen Drickamer, Musselman Library (retired)

The Bookseller: The First Hugo Marston Novel by Mark Pryor

This interesting first novel takes place in Paris and is a mystery involving rare books and book sellers. Who is killing the celebrated bouquinistes of Paris? (The bouquinistes are the used-book sellers along the Seine around Notre Dame, and are a Parisian fixture and have been there since the mid-1500s.) Hugo Marston, head of security at the American Embassy in Paris, investigates the death of a friend which leads him to Nazi hunters and Nazi collaborators, an aristocratic bibliophile, and murder. Great beach read.

Karen Drickamer, Musselman Library (retired)
Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy by Helen Fielding

Helen Fielding always makes me laugh, is better than a glass of wine for unwinding, and here she’s on target again with a woman who is now over 50. Maybe it’s just nice to read about someone out of sync with her peers, less than perfect, and still trying to figure out who she’s supposed to be. Yes, there is a happy ending following her decision to accept being a great sheltering tree. This isn’t “great literature,” but it is a great read.

Christine Benecke, Development / Research

Cinnamon and Gunpowder by Eli Brown

“What’s for dinner? There’s nothing in the ’fridge.” Lacking culinary inspiration or explosive romance? Then you must read Cinnamon and Gunpowder. In a Scheherazade-style plot, set on the high seas in 1819, kidnapped master chef

Owen Wedgwood must create a gourmet meal for ruthless pirate queen Mad Hannah Mabbot every Sunday from virtually nothing, in order to save his own life. Furthermore, he must dine with her in her quarters. You will delight in the author’s ability to describe ephemeral tastes through poetry of the other senses. Romance, narrow escapes, and shoot-outs more your style? Like Wedgwood who is falling in love over dinners, you must decide if you are on the murderous Captain Mabbot’s side or not. Bon voyage/bon appétit.

Marta Robertson, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

The Circle by Dave Eggers

Part near-futuristic dystopia, part cautionary tale, The Circle by Dave Eggers explores the limitless possibilities and pernicious dangers of a “networked” society wherein all human experiences are shared, surveilled, and documented for posterity, and privacy is considered antisocial and self-indulgent. Although a caricature of the information industry, the Circle’s pervasive data collection methods, disguised by a thin veneer of humanitarian rhetoric, are reminiscent of modern Silicon Valley firms, lending the narrative a degree of legitimacy. Eggers appears more invested in social commentary than character development, which is the novel’s only shortcoming.

Jeremy Garskof, Musselman Library
**Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein**

This novel tells the story of two young British women, one involved with the WAAF and one a spy, in World War II. Their plane goes down in occupied France, and one of the two is captured by the Gestapo. The story involves some plot twists and surprises, so here I’ll say only that it’s a story of courage, friendship, and gripping adventure. It’s a young adult book, but it certainly kept this not-quite-so-young reader on the edge of her seat. I listened to the Audible version read by Morven Christie and Lucy Gaskell, and their voices added tremendously to the story.

**Kathy Cain, Psychology**

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**The Cold Cold Ground by Adrian McKinty**

McKinty’s 12th novel uses the crime writer’s tools to examine the recent past, which is Belfast in 1981. Detective Sean Duffy, McKinty’s protagonist, is a Catholic cop in a unionist police force. Belfast and the surrounding communities — lost small towns — provide the backdrop for this fast-paced genre novel, which is gritty, violent, and thought provoking.

**Jack Ryan, Provost’s Office**

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**Corduroy Mansions by Alexander McCall Smith**

From the author who brought us *The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency*, this is the first novel in yet another series. I read it at the beach last year and recommend it for your beach read this summer. The quirky and comedic cast of London-based characters includes an overly-patient father who can’t get his dolt of an adult son to move out, a young man who is obsessed with colonic irrigation, a woman who is putting herself through the unpleasant exercise of writing the biography of her detestable son, a Member of Parliament, and — my favorite — a vegan dog named Freddie de la Hay. Have fun!

**Allison Singley, Parent Relations**
Countdown City: The Last Policeman Book II by Ben Winters

In this second installment in The Last Policeman trilogy, Detective Hank Palace is trying to solve a missing persons case while the rest of humanity awaits an asteroid's impending collision with Earth. The mood is weirder and darker than in the first book, but Winters puts an imaginative and believable spin on the end-of-times scenario. The question looms large: by the time the asteroid arrives, will there be anything left of society for it to destroy?

Tim Shannon, History

Death of the Black-Haired Girl by Robert Stone

Stone's return to the novel after a fragmented memoir and a lackluster collection of short stories takes place in a small New England college town. The novel is not as ambitious as Dog Soldiers or A Flag for Sunrise; however, Stone creates a suspenseful tale populated by psychologically complicated characters that want to know that life is not simply a collection of random events. Innocents in Stone's universe do not do well. This novel is both an allegory and a psychological thriller.

Jack Ryan, Provost's Office

A Delicate Truth by John le Carré

Now at the age of 82, John le Carré has written a fresh, fast spy novel about a covert mission gone wrong. A great summer read.

Rud Platt, Environmental Studies
Dept. of Speculation by Jenny Offill

A riveting, lyrical, sometimes whimsical and sometimes profound and always constantly engaging excavation of a contemporary marriage.

Fred Leebron, English

Doc by Mary Doria Russell

This historical novel about Doc Holliday focuses on his relationship with a Hungarian prostitute and Wyatt Earp, and is a mesmerizing read! Doc is diagnosed with tuberculosis at age 21, and we suffer with him as he tries to bring dentistry to long-suffering men in the West who have never seen a toothbrush. However, gambling and gunfighting are much more lucrative (and even necessary) skills, so dentistry is forced to take a back seat. This book is funny and touching, and Russell's storytelling is amazing.

Roy Dawes, Political Science

Doctor Who: Shada: The Lost Adventure by Douglas Adams by Gareth Roberts

Gareth Roberts' book provides a nostalgic escape for anyone who still remembers the brief time when author Douglas Adams joined the creative team of the science fiction television series Doctor Who. The novelization fleshes out an unaired script written by Adams, but never broadcast due to a strike at the BBC during the early 1980s. The book captures the mood and feel of both Adams and Tom Baker, the fourth actor to play the Doctor in the series. It's a real treat for fans of both science fiction legends.

Carrie Szarko, Instructional Technology

Elders by Ryan McIlvain

Ever wonder what the world looks like through the eyes of those young Mormon “elders” who ring doorbells in an effort to bring strangers to their faith? This short novel, written by a former missionary who lost his faith, tells their story with insight and empathy.

Tim Shannon, History
The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

I listened to this book while training for a running race. Time flew by and I found myself laughing out loud and crying in the same run. This book is very powerful and thought provoking about death, true love and the meaning of life.

Cindy Wright, Campus Recreation

This book is very powerful and thought provoking about death, true love and the meaning of life.

Two teenagers diagnosed with cancer, one in remission, the other a terminal case, fall in love and learn to embrace what's left of their time together.

Cathy Bain, Civil War Era Studies

I am only halfway through this book, but I cannot seem to put it down. Told from the perspective of a teenage girl fighting terminal cancer, you live her struggles in health and young love. It is sweet, funny, yet heartbreaking all at the same time.

Tiffany Kurzawa, Career Development

Fire Bell in the Night by Geoffrey Edwards

Taking place more than a decade before the Civil War, this story explores the fiery conflict and growing tension between the North and South. A northern reporter travels to Charleston, SC to cover the impending trial of a man accused of harboring a fugitive slave. However, during his visit he begins to investigate a string of mysterious fires occurring in the black part of town that are far too coincidental to not be connected to the trial taking place. Somehow the two events must be related, and he discreetly investigates both crimes as an outsider without losing his life in the process.

Lauren Roedner, Musselman Library
The First Phone Call From Heaven by Mitch Albom

The First Phone Call From Heaven tells the story of a small town on Lake Michigan that gets worldwide attention when its citizens start receiving phone calls from the afterlife. Is it the greatest miracle or a massive hoax? Albom’s storytelling is so moving and unexpected.

Barbara Fritze, Enrollment and Educational Services

Frankenstein: The Complete Series by Dean Koontz

A modern-day Frankenstein series that includes five books (Prodigal Son, City of Night, Dead and Alive, Lost Souls, and The Dead Town). In a twist, Frankenstein the monster is now the good guy trying to protect the world from Frankenstein the man, who is now the monster. I stumbled onto this series while looking for a book to read and there wasn’t a new book available by one of my favorite authors, Evanovich, Grafton or J.D. Robb. I previously read another book by Dean Koontz, Breathless and enjoyed it very much (although I would have ended it differently). The series offers the reader many things — mystery, suspense, comedy, science fiction, fantasy, and romance. I recommended the series to my son and husband, very different readers, and they both enjoyed reading these books.

Audrey Hatcher, Development / Advancement Systems and Research

The Girl You Left Behind by Jojo Moyes

Life After Life by Kate Atkinson

I’m recommending two books not because they were the best two novels I read in the last year (they’re not) but because they continue to pop up in my thoughts in ways that the better novels have not. One of the reasons for that is because of the role that war plays in each book. I’ll admit that I’m a bit obsessed with war as a research topic, an interest that carries over into a number of my book choices. World War I (on my mind in part because of the 100th anniversary of that conflict) plays a central role in Jojo Moyes’ The Girl You Left Behind and World War II (particularly the London Blitz) plays a prominent role in Kate Atkinson’s Life After Life.

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At the center of Moyes’ book, set primarily in France, is Sophie Lefevre, a young French woman who faces numerous challenges at the hands of the occupying Germans when her husband leaves to fight at the front. Ursula Todd, a young British woman, is the central character in Atkinson’s book. Atkinson’s book is the more memorable of the two, although I’ll admit that part of the reason for that was that I struggled more with it, initially annoyed by the literary device she uses of having her character live through a variety of versions of her life after numerous death or near-death experiences. Once I got the hang of that, though, I was sucked in.

Caroline Hartzell, Political Science / Globalization Studies

**The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt**

I was blown away by Tartt’s first novel *The Secret History*! But *The Goldfinch* is spectacular in its storytelling and character development. It follows the young Theo Decker from a series of profound losses followed by rescue by significantly flawed individuals. Theo faces one hopeless situation after the other, and his life appears to be doomed to tragic loneliness. Perhaps some amount of hopefulness emerges from his possession of a priceless painting. My wife, who is now reading the book, says “it looks hopeless!” I say to her and to you, “read on” and become absorbed in the process!

Bill Jones, Counseling Services (retired)

The first thing most readers will notice about Donna Tartt’s latest novel is its sheer size. At 771 pages, the novel is certainly a commitment of one or two weeks of your life. Yet, I can think of no better book for long summer evenings. *The Goldfinch* opens with a terrorist attack in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a stunningly well-written moment which echoes through the life of our main character, 13-year-old Theo Decker. From the chaos of the attack, Theo comes into possession of Carel Fabritius’ 1654 masterpiece, *The Goldfinch*, and the trajectory of his future is changed forever. With a nod to Dickens, the reader follows the stolen painting’s influence as Theo reaches adulthood, introducing along the way some of the most memorable characters you’ve ever met — Boris Pavlikovsky, Theo’s teenage, criminal best friend (and a lovable likely stand-in for Boris Badenov from *Rocky & Bullwinkle*), to Xandra, his father’s drug-addled girlfriend, and Hobie, an antique furniture restorer in New York. Yes, you will even learn a bit about restoring Colonial American furniture in these 771 pages! There are few books that will keep you turning the page — and often turning back to read a beautiful passage again. This is a book worth reading. Through Theo Decker, Tartt invites us to consider how happenstance shapes a life and, most importantly, how art can save that life.

Clinton Baugess, Musselman Library
The Golem and the Jinni by Helene Wecker

A first novel by a young author (and graduate of a liberal arts college), this book tells the tale of two mythical creatures — a female golem made of clay by a shady (and now dead) rabbi, and a male jinni freed from a lamp after centuries of captivity. The two arrive separately in New York in 1899, encounter various challenges, and form an unlikely friendship. The story has something for everyone — fantasy, history, wonderful characterizations, and meditations on topics as wide-ranging as friendship, culture, trust, and the nature of freedom.

Kathy Cain, Psychology

Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn

This is a cleverly constructed, page turner of a suspense/psychological thriller, told from the perspective of the two main characters, Nick and Amy. The story begins on Nick and Amy’s fifth wedding anniversary, which is as nice as the book gets. Amy suddenly disappears and all signs point to foul play, or does it? The plot is filled with twists and turns that are at times disturbing and leaves you questioning whose side of the story to actually believe.

Susan Fumagalli, Athletics

The Good Lord Bird by James McBride

Did the Civil War celebrations last year wear you out? Or are you now looking for something more to read? Well, consider one of the best new Civil War novels in years. James McBride’s The Good Lord Bird recounts the story of John Brown from a really different perspective — that of a 12-year-old black orphan who falls in with Brown several years before the raid at Harpers Ferry. No more about the kid or it will spoil the story for you.

(continued)
McBride won a National Book Award for this book that the *New York Times* review calls a comedy. It's not a comedy! Although there are comedic elements, just as you will find in Shakespeare's tragedies. This book is theology disguised as fiction, history disguised as a tall-tale, and social commentary hidden behind every sentence. There are comedic passages that will have you laughing so hard you'll cry, but there are episodes that will have you looking for a recent biography of any number of historical figures.

This book is theology disguised as fiction, history disguised as a tall-tale, and social commentary hidden behind every sentence.

By the way, the title refers to the extinct, or near-extinct, Ivory Billed Woodpecker. Early explorers who saw it were said to exclaim, “Good Lord, look at the size of that bird.”

David Hedrick, Musselman Library (retired)

His real name is Henry. He is called “Little Onion” by the man who accidentally killed his father. He is curly haired and light skinned and is “mistaken” to be a girl by the same man — the abolitionist John Brown. “Onion” travels with Brown and his rag tag army through pre-Civil War history in the late 1850s. Along the way he meets such luminaries as Frederick Douglas and Harriet Tubman. This is the John Brown story seen through the eyes and unique patois voice of an uneducated “pseudo innocent” who is with the strange “champion of racial freedom” until the end at Harpers Ferry. This tragic episode of history is written with humor, power and sadness. A great read.

Bill Jones, Counseling Services (retired)

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*The Guest Cat* by Takashi Hiraide

A couple develop a great affection for a cat that suddenly appears and begins to visit them. Set in a quiet neighborhood of Tokyo, the novel is melancholy, soothing and graceful — perfect bedtime reading.

Kathryn Rhett, English
I Married a Communist by Philip Roth

In his later novels, particularly those of the “American trilogy” (American Pastoral, I Married a Communist, The Human Stain) which conflate personal life and public scandal in the latter half of the 20th century, Philip Roth makes it seem so easy to write a novel, to tell a story. He simply sets a character talking, with another character — usually his alter ago, novelist Nathan Zuckerman — on hand to ask questions and add context, and soon, very soon, you are inside that story, those rooms, at the baseline of history as it is made and lived. Here, the history is that of the late 1940s and early 1950s; the collision of McCarthyism and popular entertainment; the maiming of lives and making of careers around the varied hysterias of post-WWII ideologues both Left and Right. The magic and marvel of Roth’s richly-researched style, his patient penetration to the point where politics meld with emotions, is that no character is merely venal or merely righteous; as the filmmaker Jean Renoir put it, “Everyone has his reasons.” You come out dazed and moved, confused but wide awake — and above all, hungry to know more about the world you live in, the people around you.

Devin McKinney, Musselman Library

The Impeachment of Abraham Lincoln by Stephen L. Carter

What if Abraham Lincoln survived the bullet from John Wilkes Booth’s gun on April 14, 1865? How different might history have been? This alternate history begins with the premise that President Lincoln survives the assassination attempt only to stand trial for impeachment during his second term. The prestigious law firm that takes on Mr. Lincoln as a client is soon faced with secrets, murder, and an overwhelming political hatred from many sides. To assist with Lincoln’s defense, the firm’s promising young law clerk, Jonathan, and the new black Oberlin graduate-turn-law clerk, Abigail, team up to overcome vicious threats, 19th-century social boundaries, and their own fears to solve a murder and hopefully save President Lincoln. A well-researched, historical novel with a 21st-century twist combines mystery, intrigue, romance, the law, and the Civil War into a thrilling story for many audiences.

Lauren Roedner, Musselman Library
The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

With great anticipation, I read the third novel from the author of *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Mermaid Chair*, and not only was I not disappointed, I was blown away. This historical novel imagines the inspirational journey of the Grimké sisters, early and influential abolitionists and women's rights pioneers.

Jennifer Cole, Academic Advising

The novel tells the story of the Grimké sisters, Sarah and Angelina of South Carolina, true historical figures and members of a slave-owning family, who became staunch abolitionists and women's rights advocates. It also imagines what might have been the lives of the slaves owned by this family, told through two slave women's stories, Handful and her mother Charlotte. All four women figuratively use the wings (a nod to the title) they have invented for themselves to deal with the challenges, barriers, and horrors of the lives they live. The novel is heart-wrenching, inspirational, and is another great read by novelist Sue Monk Kidd, who also wrote *The Secret Life of Bees*.

Kathy Williams, Career Development

The Invisible Bridge by Julie Orringer

*The Invisible Bridge*, a novel about World War II in Hungary and Paris, was inspired by real events involving the author’s family. The main characters are Andras, a Hungarian Jewish architecture student who comes to Paris to study, and Klara, a Hungarian ballet teacher in Paris. As the world gets ready for and enters into war, Andras and the older Klara begin an unlikely affair. It’s hard to talk about World War II novels without lapsing into clichés, but suffice it to say that the book is beautiful. I read it more than a year ago, but it’s one of those rare books that we remember often and that becomes part of who we are.

Kathy Cain, Psychology
**Kaltenburg by Marcel Beyer, translated by Alan Bance**

“Ludwig Kaltenburg is always waiting for the jackdaws to return, right up to his death in February 1989.” The story that opens with this line is about the life and career of Ludwig Kaltenburg, of course, but it takes in — and struggles with the moral and ethical implications of — much more than that. The fictional Ludwig Kaltenburg bears a pretty clear resemblance to the Austrian zoologist, ethologist, and ornithologist Konrad Lorenz (1903-1989), whose investigations extended into areas of human as well as animal behavior and whose scientific interests and political allegiances through the Nazi and Cold-War years remain open to question.

But there’s a larger, more urgent story here: the narrator, Kaltenburg’s protégé and student, is compelled to understand and connect key events from his own childhood and to resolve conflicting public and personal images of his mentor. Thus it becomes a novel of memory and the things that preserve, distort, or obliterate it. So many books, so little time — still, this is one I want to read again.

*Michael Ritterson, German (emeritus)*

**Kraken by China Miéville**

While not your typical member of the school of magical realism, Miéville has it in spades. This novel is a must for anyone who loves London, who enjoys a “whale of a tale” or who wonders what would happen if creationists were given magical powers, or who have pondered the question “if the apocalypse comes and no one knows, does the world still end?” Did I mention it’s a police procedural? Fun read, but you’ll never look at statuary the same.

*Thomas Jurney, Interdisciplinary Studies*

**The Last Days of Dogtown by Anita Diamant**

This somewhat odd little 2005 novel has been flying a bit under *The Red Tent* radar. Perhaps I liked it because the setting is early 1800s Dogtown, a real place on Cape Ann, Massachusetts, a few miles from where I grew up. Plus, many of the characters are outsiders, losers, and bad asses. They are interesting, and so is the story. You can smell the wood smoke and body odor. You can feel the winter wind and icy crisp cold. This book has a lovely grittiness about it.

*John Commito, Environmental Studies*
**The Last Man Standing by Davide Longo**

Leonardo is a head-in-the-clouds, nose-in-the-book professor dismissed from his university appointment after a sex scandal destroys his career and marriage. He retreats to his childhood home in a small Italian village, but he cannot escape the brutality of the collapsing world around him. Leonardo must define himself in this post-apocalyptic society that threatens what little remains of his family.

*Ruth de Jesus, Intercultural Advancement*

**The League of Princes Series by Christopher Healy**


These books are about the Prince Charmings from Cinderella, Rapunzel, Sleeping Beauty, and Snow White. They are upset since the fairy tales focus on the female characters and don’t even include their real names. They discover each other and decide to perform heroic deeds to make themselves well known. Hilarity ensues. The third book comes out in May, so you can read all three this summer.

*Kim Spayd and Chuck Wessell, Mathematics*

**Lexicon by Max Barry**

If you are like me, when summer comes you are in the mood for a fast-paced thriller but also feel like you want to read a big novel about big ideas about the human experience. The great thing about *Lexicon* is that you don’t need to choose. Max Barry’s novel is a high-paced thriller with shooting and car chases and things blowing up and it is also a smart novel which has deep things to say about language and the role it plays in human civilization. It is also a nice character piece about a young woman who is picked up off the streets and invited to a school where she learns some interesting skills and then kicks some butt. There are funny parts and romantic parts and scary parts and science-fictiony elements and I devoured this book as quickly as I could and cannot recommend it more highly.

*Darren Glass, Mathematics*
Life After Life by Kate Atkinson

It took me some time to catch on to the format of this book. A baby is stillborn in 1910 in England. But, she is born again, and again. She eventually comes to the realization that through her death and rebirth, she can rewrite history by destroying the man who destroyed so many lives.

Deb Hydock, Dining Services

Life After Life by Jill McCorkle

Not the book with the regenerating heroine. The chapters are a series of internal monologues of people from pre-teen to passing whose nexus is a nursing home in North Carolina. Each character is presented in his/her own thoughts and shows up in those of others in the town. A thoughtful, gentle read that plays many ways with the title, acknowledging that we live more than one life, and do it in layers that help determine the lives that follow. [I'm also a sucker for the pun inherent in life after life associated with a nursing home, but this isn't a depressing book.]

Christine Benecke, Development / Research

Long Division by Kiese Laymon

Cause it's damn funny. And smart. How could a book about black kids in Mississippi named Citoyen Coldson and LaVander Peeler and Shalaya Crump and Baize Shephard, a national quiz contest, and time travel be otherwise?

Scott Hancock, History / Africana Studies
**Longbourn by Jo Baker**

Admittedly, I love Jane Austen’s works, but even if you can’t “suffer” through those, you might want to give this a try — especially if you are one of the millions swept up in *Downton Abbey* hysteria. The story focuses on the hired help in the Bennet household of *Pride and Prejudice*, and the timeline of *Longbourn* mirrors the timeline of that book. I found the characters and situations to be just as compelling.

Wendee Dunlap, Annual Giving

*Pride and Prejudice* meets *Upstairs, Downstairs*. In *Longbourn*, Jo Baker re-imagines the events of Jane Austen’s most-loved novel from the point of view of the Bennet family servants. In this retelling, characters who are barely mentioned in Austen’s novel take center stage and their lives and concerns are at the center of the action. The result is a compelling novel and a powerful commentary on social inequality — in Austen’s time and in our own. This is a novel I will read and re-read; and, as a result, I’ll never read *Pride and Prejudice* the same way again.

Jean Potuchek, Sociology / Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies

**The Longest Ride by Nicholas Sparks**

A book about an elderly couple hopelessly in love for more than 70 years, a young college senior trying to figure out the next chapter of her life, and a bull-riding cowboy fighting to manage the realities of his family ranch. Once again, Nicholas Sparks does not disappoint with another romantic novel about passion, undying love, personal fear, and a remarkable art collection that connects them all. This book is a fast, light read but a love story that you won’t forget.

Lauren Roedner, Musselman Library

**The Lost Garden by Helen Humphreys**

Set in spring 1941 on the tail end of the worst of the bombings of London, the protagonist Gwen leaves London to head a group of Land Girls on an estate that is billeting troops waiting to be sent into fighting. The prose and the heroine seem to unclench — is it trite to say blossom? — in the following months as the main characters each come to their own terms with the inevitabilities. A gentle, realistic slice of wartime on the micro level that left me with the sense that one can choose to go on without having all the answers and to get a good crop out of whatever soil you’ve been given.

Christine Benecke, Development / Research
The Lowland by Jhumpa Lahiri

If you’ve enjoyed Jhumpa Lahiri’s previous works, you’ll like this one, too. This novel follows the compelling theme of telling the stories of two brothers whose lives go in dramatically disparate directions while always remaining inextricably linked. Set primarily in Kolkata and Rhode Island, the novel spans from the early 1950s to roughly the present. I loved it for its sympathetic characters, rich historical details, and struggles with identity and loyalty.

Allison Singley, Parent Relations

The Luminaries by Eleanor Catton

While in New Zealand this year, I was able to sit in on a book group that was reading The Luminaries, the Man Booker Prize winner of 2013. It might take up much of your summer, but I encourage you to read this wonderful 800+ page mystery. It is also a love story and has a fascinating cast of characters in NZ during the Gold Rush years of the late 1800s. Catton’s research and her language are impeccable!

Ashlyn Sowell, Development

Lunatics by Dave Barry and Alan Zweibel

A hilarious comic romp about two inept family-men from New Jersey who somehow achieve regime change in Cuba and China, solve the Middle East problem, fight Somali pirates, and disrupt the Republican National Convention. Dave Barry, enough said.

Peter Pella, Physics
The Magicians by Lev Grossman

Quentin Coldwater, a brilliant 17-year-old Brooklyn, NY high school student goes to an interview for a scholarship to Princeton. The interviewer is found dead just as Quentin arrives. Someone hands him an envelope as he is leaving the scene and as he is walking away he opens the envelope. One of the papers is carried away by the wind and as he tracks down the elusive page he suddenly finds himself in another world far away from Brooklyn. From that introduction the author introduces us to a dimension inhabited by a college of magic, a place that Quentin could only imagine from his readings of C.S. Lewis and J.K. Rowling. The rest of the book is a would-be sorcerer’s dream, and often a nightmare. Read on and enter Quentin’s world of many mysteries.

Bill Jones, Counseling Services (retired)

Master and Commander by Patrick O'Brian

Master and Commander is set in the naval wars between England and France at the turn of the 19th century. The book — and the series of 20 that follow — chronicle the unlikely friendship between Jack Aubrey and Dr. Stephen Maturin. The accounts of naval battles are riveting and are drawn closely from sailors' letters and contemporary accounts.

Gavin Foster, Information Technology

The Master of Petersburg by J.M. Coetzee

In this short novel, Dostoevsky returns to St. Petersburg to investigate the death of his son. It is a fantastic recreation of St. Petersburg in the 19th century.

Emelio Betances, Sociology / Latin American Studies
Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs

Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs offers an unusual premise in that it combines a story with vintage photographs to present a tale that is both whimsical and chilling. I loved the idea of this book. Sixteen-year-old Jacob grows up listening to the tales of his grandfather’s childhood in an orphanage filled with children with unusual powers and evil monsters lurking in the shadows. The old photographs and letters make this a beautifully unique book.

Ginny Rinehart, Dining Services

Mr. Britling Sees It Through by H. G. Wells

This year’s centenary of World War I will doubtless awaken interest in the literature that emerged from that conflagration. No work deserves rediscovery more than this sensitive and searching novel. It follows the activities of a British author, clearly modeled on Wells himself, and his circle of friends and family, all struggling to hang onto their values, their relationships and their sanity in the midst of personal loss and epoch-shaking events. It’s hard to believe that such a quietly beautiful work could come out of such a turbulent time.

Richard Sautter, Theatre Arts

Mrs. Lincoln’s Dressmaker by Jennifer Chiaverini

This novel focuses on the real life character, Elizabeth “Lizzie” Keckley, and her complex, decades-long friendship with First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln. A well-researched piece of historical fiction, this book interprets the life of Lizzie, a freed slave, who becomes the famous modiste for the First Lady during and after the Civil War. As a confidant of Mrs. Lincoln and a friend of the Lincoln family, Lizzie’s story was published in a most unfortunate way in the late 19th century. But recent scholarship (fiction and nonfiction) strives to better explain the extraordinary relationship between these remarkable women. This story brings to light both widows, narrating a fascinating tale of Lincoln’s White House, Washington City in the Civil War Era, 19th century media, and the realities for both women after President Lincoln’s assassination.

Lauren Roedner, Musselman Library
**Murder in the Sentier: An Aimée Leduc Investigation by Cara Black**

Another fun romp through the streets of Paris is Black's third, and best, Aimée Leduc mystery. Aimée is the daughter of an American, who disappeared when Aimée was eight years old, and a Parisian policeman, who was murdered and from whom she inherited a detective agency that specializes in computer security. In the 1960s, Aimée's mother was involved with a gang of young terrorists. What did her mother have to do with these people? How guilty was she of their crimes? And is she still alive? The book is fast moving and full of suspense and the descriptions of sights and sounds of Paris will have you walking its city streets once again.

Karen Drickamer, Musselman Library (retired)

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**The Museum of Extraordinary Things by Alice Hoffman**

Set in New York City in 1911, this book combines a dash of magical realism with a solid grounding in the social history of the time. Eddie, an Orthodox Jew from the Ukraine who has turned his back on religion and become a photographer, finds his true calling when asked to locate a young woman missing after the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. Coralie finds the courage to rebel against her father who has turned her into an exhibit in his Museum of Extraordinary Things on Coney Island.

Julia Hendon, Anthropology

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**The Museum of Innocence by Orhan Pamuk**

Pamuk describes the city of Istanbul from the 1950s to the 1980s. The storyline is romantic and shows how a man who is 30 years old meets a young woman who is 17, and then, have a troubling romantic story; but the important thing is that through the novel the reader gets a sense of cultural life in Istanbul.

Emelio Betances, Sociology / Latin American Studies
My New American Life by Francine Prose

Lula is a 26-year-old Albanian refugee living in New York City, with an expiring tourist visa and no desire to return to her homeland. Her luck changes when she lands a job as a caretaker for a rebellious teenager in the suburbs. Lula is close to realizing the “American Dream.” She has a steady income, comfortable home, and semblance of family life. Her employer, Mr. Stanley, knows an attorney who can help her with her legal status. Things take a dark turn when Albanian acquaintances request a favor that may threaten her cozy existence. The prevailing anti-immigrant sentiment is a background theme, as is Lula's less-than-idyllic life in Communist Albania, letting the reader decide where Lula would be better off.

Robin Wagner, Musselman Library

The Ocean at the End of the Lane by Neil Gaiman

Is childhood real or is it all a fantasy? This compelling book is about a man who has returned to his old home in Sussex, England. But the man reverts to his childhood as a seven year old, a lonely boy who discovers powerful forces that focus around three females, an 11-year-old girl (who may be hundreds of years old), her mother and her grandmother. Their world is a place of enchantment, mythology and darkness… a powerful, magical stew that draws you in until you are enveloped in mystery.

Bill Jones, Counseling Services (retired)

The Old Man Who Read Love Stories by Luis Sepúlveda

This brief (only 144 pages) Chilean novel has sold more than five million copies — and with reason. It's very moving and a real page turner. It brings Gabriel García Márquez to mind — but without the magical realism — and is also reminiscent of “The Bear” episode in Faulkner’s Go Down, Moses. Nevertheless, it’s highly original.

Kerr Thompson, Spanish
Orfeo by Richard Powers

A composer cultures bacteria in his kitchen in an attempt to create the ultimate piece of music, a composition for the end of time. While the thriller aspect of the story —

A composer cultures bacteria in his kitchen in an attempt to create the ultimate piece of music . . .

Homeland Security chases him all over the country — is interesting background, the real story is a casual history of serious music with enticing descriptions that make you want to listen to the compositions he describes. Fortunately, the library has most of them in its CD collection.

Ellen Hathaway, Gettysburg Review

The Orphan Master's Son by Adam Johnson

This Pulitzer Prize-winning novel portrays the struggles of everyday life in North Korea. It was a well-researched, fascinating read about life in an unfamiliar part of the world. Everyone I know that has read it (including myself!!) has thoroughly enjoyed it and learned a lot!

Irene Hawkins, Environmental Studies

Our Lady of Alice Bhatti by Mohammed Hanif

This lively and fast-paced novel revolves around the life of Alice Bhatti, the daughter of a janitor and a Christian “outcaste” in Pakistan. Working at a local crumbling hospital, Alice navigating through a world of religious tensions and biases, corruption, and a series of menacing male figures. Part critique of women’s rights in Pakistan and part harrowing tale of Alice’s determined spirit — and full of unforgettable characters.

Megan Adamson Sijapati, Religious Studies / Globalization Studies
**Perfect by Rachel Joyce**

*Perfect* can be read as a story about the unraveling of a boy and his mother. It could also be read as a budding romance between two flawed people who discover that together they are perfect. As a whole, the novel begs questions about redemption and friendship. All of this is instigated by the addition of two leap seconds in 1972 and the course of events that followed.

Jennifer Cole, Academic Advising

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**Perfect Peace by Daniel Black**

Emma Jean Peace wants a daughter so desperately that she raises her seventh infant son, Perfect, as a girl. Even her husband believes that Perfect is a girl until the lie is exposed when, at age eight, the child’s biological gender is finally discovered by her siblings. The shocking revelation challenges the Perfect family to rethink gender, sexuality, and love, and challenges readers to think critically about our own (mis)perceptions of identity.

Jennifer Bloomquist, Africana Studies

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**The Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett**

The best book you’ve ever read about the building of a cathedral. Fascinating intertwining relationships, plot twists, evil plans, revenge, pyromania, heroic monks

... well worth its weight in your beach bag!

and more cathedral building will make this page turner well worth its weight in your beach bag!

Stephanie Peirce, Admissions
Points and Lines by Seicho Matsumoto

Matsumoto has written classic mysteries set in Japan that capture the Japan of the sixties and seventies. Detective Torigai tenaciously finds the lines that connect the points. I'm retired so I can read lots of Japanese mysteries. Here are a few more: Keigo Higashino, The Devotion of Suspect X; Shizuko Natsuki, The Obituary at Two O’Clock; Kobe Abe, The Ruined Map. All give detail on the Japanese detective’s thinking process and the setting in which the detective works.

Ann Harper Fender, Economics (emerita)

The Quest by Nelson DeMille

The author of Up Country and by the Rivers of Babylon has extensively rewritten his first novel which he originally published in 1975. The book is set in Ethiopia in 1974 amidst the revolution and civil war that brought about the end of a 3000 year old civilization. A group of journalists covering the war, stumble upon a clue to the oldest mystery; the location of Holy Grail. Full of history, thrills, and mystery.

Karen Drickamer, Musselman Library (retired)

Redeployment by Phil Klay

So, the truth is, I have not read this yet myself, but hope to have time this summer. Just after reading Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk, by Ben Fountain, I heard Klay interviewed and was eager for more. An Iraq War veteran, Klay wrote the collection of stories to bring multiple perspectives on war to a broad audience. The stories include the voices of soldiers, civilians, and even children.

Emily Clarke, Development
**Rescued by John Bevere**

This is a thriller that leaves every danger, every risk, and every rescue you've ever imagined in the dust and was a life-changer for me. It kept me on the edge of my seat as to what was going to happen next.

*Elaine McCauslin, President’s Office*

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**The River of No Return by Bee Ridgway**

In the beginning of *The River of No Return* by Bee Ridgway, we meet Nick, a 19th-century nobleman who fell through time and has lived in the 21st century for several years. He drives and texts and thinks of women as educated equals. Julia, back in the 19th century, is finding out about powers of her own. When the two get together, and try to figure out time travel and the secret guild that controls it, it’s a really fun read. I first read this expecting pure candy — Jane Austenesque time travel! — but found the writing beautiful, the plot well-drawn, and the characters compelling. I can’t wait for the sequel.

*Jocelyn Swigger, Sunderman Conservatory of Music*

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**The Rosie Project by Graeme Simsion**

I loved this novel about an Australian genetics professor, Don Tillman, who embarks on two logic-driven projects: one to find a wife and the other to find the unknown father of an acquaintance named Rosie. Don doesn’t seem to be aware that he has Asperger’s syndrome, but his unusual perceptions of social interaction affect every aspect of the plot. Warm, funny, and offering some food for thought, the book is a perfect summer read.

*Kathy Cain, Psychology*
The Round House by Louise Erdrich

A Native American bildungsroman meets Law & Order: SVU in a beautifully woven tale of family, culture, and scandal.

Jennifer Cole, Academic Advising

… what does justice look like when the crime is committed by a white man on tribal land?

Joe is the only son of the tribal judge and the tribal clerk of the Ojibwe Reservation in North Dakota. He recounts his happy home until the summer of his 13th year, when his mother is brutally assaulted in an attempt to silence a crime. But what does justice look like when the crime is committed by a white man on tribal land?

Ruth de Jesus, Intercultural Advancement

Sacré Bleu: A Comedy d'Art by Christopher Moore

This is a thrilling novel about all things fabulous: Paris, the Impressionists, steam-powered stilts, sex, murder and baguettes. Moore imagines a world where painters are deliberately driven to madness by the color blue.

Kim Spayd and Chuck Wessell, Mathematics

Samurai Mystery Trilogy by Dale Furutani

(Death at the Crossroads, Jade Palace Vendetta, Kill the Shogun)

After six decades, a great Groupon offer was taking me back to my home (ages 3-5) in Tokyo, Japan. What better, and painless, way to prepare for Japanese history/culture/economy/society than by reading murder mysteries? Dale Furutani's trilogy about a wandering samurai, unemployed in the 17th century by political change, provides exciting storytelling amidst a bit of history. Furutani also has written a series about a modern detective working in Tokyo and Los Angeles; the books provide interesting tidbits about contemporary Japan.

Ann Harper Fender, Economics (emerita)
Snow by Orhan Pamuk

A journalist travels from Istanbul to the remote city of Kars (which in Turkish means “snow”), where girls are committing suicide because public authorities do not allow them to wear a veil. The novel shows clearly the problems between religion and politics. It also shows how Turkey finds itself between East and West.

Emelio Betances, Sociology / Latin American Studies

The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey

In search of a new beginning and relief from their grief, a middle-aged Pennsylvania couple homesteads in the 1920 Alaskan wilderness. In an unusual moment of playfulness, the couple builds a child out of snow. The next day, the snow child disappears, and the couple glimpses a little girl living in the woods. Who is this fairy tale child they come to love, and are they prepared to accept the give and take realities of their harsh new landscape?

Ruth de Jesus, Intercultural Advancement

Snow Hunters by Paul Yoon

A refugee from the Korean War immigrates to Brazil and becomes a tailor. This is a small book (only 194 pages) and quite a delight. Yoon’s sentences are like delicate embroideries and so poetic. Sometimes time stops like a slow Sunday and then life picks up. I liked that not all is explained — characters remain somewhat of a mystery to the reader. Like real life. Disclaimer: Paul wrote part of this book while living in our house while we were on sabbatical.

Nathalie Goubet, Psychology
One of my goals for the year was to get back to reading for pleasure and I am really pleased to say I am making great progress! For this summer, I am recommending two books that have one noteworthy similarity. The two books are *Someone* by Alice McDermott and published in 2013 and *Stoner* by John Edward Williams, first published in 1965 and re-released in 2006. Both books focus on a main character and follow that character over the course of their rather uneventful lives. Thoreau’s phrase, “lives of quiet desperation,” was called to mind. Neither character is remarkable or perhaps even all that likable, and yet, in the hands of these authors, the characters shimmer with subtle intelligence and great humanity. Both books are finely crafted and elegantly written, containing passages that are so lyrical they literally stop you in your tracks. These are two of the finest novels of this type you will ever encounter. I suggest reading them back to back…afterwards, you will never regard the unremarkable person in your life in quite the same way.

*Julie Ramsey, College Life*

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**The Son** by Philipp Meyer

Epic story of the American West, full of heroes and villains and some who are both.

*Paul Fairbanks, Communications and Marketing*

This sprawling historical novel tells the story of the McCullough family and the “settling up” of Texas. Three different narrators provide their perspectives on the history of the frontier, race relations in a volatile region, and the place of violence in civilization. The plot ranges from 1846 to the near present. This is a long novel, but in the best possible way — I could not put it down.

*Janelle Wertzberger, Musselman Library*

A great novel of 19th - 20th century Texas.

*Dusty Smith, English*
**Still Life with Bread Crumbs by Anna Quindlen**

Whether you've been a fan for a long time or are considering her work for the first time, I'd recommend moving Anna Quindlen's most recent novel to the top of your book pile. It follows Rebecca Winter, a once well-known photographer now struggling to make ends meet, as she moves from Manhattan to a remote cabin upstate and challenges notions of what it means to be 60 in terms of friendship, family, love, art, and adventure.

Harriet Marritz, Counseling Services

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**Stoner by John Williams**

One of the best college novels ever, maybe THE best.

Dusty Smith, English

It is fitting that my recommendation is the product of another recommendation, one from Dusty Smith, because Stoner, first published in 1965, sold few copies initially, quickly went out of print, and was sustained only through word of mouth. However, in 2006 Edwin Frank, the editorial director of *New York Review Books Classics*, made certain the book was reprinted. The book received further attention in 2007 when Morris Dickstein reviewed Stoner for the Sunday *The New York Times Book Review*, calling it a "perfect novel." Stoner follows the life of William Stoner who attends the University of Missouri to study agronomy, but who falls in love with English literature instead. This unexpected passion leads him to a Ph.D. and a career in teaching at the same institution where the reader follows his life, its highs and lows, both in and outside the classroom. Deeply moving, Stoner may be particularly so for those of us who are ending an academic career and looking back with a certain melancholy.

Elizabeth Richardson Viti, French / Johnson Center for Creative Teaching & Learning

John Williams (1922-1994) is a writer I — and, it appears, a lot of other people — first heard of with the recent reissue of two titles by *New York Review Books*. Williams taught in the writing program at the University of Denver from 1954 to 1985. The protagonist of this novel, William Stoner, makes his career, a generation earlier than the author, in the English department (where else?) at the University of Missouri. His life is a succession of disappointments, yet at its end he concludes that it was a good life, and we may have to reflect for a moment to understand his meaning. Williams's narrative is loving and elegiac, and a celebration of the literature he and Stoner both cared deeply about.

Michael Ritterson, German (emeritus)
The Stories of Ibis by Hiroshi Yamamoto

A long work by a well-known Japanese science fiction writer, this novel is seven separate stories told to a human storyteller by the female robot, Ibis. Each story stands on its own but together forms the literary history of humans' creation of Artificial Intelligence. Only after listening to all the stories can the storyteller (and the reader) understand the lesson that Ibis wishes to impart. Easy to read each story (save one) in one sitting. A thoughtful read on the nature of humanity and our treatment of “the other.”

Eleanor Hogan, Asian Studies

The Story of a New Name by Elena Ferrante

This is easily the most memorable novel I’ve read in the past seven months. The principal setting is a working-class, dialect-speaking neighborhood in Naples during the years 1955-1962. The first-person narrator is Elena Greco. She is 22 and a university student in Pisa when we first meet her, but the story she tells starts a half dozen years earlier. She is bookish, desirous of adult approval, and a good student — with literary ambitions. Her best friend and competitor is Lila Cerullo. Lila is charismatic, defiant, beautiful, and, in Elena's eyes, brilliant, especially in her writing, but, for lack of parental support, she will marry at age 16 to a good provider whom she despises. The evolving relationship between Elena and Lila provides the central dynamic of the novel. What makes the novel so powerful? First, the narrator’s voice is strikingly direct, especially in pursuit of uncomfortable truths. Second, the novel is clearly autobiographical; it has the heft and amplitude of real life. Finally, I imagine the author’s method of production (“Elena Ferrante” is a pseudonym) as the constant picking at her own open wounds.

Fritz Gaenslen, Political Science

The Storyteller by Jodi Picoult

The Storyteller is one of Jodi Picoult's newer page turners about redemption and forgiveness. Similar to other Picoult novels, the plot unravels by jumping between a few different time periods, allowing the reader to learn more about the characters' backgrounds and why the central themes are not as black and white as they originally seem. In this book, readers struggle with the questions — “Is forgiveness yours to offer if you aren’t the person who was wronged?” and “Can someone who has committed horrendous acts ever be fully redeemed?”

Erin Stringer, Development
Sugar by Bernice L. McFadden

From the first sentence, “Jude was dead,” this book is intriguing. A chronicle of violence, prejudice, judgment, love and acceptance in 1950s black Arkansas, Sugar tells the story of the relationship that builds between a middle-aged church-going housewife and the prostitute who moves in next door. At times painful and funny, the story ends, in part, both triumphant and bittersweet.

Jennifer Bloomquist, Africana Studies

Swords of Steel: The Story of a Gettysburg Boy, A Boy at Gettysburg, The Loving Heart, and Emmeline by Elsie Singmaster

Read one of the historical novels that local writer, Elsie Singmaster (1879-1958) wrote for young people about the Battle of Gettysburg. It's so fun to read a story that's set in the town where you live. They are all four worth reading, but Swords of Steel, a Newbery Honor recipient, is probably the best of the bunch. The main characters in all four novels are local people — some professors at the College! They are quick and fun novels, and better yet, the endings are happy.

Paula Olinger, Spanish

A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki

When my librarian-aunt sent the family our group reading project, the short-listed authors for the 2013 Man Booker Prize, I chose Ruth Ozeki’s A Tale for the Time Being. The narrative moves beautifully between the diaries of a young suicidal girl in Japan and a transplanted Manhattan author experiencing writer’s block while living in isolated British Columbia. Dark themes meld into a sparkling meditation on the nature of time and space. Unconvinced by the initial opening conceit, I am so glad that I decided to continue reading.

Marta Robertson, Sunderman Conservatory of Music
Ten Things I've Learnt About Love by Sarah Butler

Ten things Ten Things I've Learnt About Love is about:


Jennifer Cole, Academic Advising

Tess of the d’Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy

I’d read nothing by Thomas Hardy since high school, and my only lasting memory, from The Return of the Native, was a romantic notion of life as a furze cutter on Egdon Heath. Hardy’s 1891 masterpiece, Tess, so firmly anchored in the people, the mores, and the land of his “Wessex” countryside, has of course gone through countless print editions over the past century or more, but it’s also been adapted for the stage, film, and TV. (So far, I’ve missed the 2007 rock opera version.)

Don’t choose this book if you’re not willing to make the emotional investment in the fortunes of its characters.

Don’t choose this book if you’re not willing to make the emotional investment in the fortunes of its characters. They’re buffeted (sorry, there’s no better word for it) by forces real people face in any age. I can’t decide which is the more outrageous — the wrongs suffered by the title character or the terrible misunderstandings and missed encounters that drive the fatal plot.

Michael Ritterson, German (emeritus)

The Testament of Mary by Colm Tóibín

This book is an unsentimental portrayal of Mary as a solitary older woman piecing together personal memories of the events in her son’s life and brutal crucifixion. Ever the iconoclast, Tóibín’s re-imagined story from Mary’s perspective gives us a human being and witness, not a Madonna.

Kay Hoke, Sunderman Conservatory of Music
**The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien**

*The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien is set during the Vietnam War, and it can be read as either a collection of short stories or as a novel...it is riveting because it brings to light the weight of what we asked our young soldiers to carry in Vietnam, both literally and figuratively, AND psychologically and physically.

*Darryl Jones, Admissions*

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**Tiger Shrimp Tango by Tim Dorsey**

If you have ever spent time vacationing in Florida, especially Tampa, Miami, Key West and points in between, you will appreciate the vast historical trivia knowledge of Serge A. Storms as he and his perpetually addled sidekick Coleman, creatively rid the state (and hence the country) of con artists. Also very funny.

*Peter Pella, Physics*

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**A True Novel by Minae Mizumura**

I learned about this novel when I attended a Brontë conference in Turkey. It’s a Japanese reading of *Wuthering Heights*. Like *Wuthering Heights*, it deals with families and their different generations, with houses as complicated and characteristic as any of the people who live in them, with nested narratives and unreliable narrators, with traces of the supernatural, and with an unexpected (but not totally unexpected) twist at the end.

*Temma Berg, English / Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies*

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**Waiting for the Barbarians by J.M. Coetzee**

Coetzee, a Nobel Prize winner, describes how South Africa dealt with the issues of apartheid: its brutality, the arrogance of power and, as counterpoint, a judge sent to the interior represents human reason.

*Emelio Betances, Sociology / Latin American Studies*
What's Bred in the Bone by Robertson Davies

I enjoyed *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt, and I'm sure many others will recommend it. But its jacket blurb reminded me of a book I love more: *What's Bred in the Bone* by Robertson Davies. *What's Bred in the Bone* tells the story of an art forger who uses his skills to save masterpieces from the Nazis. The descriptions of art and artistic training, as well as the indelible characters, make it one of my favorite books (the other books in the trilogy are fun, too).

Jocelyn Swigger, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

White Hot by Sandra Brown

Sayre returns to her Louisiana hometown for her brother's funeral. She has to confront her controlling father and try to prove her brother was murdered and did not commit suicide. In the midst of this family drama, she connects with a shrewd lawyer whom she may find she has more in common with than she first realized.

Lisa Becker, Information Technology

Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald by Therese Anne Fowler

Without knowing much about Zelda Fitzgerald, I picked up this novel on a whim and was instantly taken away to the glitz and glamour of the Roaring Twenties and the literary and artistic circles of the Lost Generation in Paris. But what of Zelda after the parties? The author does an excellent job portraying a woman striving to carve out her own identity beyond her husband's fame.

Kerri Odess-Harnish, Musselman Library
Once the United States got a taste of Scandinavian crime fiction with Steig Larsson's *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, we instantly craved more. Soon writers like Norway’s Jo Nesbø were hitting our bestseller lists.

Dubbed “Nordic Noir,” the genre leads us through horrifying crimes set in some of the bleakest European landscapes. That’s part of the allure, since most of us know very little of these intriguing locations. This backdrop is reflected in the main characters, who can be distant, dark and cold.

For me, finding Nordic Noir authors I enjoy is like searching for cashews in the nut mix. There’s a lot I push aside because they truly can be too bitter to digest, especially those with crimes against children (e.g., *The Beast* by Anders Roslund).

But ahh, those cashews! There’s Henning Mankell’s *Wallander* that was adapted into three TV series, including Kenneth Branagh’s version, which airs on PBS. In fact, the original Wallander series was a collaboration between Mankell and producer Ole Søndberg that launched Yellow Bird, a media production company known for such Noir titles as Larsson’s trilogy, Joe Nesbo’s *Headhunters* and Liza Marklund’s *Annika Bengtzon series*.

Annika Bengtzon, a newspaper crime reporter in Stockholm, is a great character and Yellow Bird perfectly brought her to the small screen with six episodes based on the novels, now out on DVD. Currently they are working on a U.S. version (coming to ABC this fall). They promise to send a lot more across the pond — both subtitled originals (my preference) and adaptations.

For Nordic Noir with a ghostly haze, I recommend Johan Theorin’s tales set on the eerie island of Öland in the Baltic Sea. *The Darkest Room* had me burrowing under the covers even though it was 90 degrees outside! Or maybe I’m just nuts.
This summer, join the Class of 2018 in reading *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore!

More information coming soon on the orientation website at: www.gettysburg.edu/orientation

Things to do this summer:
- Read the book
- Join the discussion
- Plan for the author visit on September 10, 2014
- Questions? Contact orientation@gettysburg.edu

Sponsored by the Office of the Provost and the Division of College Life with support from the Teagle Foundation.

Follow Wes on Twitter: wesmoore1 and Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheOtherWesMoore
At Home: A Short History of Private Life by Bill Bryson

You might remember Bill Bryson for his earlier book *A Walk in The Woods* about his adventures hiking the Appalachian Trail. In this book, Bryson uses his wonderful wit and humor to explain some of the common things from your home. Like, why is a hall, a hall, and other such oddities. Just a good, informative book.

Mike Bishop, Dining Services

The Battle for Okinawa: A Japanese Officer’s Eyewitness Account of the Last Great Campaign of World War II by Hiromichi Yahara

I would like to read this account of the Battle of Okinawa for a personal reason: in early April 1945, a few days after the invasion of the island, a Japanese mortar killed my great uncle, a 2nd lieutenant platoon leader who served with the 184th U.S. Infantry. We still have the Western Union telegram that notified his parents of his death, and the campaign that claimed him still haunts us. I’ve read two histories that cover the battle, and now I’d like to learn about the Japanese experience of it.

Alan Perry, Italian

The Beatles: All These Years, Vol. 1: Tune In by Mark Lewisohn

*Tune In* is the first installment of a three-volume biography of The Beatles, and the magnum opus to date of the man globally acknowledged as their leading scholar-authority. Traveling from Ireland’s ancestral shores to December 31, 1962, when an unwitting world stood on the verge of Beatlemania, the book is both a monumental achievement and a watershed. Previously unknown witnesses and facts accumulate a dozen to the page, and Lewisohn, a supreme stylist, conjures the Beatles’ days and nights in vivid colors and layered depths; like ghosts from the future, we eavesdrop on a strange, electric, contingent world of real surfaces, sounds, processes. No one who reads *Tune In* will hear The Beatles in the same way afterwards, nor think of them as the same people, nor emerge without a dazzled sense of the many quantum levels of chance and improbability underlying their phenomenon — which is, as much as any other we might nominate, the phenomenon of our age.

Devin McKinney, Musselman Library
The Book of Woe: The DSM and the Unmaking of Psychiatry by Gary Greenberg

What is a mental illness anyway? If you come down with a runny nose, sore throat, coughing and sneezing, chances are you can trace that back to a cold virus — but what if all you had to work with was the symptoms and not the root cause? Would you have "sneezing disorder"? Or perhaps "sore throat disorder"? Is there a difference? How often do you have to sneeze to have "sneezing disorder" and not just normal sneezing?

Gary Greenberg details the creation of the primary book of mental health symptoms and diagnoses, the Diagnosis and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5) which was finally published in 2013. Intended to be the latest word in the treatment of mental illness, the DSM-5 has come under tremendous fire from patients and doctors alike for shifting diagnoses and extending the reach of mental illness into areas where it may not be appropriate — should prolonged depression after the death of a loved one be considered an illness? Greenberg traces the history of the DSM, showing that the creation, deletion and reclassification of illnesses has been a constant process: up until 1973 and the publication of DSM-3 homosexuality was considered a mental disease. Asperger's syndrome appeared in the DSM-4, only to be challenged in the DSM-5. Without distinct biological criteria for each disorder, the debates over classification and treatment (and even normality) end up being far more political than scientific, with patients, doctors, insurers, drug companies and many others all wanting their input. Greenberg is at his strongest while detailing the endless debate over the manual and some of the fascinating politics (the lead editor of DSM-4 was one of the primary opponents of the DSM-5), but sadly the book doesn't come with much of a path forward to help people with their very real issues.

Eric Remy, Instructional Technology

Bossypants by Tina Fey

Inspired by American Dialect Society's Word of the Year for 2013, my review consists of this: Because Tina Fey.

Abby Kallin, Admissions
Brick by Brick: How LEGO Rewrote the Rules of Innovation and Conquered the Global Toy Industry by David C. Robertson with Bill Breen

What was the toy of the 20th century? Legos! However, in 2003, the Lego Group announced the biggest financial loss in its history. How did that happen? This book tells not only the history of the Danish company but also how a new leadership team pulled off one of the most successful business transformations in recent memory. If you've ever stepped on a Lego, or snapped two of them together, you will want to read Brick by Brick!

Nancy Chambers, Parent Relations

The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the Golden Age of Journalism by Doris Kearns Goodwin

The Adventures of Theodore Roosevelt by Theodore Roosevelt, edited by Anthony Brandt

I've always found that contemporary issues make more sense when placed in historical context. The current debates about the role of government today — indeed, the validity of government intervention in the economy — are illuminated in Doris Kearns Goodwin's latest book, The Bully Pulpit, focused on Teddy Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the muckraking journalists of the Progressive era. Some critics argue that Kearns Goodwin's focus is too “top down.” Maybe it is. A lot of Progressive activity in the early 20th century was generated by grass roots citizen protest and activism. But never mind. Readers who want to know more about these two presidents and the way journalists helped advance a progressive agenda will find Goodwin's account not merely informative but riveting. The problems of the day that the presidents were addressing, including overweening corporate power and inequalities of wealth and opportunity in the U.S., are well limned. TR's vitality and the ingenuous humility (combined with a touch of ambition) of Will Taft, come through clearly, as does the basis for their close friendship and its heartbreaking rupture during Taft's years in the White House.

For a reader with time and patience for a book on TR that's less hefty than Kearns Goodwin's 900-page tome, I'd recommend The Adventures of Theodore Roosevelt, edited by Anthony Brandt. It offers a wonderful selection of TR's own writing about his experiences as a cowboy in the Badlands in the 1880s, as a Rough Rider in Cuba during the 1898 war with Spain, his African safari experience and that amazing, nearly disastrous trip down the River of Doubt in the Amazon after Roosevelt left the White House. What a man! What a writer!

Michael Birkner, History
The Cello Suites: J.S. Bach, Pablo Casals, and the Search for a Baroque Masterpiece

by Eric Siblin

Siblin has carefully researched and interwoven two fascinating stories: the first is the 18th century story of the J. S. Bach’s composition of the six Cello Suites and their subsequent disappearance; the second is the 20th century story of their discovery by a young Pablo Casals, whose signature performance would give them standing as recognized works of musical genius and make the cello a solo instrument. The author’s own search for the meaning of these haunting compositions add a narrative overlay. The book is structured around the six Suites, and I recommend listening to any one of the great recordings along with each chapter. Wonderful!

Dan DeNicola, Philosophy

Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness and
Don’t Let’s Go to the Dogs Tonight: An African Childhood by Alexandra Fuller

Two very entertaining and interesting books about Fuller’s childhood and growing up in Africa during the Rhodesian War. The second book, Cocktail Hour Under the Tree of Forgetfulness, focuses a bit more on her parents’ lives, especially her mother Nicola’s story. In both books, her family moves around Africa and has many adventures along the way! You will likely feel shocked, amazed, happy, and sad while you read these books.

Sarah Principato, Environmental Studies
I am teaching a first-year seminar on *Divine Comedy* in the fall, and I need to return to a full reading of this crucial medieval text that profoundly shaped Dante’s understanding of the relationship between faith and reason, and the nature of free will and predestination. The great English author C.S. Lewis commented that to “acquire a taste for it is to become naturalized in the Middle Ages.” Written in the year 524 as Boethius, a Roman statesman, languished in prison, the text has been described as one of the single-most influential works in the West on Medieval and early Renaissance Christianity.

Alan Perry, Italian

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The scientific search to understand the origin of life is progressing now by leaps and bounds. This fascinating book explains what we have learned and surveys the new field of synthetic biology, which is already producing potential solutions to major issues in food supply adequacy, health management and climate change. Modified DNA structures give insight into possible alternative life forms, as well as imaginative inventions...and, of course, these also pose challenging ethical issues. A witty and entertaining read, accessible to the general reader with a curious mind.

Dave Moore, Musselman Library

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Stolen credit cards and lost identities are common stories in mainstream media publications. In his book, Clifford Stoll takes the reader through what is considered the first internet security breach. Even though the topic is technical, the book reads like an international espionage mystery novel.

Rod Tosten, Information Technology
**Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead** by Brené Brown

This is a great nonfiction book for readers who enjoy scholarly research that is interpreted and applied practically. This book dives into Brown's sociological research on vulnerability and shame, and teaches us how to overcome those emotions in order to continue to take risks in our everyday lives. Brown is funny and down-to-earth (both in her writing style and in her TED talks).

Valerie Martin, Admissions

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**David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants** by Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell is a master at deconstructing our preconceived notions about the world around us and illuminating the flaws in our long-held way of thinking. His latest book is no exception, and is brimming with examples from the distant past, the recent past and the present day in which adversity and suffering have proven to be sources of strength for individuals or groups, while so-called advantages can actually hinder progress and success. It's an inspiring read that reinforces the notion that anything is possible, regardless of how the odds may appear to be stacked against you.

Betsy Duncan Diehl, Development

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**The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America** by Erik Larson

A wonderful book that contrasts the building of the White City for the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago with the clever serial killer who used the fair to lure victims to his house of horrors.

Brian P. Meier, Psychology
**Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the World**

by Vicki Myron

*Dewey* tells the heartwarming story of a kitten, Dewey Readmore Books, found in the book return of the library in Spencer, IA on the coldest night of the year in 1988. It details the kitten's extraordinary personality, his devotion to doing his self-appointed duty toward those who loved him and the patrons of the library, and the impact he had on all who came to know him. Dewey became the loving companion to a town full of residents suffering from the effects of the farming crisis of the late 1980s.

This book is an easy read and accessible to readers of almost any age. It's an uplifting story of survival, endurance, trust, and hope that makes you believe the best of people — and animals! Dewey’s story and inspiration spread around the globe and after 19 years of dutiful library service, his obituary ran in more than 250 newspapers and aired on several televised news stations.

Miranda Wisor, Musselman Library

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**The Diary and Letters of Kaethe Kollwitz**

edited by Hans Kollwitz

This powerful book reveals the struggles of a remarkable German artist who struggled to find joy in her life after losing her youngest son in the First World War and her grandson in the Second World War. Kollwitz’s diary and letters also provide a fascinating glimpse into the human experience for those living in Germany during the first half of the 20th century. After reading this book, you will want to see Kollwitz’s memorial sculpture, titled The Grieving Parents, which was finally completed and placed in the Vladslo German War Cemetery in Belgium.

Christopher J. Zappe, Provost
Elsewhere by Richard Russo

One of my favorite authors, Richard Russo has come out with a memoir that is succinct, but packs a punch. This Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist (Nobody's Fool, Empire Falls and the hilarious Straight Man) escapes upstate New York, but not his mother. He is forced to take her with him when he heads off to Arizona for college. The road trip across the country is sad, but hilarious, and the author’s one-liners are once again priceless. The famous author recognizes that he is an enabler to his mother, Jean, who is both annoying and needy, but what can he do? As I read Russo's memoir, I was struck at how balanced his own life is given the woman who raised him. He is first a respected college professor at Colby, and then a wildly successful author whose novels have made it to the big screen. I always liked his works, but after reading Russo's memoir I have even greater respect for him as a son, husband and father.

Patti Lawson, Government and Community Relations

The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer by Siddhartha Mukherjee

Written for the lay person, this is a fascinating book chronicling the history of cancer from ancient Egypt to the present. The author is an oncologist who interweaves the story of cancer with the stories of patients he has treated. If you or somebody you know has been diagnosed with cancer, The Emperor of All Maladies will help you to understand this ubiquitous disease.

Kristin Stuempfle, Health Sciences


This book is a great read about wealth and society. It will make you think about excess and purpose particularly in how we utilize (or not) the resources we have been given and who, in the end, benefits from those resources.

Brian Falck, Major and Planned Giving
**Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion** by Jeffrey J. Kripal

This is a 588-page romp through the history of the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, CA, founded in 1962 by Michael Murphy (*Golf in the Kingdom*, 1971) and Richard Price on cliffs overlooking the Pacific. Esalen grew the Human Potential Movement (inspired by Aldous Huxley), transpersonal psychology (Stan Grof), Eastern spirituality (Zen, Tantra, Yoga), and even “citizen diplomacy” with the Soviets. Jeff Kripal (religious studies, Rice U.), a clever, funny man, really connects the dots of alternate science and spirituality in this backstory to *How the Hippies Saved Physics* (David Kaiser, 2012).

Charles F. Emmons, Sociology

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**Five Billion Years of Solitude: the Search for Life Among the Stars** by Lee Billings

The magical realist novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez tells of a fictional city, Macondo, isolated by a vast and impenetrable jungle, a city in which the dreams and imaginings of its inhabitants create a reality that both mirrors and distorts the wider world beyond. It is surely fitting that a fine nonfiction book by science journalist Lee Billings pays homage to Márquez, telling the story as it does of a world, our Earth, isolated by vast interstellar distances, whose inhabitants envision a plurality of habitable planets orbiting the multitude of suns beyond our own.

There’s nothing magical about this quest for extrasolar life, since astronomers have cataloged, at last count, over 4000 planets circling stars other than our sun, an indication that extrasolar planetary systems are the norm rather than the exception. How many of these new planets are habitable, and how to decide if they are in fact inhabited, is the principal focus of the book. Written and paced like a good novel, it is filled with human interest stories from the astronomers who are engaged in the hunt.

Despite optimistic prospects, many of these scientists worry that essential projects to find habitable worlds may be put on the back burner by governments strapped for research funding. And there’s also the possibility that the task is harder than we think: that the solitude of our pale blue dot in space may have added a Macondo wishfulness to the ostensibly sober assessments of planet-hunters. Billings cautions that we take increasingly frequent press releases announcing potentially habitable worlds with a grain of salt, for at present, “the handful of known facts for each planet…[is] buried beneath the familiar fictions that so many people construct for themselves.”

Larry Marschall, Physics

(continued)
The subtitle, *The Search for Life Among the Stars*, tells it all. You may have already read the news releases about the discovery of exoplanets and the “Goldilocks Zone” in which life as we know it could be possible. Here’s a book that tells in layman’s language how all this is done, the human stories of competition among scientists, and the exciting possibilities of projects in the works which will be producing even more detail over the next decade or two. But the distances are huge and the challenges to communicate or to travel are also huge. So where will all this go? A fascinating read!

Dave Moore, Musselman Library

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DON’T skip over this thinking you’re not interested. Do you want to do a better job investing your retirement money; do you want to understand investing in general? Then this book’s for you. An easy read. A great primer. Sound advice by *Morningstar’s* director of Stock Analysis.

*DON’T skip over this thinking you’re not interested.*

Ed Cable, Development

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**Galileo’s Mistake: A New Look at the Epic Confrontation Between Galileo and the Church** by Wade Rowland

You are present near the beginning of the “scientific revolution,” witnessing the encounter between Galileo and the Inquisition. There is one paragraph describing Galileo’s misunderstanding of what he was doing in trying to make public the difference between observation and believing on the basis of authority. A really exciting story of a major event that helps create “our modern world.”

Louis Hammann, Religious Studies (emeritus)
Gettysburg: The Last Invasion by Allen Guelzo

If you are connected to Gettysburg College or the town of Gettysburg, this is a must read. Allen Guelzo is a tremendous storyteller, and does a masterful job in his book.

_If you are connected to Gettysburg College or the town of Gettysburg this is a must read._

He doesn't just cover where the regiments moved but tells the stories of the people involved in the Battle of Gettysburg.

Paul Redfern, Communications and Marketing

God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades by Rodney Stark

Stark is one of the best historians of Christianity going today, and this book shows that he's also one of the bravest by going against prevailing wisdom. In it, he argues that the Crusades, far from being expansionist and imperialist enterprises, were provoked by "Islamic provocations" such as murder of Christian pilgrims and assaults on holy places. Moreover, he argues that it is nonsense to presume that bitterness because of the Crusades has been a Muslim constant for a millennium. Instead, he concludes, the bitterness is a relatively recent phenomenon, sparked by 19th and 20th century European colonization of the Middle East. The book, as you might expect, created controversy when published in 2009. But Stark makes an extremely strong case.

Kerry Walters, Philosophy

A Higher Call: An Incredible True Story of Combat and Chivalry in the War-Torn Skies of World War II by Adam Makos and Larry Alexander

I was moved to tears by this book! A story of extraordinary courage and moral integrity, the story chronicles the WWII missions and unlikely encounter of two young second lieutenants: Charlie Brown, an American bomber pilot on his first mission, and Franz Stigler, a German Messerschmitt ace fighter pilot. Charlie's badly-damaged plane and wounded crew survive because of Franz's astonishing decision. Franz and Charlie's powerful encounter preoccupies them for the rest of their lives, but they meet again in their eighth decade to reflect on how this incident and the war changed them forever.

Jonelle Pool, Education (emerita)
How Racism Takes Place by George Lipsitz

How Racism Takes Place is a wonderful read. It’s a book that questions why race is still such a large predictor of life chances in a post-civil rights time period.

Christina Jackson, Africana Studies

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.

Amanda Davis, Athletics

I See You Made an Effort: Compliments, Indignities, and Survival Stories from the Edge of 50 by Annabelle Gurwitch

Gurwitch is an actress and comic essayist whose third book is great stuff for the beach or porch — funny essays about the trials of midlife.

Kathryn Rhett, English

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

One woman’s cells have led to countless medical advances, but those cells were taken without her knowledge, and her family was never compensated. It’s a great story that the author is obviously very invested in telling.

Andy Vogel, Athletics
**In Defense of Flogging by Peter Moskos**

Another scathing critique of our criminal justice system based on the question “given the choice between five years in prison and 20 lashes, which would you choose?” Since the answer of most is the latter, the follow up question is “why do we consider the former to be more humane?” Primarily a philosophical treatise on the nature of punishment in America, there are occasional digressions, as can be expected in such a work, but here, into the specifics of flogging, especially as practiced in Singapore, among other places, but the faint of heart can skip over these, although they are not nearly as graphic as, say, *The Dark Knight.*

**Thomas Jurney, Interdisciplinary Studies**

**Inside the Box: A Proven System of Creativity for Breakthrough Results by Drew Boyd and Jacob Goldenberg**

Tired of the clichéd "thinking outside the box?" Based on research that discovered a set of common patterns shared by many inventive solutions, the authors promote the use of Systematic Inventive Thinking (SIT) to infuse creativity into everyday problem-solving. Five templates form the basis for SIT: subtraction, division, multiplication, task unification, and attribute dependency. Start thinking inside the box and stir those creative juices.

**Bob Kallin, Development**

**Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Thinking by Daniel C. Dennett**

Not all of us have brains that work like von Neumann’s, but the gap probably shouldn’t be so wide either, as the author implies in the introduction of his most recent book which contains “a set of tools” for thinking more efficiently about complicated and somewhat controversial issues. Although Dennett himself does not like the analogy of the human brain to computers, in a talk he refers to these tools as “a set of apps” for the brain that otherwise would leave it like a useless, empty smartphone.

**Ari Farshbaf, Economics**
**An Invisible Thread: The True Story of an 11-Year-Old Panhandler, a Busy Sales Executive, and an Unlikely Meeting with Destiny** by Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski

*An Invisible Thread* is a quick read and a heart-warming true story about a young homeless boy in Manhattan who makes a wonderful connection with an ad sales rep.

...a great reminder of how one act of kindness can change a person’s life.

The best part is that story is written by Laura Schroff — the main character in the book. The book is a great reminder of how one act of kindness can change a person’s life.

Laura Runyan, Foundation, Government and Faculty Grants

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**It Happened On the Way to War: A Marine’s Path to Peace** by Rye Barcott

A college student in ROTC with a contract with the Marine Corps travels to Kenya’s largest slum and works with local leaders to found a community-based NGO that prevents violence among youth. During his deployments in Iraq, Bosnia, and east Africa, he contemplates and in some cases struggles to reconcile his dual missions as a Marine and a humanitarian.

Cathy Bain, Civil War Era Studies

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**Jesus: A Pilgrimage** by James Martin

A difficult book to fit comfortably in any single genre, Martin's *Jesus* is part memoir of his journey to the Holy Land, part biblical exegesis, and part devotional reflection. Insightful and authentic.

Kerry Walters, Philosophy
**July 1914: Countdown to War by Sean McMeekin**

I grew up in the Vietnam era and have had a layman’s interest in the Great War for almost four decades in the way the world unraveled into a war unlike anything most anyone expected, a war that irreparably altered the globe and set in motion repercussions still with us. McMeekin’s countdown through the weeks is fascinating, particularly his analysis of the primary interests and diplomatic moves of each of the critical countries. One country chooses an option, perhaps purposely misleading an ally or potential opponent. Another country struggles to decipher communiques that aren’t read until the next morning because someone is out of town or went to bed early. Technology of the time meant some communiques arrive out of sequence with unfolding events. Plans for mobilization are held hostage to traditional summer leave for troops to help with the harvest. Someone’s misplaced loyalty or ego or lack of accountability or misreading of signals triggers a step that couldn’t be reversed. The invasion of Iraq a decade ago and the recent developments in the Crimea with Russia have reminded me that the more things change, the more people are fundamentally still the same. A good read, even if you don’t like books on war or politics.

Christine Benecke, Development / Research

**Knocking on Heaven’s Door: The Path to a Better Way of Death by Katy Butler**

In this memoir, Katy Butler explores her parents' desires for "good deaths" and the forces within our medical community that stood in the way. Thoughtful and provocative, especially to those of us dealing with aging parents and their care.

Gail Jones, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

**Leonardo and the Last Supper by Ross King**

As usual with King’s books, this one is about much more than the subject title and he manages to weave Leonardo’s biography, Renaissance history, and the story of a well-known work of art into something fresh and compelling. The saga of what happens to the work after its completion is just as fascinating (it was almost bombed out of existence, but “restoration” attempts put it in almost equal danger).

Kay Etheridge, Biology
**Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team 10** by Marcus Luttrell with Patrick Robinson

Before you have a worldview that involves rules of engagement, Navy SEALS, Al-Jazeera, Afghanistan, books written with ghostwriters, and, particularly, the abstractions *valor, honor, and friendship*, read *Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team 10* by Marcus Luttrell with Patrick Robinson. Yes, at one point he refers to a female warrior as a *girl*, and the book is littered unnecessarily with the abbreviation *'em* for *them* — such John Wayne moments are insignificant in the brilliant moral light of this extraordinary book.

*Sheila Mulligan, English*

**Love and Math: The Heart of Hidden Reality** by Edward Frenkel

Frenkel has written a wonderful description of growing up Jewish in Russia at a time when this was not an easy thing to do, intermingled with a wonderful description of some deep mathematics that will be accessible to just about anyone who wants to give it a go. Frenkel does a great job of describing what mathematics is all about (and what it isn't all about) while also describing some actual mathematics. All while telling a very personal story that is compelling reading.

*Darren Glass, Mathematics*

**The Man Who Broke Into Auschwitz: A True Story of World War II** by Denis Avey

Not your usual summer read, but a great one: In 1944, Avey, a British POW pretending to be a Jew, smuggled himself into the infamous slave labor/death camp. He

> His account is no cozy summer pleasure, but for those seeking greater understanding of human courage in the face of unspeakable horror, it is an eye-opener.

heroically chose to be a witness to the brutality meted out to Jews in that “hell on earth.” His account is no cozy summer pleasure, but for those seeking greater understanding of human courage in the face of unspeakable horror, it is an eye-opener.

*Donald Tannenbaum, Political Science*
Men We Reaped: A Memoir by Jesmyn Ward

A memoir few of us can fully relate to that gives worth to the lives of black men and women in Mississippi whose lives have been counted as worthless.

Scott Hancock, History / Africana Studies

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Mind Gym: An Athlete’s Guide to Inner Excellence by Gary Mack with David Casstevens

This book is a quick read that gives great insight into how great athletes became successful. However, a lot of the lessons can also be applied to the life of a non-athlete, such as visualizing what you DO want as opposed to what you don’t. I hope that you enjoy it as much as I did!

Leah Bernier, Athletics

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Mo’ Meta Blues: The World According to Questlove by Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson and Ben Greenman

This fantastically fun memoir of Questlove, drummer for The Roots and bandleader for The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, is a great trip down memory lane growing up in 1970s West Philadelphia. Displaying his huge range of musical tastes, Questlove shares what albums and artists made impacts on him growing up (Prince is a big one). His stories of his early life traveling with his father who was also in the entertainment industry, forming The Roots, and his take on how hip-hop has changed over the years is funny, thoughtful, and tender.

Kate Martin, Musselman Library
A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present by Andrew Gordon

In addition to looking at old photos, maps, recalling family stories, and reading murder mysteries, I did read this well-written history of Japan in preparation for my trip to that country. It made sense to me and was quite readable, but I have no idea about its accuracy. (I also pulled out an old Japanese language text, but never got around to studying it.)

Ann Harper Fender, Economics (emerita)

The Necklace: Thirteen Women and the Experiment That Transformed Their Lives by Cheryl Jarvis

This true story explores the lives of 13 California women whose main connection to one another is a diamond necklace that they purchased as a group to share, much like a car-sharing program. They are from very different backgrounds and have varying motivations for wanting to be part-owners of a $30,000 necklace, and the book weaves together their stories in a touching way. What initially seems like a somewhat hedonistic purchase actually seems to bring out a sense of camaraderie and benevolence among the women, which transforms not only their lives, but also their community.

Betsy Duncan Diehl, Development

A Nervous Splendor: Vienna 1888-1889 by Frederic Morton

A Nervous Splendor is an old book by a popular historian, Frederic Morton, but it is simply a good read. It is also a fascinating snapshot of an urban setting, namely Vienna in the 1880s, that was going through dramatic cultural experimentation. Morton's work leads one into the world that helped produce figures as dynamic and diverse as Gustav Mahler, Sigmund Freud, Theodor Herzl, and Arthur Schnitzler.

Bill Bowman, History
The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness
by Michelle Alexander

An excellent and shocking indictment of our criminal justice system and the ends to which it appears to be working — perpetuating an underclass of mostly black males. For anyone who has had trouble discussing race in the Obama era with a student, who wants to understand the fallacy of colorblindness and claims of a post-racial society, this is essential reading. And if you are tired of book-length arguments that have to stretch facts to fit a drawn-out hypothesis, have no fear — Michelle Alexander does not have to twist facts to make her case.

Thomas Jurney, Interdisciplinary Studies

The Piano Shop on the Left Bank: Discovering a Forgotten Passion in a Paris Atelier
by Thad Carhart

Welcome to the quiet perfection of a Paris where pianos are not just sold, but matched to the families worthy of their care. This is the true story of Thad Carhart's growing friendship with Luc, a craftsman who refurbishes pianos and elevates the quality of music in Paris one keyboard at a time. This is a story that speaks to the musical soul in each of us.

Carolyn Sautter, Musselman Library

The Presidents Club: Inside the World's Most Exclusive Fraternity by Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy

An excellent book that delves into the complicated relationships between the members of the world's most exclusive club. A great read for American history enthusiasts from the mid-20th century to the present with special emphasis on presidential history and politics.

John Campo, Athletics
Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking by Susan Cain

Quiet is a truly remarkable book that provides needed insight on the sheer beauty of solitude. Cain has filled the pages with stories of people whose public personae may be anything but introverted yet need significant amounts of quiet time to reflect and be creative. Reading this fascinating text has made me reevaluate how I view students in my classroom. In a phrase...be more respectful of the quiet ones who listen intently.

Buzz Jones, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-year-old Boy with Autism by Naoki Higashida

Everyone should read this book. It is a simple but poignant insight into the mind of a person with autism.

Heidi Frye, Admissions

The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks by Jeanne Theoharis

This book is a great example of what biography, at its best, can do. Even within the enormous constraints imposed upon anyone attempting to write a biography of Rosa Parks (a legal dispute over her estate has made the bulk of her papers inaccessible to scholars for decades), Theoharis has managed to produce a book that not only provides a thorough account of the life of one very important person, but also uses its subject as prism through which to explore meaningful interpretive questions. The book tackles some of the most important debates in civil rights history, i.e., the role of geography in shaping civil rights activism, the relationship between nonviolence and black power, and the complexities and contexts of political organizing. Theoharis also explores the impact of gender and gendered assumptions on shaping both contemporary and modern understandings of the black freedom struggle, and the process through which political acts become mythologized and neutralized. By challenging traditional interpretations of Parks, the book challenges the textbook narrative of the movement itself. And finally, the book honors a woman who deserves to be understood as more than a figurehead, but rather as a political activist in her own right. The real story of her life is far more interesting than the “tired seamstress” myth.

Jill Ogline Titus, Civil War Institute
Red Brick, Black Mountain, White Clay: Reflections on Art, Family, and Survival
by Christopher Benfey

Affirming that geology shapes lives, Benfey's family memoir bumps up against science, history, the American crafts movement, higher education, and contemporary art in a way that would have made Jung proud.

Sue Baldwin-Way, Communications and Marketing

Regenesis: How Synthetic Biology Will Reinvent Nature and Ourselves
by George Church and Ed Regis

This is an excellent treatment of an emergent field that takes an engineering approach to modern life sciences. The lead author, George Church, is a pioneer in DNA sequencing technologies, biofuels, DNA editing, de-extinction, and synthetic life. Readers will gain an appreciation for the amazing goals and creative approaches taken in modern "synthetic biology."

Ryan Kerney, Biology

Reign of Error: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and the Danger to America's Public Schools by Diane Ravitch

Ravitch, an education historian and former Assistant Secretary of Education, initially supported the educational reforms embodied in “No Child Left Behind” and “Race to the Top,” but after examining the evidence, she changed her mind. This book explains why and identifies measures that have proven more effective.

Kerr Thompson, Spanish
Relish: My Life in the Kitchen by Lucy Knisley

Even if you're not drawn to graphic narratives, I highly recommend giving this a try. It's a perfect summer read. The story is delightful and upbeat, telling the young main character’s autobiography through her and her family's experiences with food. From New York City to the Hudson River Valley to Chicago (with Mexico and a few other places thrown in for good measure), readers get taken on a fun coming-of-age gastronomic journey. The illustrations are fantastic. This is one my favorite recent reads. If you like this, I also recommend American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang, Embroideries by Marjane Satrapi, and Anya's Ghost by Vera Brosgol.

Allison Singley, Parent Relations

Resilience: Why Things Bounce Back by Andrew Zolli and Ann Marie Healy

This fascinating read explores the questions of how and why certain people and places in our world “bounce back” or “break down” when faced with challenging situations. For me, the summer is a great opportunity to renew my sense of spirit and determination after a busy academic term. Hopefully, this book can help us all find ways to prepare for inevitable challenges that will require our resilience.

Andy Hughes, Garthwait Leadership Center

The Right Path: From Ike to Reagan, How Republicans Once Mastered Politics — and Can Again by Joe Scarborough

This book provides an insightful, well-written, and much-needed “road map” for the GOP. A great read for anyone who loves politics and history.

Kathy Iannello, Political Science
**The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion** by Jonathan Haidt

This book summarizes research that Haidt — for 14 years a member of University of Virginia’s psychology department — and others have conducted on how people make ethical and political choices. It argues that, for the most part, political convictions are based on gut feelings and that reasoning comes into play only as a means of justifying what we already believe.

Kerr Thompson, Spanish

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**Rin Tin Tin: The Life and the Legend** by Susan Orlean

I heard an interview with the author on NPR and fondly remembered my childhood days of watching Rin Tin Tin on the small screen. While the author does a great job chronicling all of these German Shepherds that became Rin Tin Tin in the movies and television, it begins during WWII and is much more about the times and the people. A great read.

Patti Lawson, Government and Community Relations

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**Salt, Sugar, Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us** by Michael Moss

Moss exposes the insidiously genius nature of the food industry and makes Big Tobacco look like Mother Teresa. If you’ve ever wondered about the crave-worthy “mouthfeel” of Oreos, Doritos and other perfectly-engineered snack foods, don’t read this book. But, if you want an empowering wake up call, you will never walk down the aisles of Giant the same way.

Leslie Strongwater, Theatre Arts
The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914 by Christopher Clark

On the centennial of Europe's plunge into the Great War, one can retrace the steps and missteps that led Europe into war in 1914. This is not a "war book" so much as an analysis of “great power” politics in the lead up to war. Clark does an admirable job of giving a balanced view of perspectives and relates events to issues that are relevant today.

Rob Bohrer, Provost's Office

The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way by Amanda Ripley

This book uses the experiences of three U.S. high school students in Finland, Poland, and South Korea as a context for exploring these countries' achievements on the PISA (Program of International Student Assessment) and comparing them with the U.S. Although not a systematic study, it is a worthwhile and eye-opening read. Interestingly, the student who spent a year in Poland is from Gettysburg.

Kerr Thompson, Spanish

In this nonfiction book, Amanda Ripley describes the journey of three American high school students who spent a year studying in South Korea, Finland, and Poland. These countries rank high in the international student assessment survey (PISA) and Ripley uses these examples to give insights on what we could do differently/better here in the U.S. One of the three students featured in the book is from Gettysburg, and parents with children in the Gettysburg school system will eagerly read the section on Gettysburg High School. A great book which gives hope that our educational system could change for the better if we learn from other countries' experiences.

Nathalie Goubet, Psychology
Soldier From the War Returning: The Greatest Generation’s Troubled Homecoming from World War II by Thomas Childers

I have listened to two courses that Professor Childers has produced with the Great Courses Company, and I think highly of him as a historian. This study also interests me for personal reasons since my two grandfathers who fought in and survived World War II returned as part of the “greatest generation.” Both of them, along with a great uncle who was imprisoned in Germany for two years, came home and helped build the modern American, post-war economy. But, they were all wounded in their own way, and I am certain that the horrors of the war affected them deeply. I’m hoping that Childers’ study helps me to better understand their trauma and the challenges they experienced in coming home.

Alan Perry, Italian

The Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance by David Epstein

I picked up Epstein’s nonfiction book based on a number of reviews and read it during the Winter Olympics. It will be just as interesting when read on a beach or in a hammock or, best yet, after a sweaty workout.

It will be just as interesting when read on a beach or in a hammock or, best yet, after a sweaty workout. David Epstein’s superb explanations of how genetics does and does not influence ability are told through the stories of elite athletes, making the book hard to put down.

Sharon Stephenson, Physics

The Swerve: How the World Became Modern by Stephen Greenblatt

Contrary to what the title suggests, this book excels at bringing to life the Renaissance revival of ancient texts, taking you through guarded monasteries and even fragmented remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum. For those interested in science and philosophy, this story sheds light on the writings of Lucretius, whose secular beliefs on mortality, embracing the pleasures of life and on the composition of the world as atoms are fascinating and thought provoking.

Felicia Else, Art and Art History

(continued)
The basic “adventure” of the book is the discovery of the only surviving copy of Lucretius’s *De Rerum Natura*. We also see the vitality of European culture heading into the Renaissance. The “swerve” refers to the random action of Democritus’ atoms that sets in motion the creation/emergence of the universe in all of its variety.

*Testament of Youth: An Autobiographical Study of the Years 1900-1925*

*by Vera Brittain*

First published in 1933, Brittain’s memoir relates the story of a generation scarred by WWI. As a university student at Oxford who volunteered as a nurse, she wanted to endure what her brother and fiancé were experiencing in the trenches. By Armistice Day, her fiancé, a brother, and several close friends had been killed in battle. Brittain is a shrewd and intelligent observer of all aspects of the war and liberally includes passages from letters, diaries, and the poetry of her wartime contemporaries. The BBC produced it as a very fine series in 1979 and began shooting a film version in March 2014.

*Kay Hoke, Sunderman Conservatory of Music*

*Toughness: Developing True Strength On and Off the Court* by Jay Bilas

Jay Bilas does a masterful job of calling upon his life experiences and encounters with others to define toughness. Toughness, as Bilas defines it, is made up of skills that are learned. Even the non-sports fan will appreciate the stories, interviews, and life experiences Bilas details in this engaging read.

*Jim Duffy, College Life*
**The Ultimate Hiker’s Gear Guide: Tools & Techniques to Hit the Trail**
*by Andrew Skurka*

Andrew Skurka is known for pioneering several long-distance hiking routes, including the 6,875-mile Great Western Loop which stitches together the Continental Divide Trail and Pacific Crest Trail. Use this little book to help plan your own epic backpacking adventure (without blowing a fortune on useless junk at REI).

*Rud Platt, Environmental Studies*

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**Unbowed: A Memoir**
*by Wangari Muta Maathai*

I assigned this memoir by 2004 Nobel Peace Prize-winner Wangari Maathai (awarded for work on linking environmental issues with human rights) to my seminar course after reflecting privately on the meaning of this amazing woman’s life work and realizing that this is a memoir that everyone should read! Beautifully written, earnest, and full of insights and questions to stir your soul. My students seemed to love it as well, describing the work as eye-opening, transformational, powerful, and deeply meaningful. For those who don’t have a strong regional background in Kenyan politics, this also offers a primer on the country’s colonial/post-colonial experience.

*Monica Ogra, Environmental Studies*

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**Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption**
*by Laura Hillenbrand*

This is an incredibly moving story of survival both in the sea and in a prison camp in World War II. It was impossible to avoid getting emotionally invested in Louie Zamperini’s incredible journey from the Olympics, to the ocean, to a Japanese prison camp. I recommend this book to anyone I can.

*Andy Vogel, Athletics*

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I enjoyed reading this book because, like the main character, my father was a bombardier in WWII. This book touches all of your emotions. I can’t wait to see the movie which is coming out later this year.

*Jane North, President’s Office*
Waiting for Snow in Havana: Confessions of a Cuban Boy by Carlos Eire

Carlos Eire paints a beautiful picture of boyhood in Cuba around the time of the fall of Batista.

Rick Rosenberg, Foundation, Government and Faculty Grants

What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets by Michael J. Sandel

Sandel argues that not just our economy, but our entire society, is now based on market values, crowding out moral or other nonmarket values. His real examples are eye-opening and his argument that it has happened without us fully realizing it is both nuanced and thorough. A stimulating, crisp read from a public intellectual.

Gary Ciocco, Political Science

When Broken Glass Floats: Growing Up Under the Khmer Rouge, a Memoir by Chanrithy Him

An incredible first-person account of a young girl's survival under the Khmer Rouge who moved city dwellers to the countryside to work as laborers with little or no food. This mesmerizing story was suggested reading for my NGO-sponsored trip to Cambodia. I took it with me, intending to give it away, but found it so compelling that I brought it back home with me to share with family and friends.

Janet M. Powers, Interdisciplinary Studies / Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (emerita)

Where Nobody Knows Your Name: Life in the Minor Leagues of Baseball by John Feinstein

John Feinstein takes the reader on a journey through the world of Minor League Baseball. Where Nobody Knows Your Name traces life in the minor leagues where many of these players’ human stories are rarely seen by the masses. From Akron to Williamsport, follow the want-to-bes, soon-to-bes and never-will-bes on their baseball journey.

Michael Kotlinski, College Bookstore
Who Stole the American Dream? by Hedrick Smith

Many of us were privileged to hear Hendrick Smith's talk, based on his bestseller book, at the College this past winter. A long-term writer for *The New York Times*, Smith shepherds us through recent political history, highlighting both the actors and legislation responsible for changing our national ethos from one of ebullient optimism in the 1960s to our recent and current malaise, principally in the economic sphere. He nicely articulates what so many of us sense. A good read.

Ken Mott, Political Science

The Whole Beast: Nose to Tail Eating by Fergus Henderson

Once upon a time, I was a vegetarian...and now I'm not. During the transition, I decided that a meat eater's responsibility was to the entire animal and used recipes from *The Whole Beast* to accomplish that goal. If you're planning on doing a bit of summer barbecuing, I recommend the versatility of organ meats.

Jennifer Bloomquist, Africana Studies

Whole Earth Discipline: Why Dense Cities, Nuclear Power, Transgenic Crops, Restored Wildlands, and Geoengineering Are Necessary by Stewart Brand

A breath of fresh air, Brand uses data and logic to see a way clear to our grandchildren's future. This book can cure you of mindless ideology, left and right.

Ralph Sorensen, Biology
**Why I Read: The Serious Pleasure of Books by Wendy Lesser**

Books written about books can be incestuous and precious. But this one is a joy. Ranging from sci-fi to detective stories to classics to poetry, Lesser makes you want to read books you haven't and nudges you to better appreciate those you have. And she does so in beautiful prose.

**Kerry Walters, Philosophy**

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**The World is Moving Around Me: A Memoir of the Haiti Earthquake by Dany Laferrière**

When he found himself in the middle of the earthquake in Haiti, author Dany Laferrière started writing in his little notebook. This book is the result of his thoughts taken as the earth was moving around him. Poignant, vivid, well written, it needs to be discovered. Laferrière is to be read also for his wonderful book *The Enigma of the Return* which narrates Dany's return to Haiti after his father's death, a man exiled during the Duvalier dictatorship and who never saw Haiti again before he died.

**Florence Ramond Jurney, French**

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**The World of Yesterday: An Autobiography by Stefan Zweig**

Zweig is one of the most important Austrian writers, and our library has about 37 of his novels in English. In this memoir, Zweig reconstructs the Austria of the early 20th century as a witness of the extraordinary changes that took place in that country.

**Emelio Betances, Sociology / Latin American Studies**
The World’s Strongest Librarian: A Memoir of Tourette’s, Faith, Strength, and the Power of Family by Josh Hanagarne

I learned more about Mormonism, kettlebells, working in a library, and living with Tourettes Syndrome in these 291 pages much more quickly and enjoyably than reading four different books on those subjects. I laughed and cried my way through this book, always on the edge of my seat wondering, "What is going to happen next?" And I can’t help but think that if everyone grew up with the sort of loving, supportive family that Mr. Hanagarne was blessed with — we would all be so much better off.

Wendee Dunlap, Annual Giving / Alumni Relations

Writing the Gettysburg Address by Martin P. Johnson

We had two Lincoln Prize winners in 2014, one of whom was our own Allen Guelzo, for his highly-acclaimed book, Gettysburg: The Last Invasion. The other winner was Martin Johnson who won the Prize for this book, which is based on an amazing piece of detective work. Johnson traces Lincoln’s journey to Gettysburg and reveals the process by which Lincoln wrote and revised his remarks to be given at the cemetery’s dedication, right up until their delivery. As a Gettysburg resident, I found the description of Lincoln’s experience here in town the night before he gave his Address to be particularly fascinating; and I found the portrayal of Lincoln to be both insightful and moving.

Janet Morgan Riggs, President

Your Fatwa Does Not Apply Here: Untold Stories From the Fight Against Muslim Fundamentalism by Karima Bennoune

Written by a human rights activist, this compilation of accounts of Muslims worldwide fighting extremism in their communities provides an alternate perspective of the advocates of peace in Islam.

Cathy Bain, Civil War Era Studies
A great deal of the reading I did over the past year was concentrated on the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and as you might expect, quite a story it makes. Constitution-making demanded the Founders dedicate an entire summer (and more) to the task, but you can read about it with substantially less trouble this summer if you'll turn your attention to Richard Beeman’s *Plain Honest Men: The Making of the American Constitution* (2009) — by far the most literate and yet thoroughly well-informed account of the Convention on offer.

To understand the thinking (and reading) that produced the Constitution, go to Forrest McDonald's *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution* (a Pulitzer Prize finalist from 1987) which introduces you to a galaxy of well-known and little-known thinkers in the 18th century who made the minds that made the Constitution. For an article-by-article tutorial on the Constitution, Garrett Epps’s *American Epic: Reading the U.S. Constitution* (2013) makes the procedural dross of the Constitution read like gold.

Of course, writing the Constitution was hard enough: getting it ratified by the states was a task that looked like it would be better suited to Sisyphus. But ratification happened, and the story is told broadly and well in the recently-lamented Pauline Maier’s *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788* (2011) and Richard Labunski’s *James Madison and the Struggle for the Bill of Rights* (2008).
As we know in Gettysburg, historical anniversaries fuel enthusiasm for subjects otherwise neglected. Here’s what I recommend reading on the Great War.

For general histories/military histories, I suggest Hew Strachan’s *The First World War* and Michael Neiberg’s *Fighting the Great War*. For military histories of specific battles, William Philpott’s book on the Somme *Bloody Victory* [published in U.S. as *Three Armies at the Somme*] and David Stevenson’s *With Our Backs to the Wall: Victory and Defeat in 1918*, are both masterful accounts. Gary Sheffield’s *Forgotten Victory* is a combative reminder that one side actually won the war.

There is no shortage of great memoirs/novels written by members of the war generation reprinted in the present age. Robert Graves’ *Goodbye to All That* is a classic “war book” for a reason; just don’t take him too seriously. Less well known is Frederic Manning, whose grimy and alcoholic *Her Private’s We* is without parallel for both its brevity and its ability to make you feel the trenches. You can smell the cordite in his novel. Edmund Blunden’s *Undertones of War* is written so beautifully that it makes Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms* read like a high school creative writing capstone (a good one, it should be conceded). Cecil Lewis’ *Sagittarius Rising* and T.E. Lawrence’s *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* are reminders that not everyone emerged from the war with mud-stained tunics. If you want a deeply depressing read this summer, then Vera Brittain’s *Testament of Youth* takes the cake.

If interested in historical fiction, there are few finer works in that genre than Sebastian Barry’s *A Long Long Way*. For films, well, the less said about WWI movies the better.

After reading *all* of these, if you are deeply disillusioned and anguished and questioning what it all means, then read David Reynolds’ *The Long Shadow*. He will make sense of the senseless; his book a reminder that our conception of the war is very different than the perceptions of people who lived through it.
Join us for book discussions, film screenings, and lectures designed to help us move past today’s headlines and explore the art, culture, and everyday life of Syrians and Iranians. Series events are scheduled September 2014 – April 2015.

All events are free and open to the public.

To learn more and to receive program updates, contact Janelle Wertzberger (jwertzbe@gettysburg.edu) or Kerri Odess-Harnish (kodessha@gettysburg.edu).

Sponsored by the Middle East & Islamic Studies program and Musselman Library with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
**Boy directed by Taika Waititi (2010)**

Made by Maori filmmaker Taiki Waititi, *Boy* is a wonderful coming-of-age story of a boy who dreams of Michael Jackson, and his dad, Alamein. Alamein (played by Waititi) is a deadbeat who has deserted his family but returns home to find some stolen treasure. With a keen yet low-key humor conveyed through the boy narrator, *Boy* provides gentle insight into personal relationships and colonial legacies.

*Salma Monani, Environmental Studies*

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**Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony directed by Laurent Malaquais (2012)**

I initially put on this film expecting it to be a farce. However, it was really well done, and it challenged my assumptions in that special way that the best books and films do. I walked away with great respect for Bronies and wishing that the world had more of them.

*Jennifer Cole, Academic Advising*

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**Exit Through the Gift Shop directed by Banksy (2010)**

The story of how an eccentric French shopkeeper and amateur filmmaker named Thierry Guetta attempted to locate the famous graffiti artist Banksy, only to have the artist turn the camera back on its owner. This documentary is a funny and thought-provoking exploration of the nature of graffiti and its place in the art world.

*Isabel Valiela, Spanish / Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies*
Frances Ha directed by Noah Baumbach (2012)
I'm a sucker for Greta Gerwig, Lena Dunham, and Mark Duplass. They give me hope. Without them, I might spiral into an abyss of despair about the young East Coast hipsters out to save themselves if not the world. OK, maybe even the world. It's so easy to mock them! But in films like this one, the slacker irony falls away, and I see the beauty and resolve of my own daughters and my most earnest, cherished students.

John Commoto, Environmental Studies

Go for Sisters directed by John Sayles (2013)
You can't see a John Sayles film these days unless you wait for the DVD distribution. Go for Sisters is a rare African American female buddy film — that is a film that only Sayles would dare to make. Sayles’ three protagonists, two women and a disgraced Los Angeles policeman, are complex and compelling. Like all Sayles films, Go for Sisters contains a sociopolitical subtext. As usual, Sayles elicits strong performances from all of his actors.

Jack Ryan, Provost’s Office

Harold and Maude directed by Hal Ashby (1971)
This was definitely my coming-of-age movie; and as I have seen it dozens of times, it is hard for me to imagine that younger generations may not know it. Harold, a totally odd duck teenager preoccupied with death, encounters Maude, an older widow who embraces life. Their unconventional relationship is quirky and wonderful, and with the whole thing set to Cat Stevens’ music, it has always spoken to me. I wanted to be Maude (Ruth Gordon), and I still do.

Sunni DeNicola, Musselman Library

Jesus Christ Superstar directed by Norman Jewison (1973)
In this 1973 musical, I especially enjoy the movie setting and the fact that no computers generated any of the scenes.

Rod Tosten, Information Technology
**The Lady in Number 6: Music Saved My Life directed by Malcolm Clarke (2013)**

This documentary is about the life of Alice Herz-Sommer, a 109-year-old classical pianist and the world’s oldest Holocaust survivor. Music was her life and saved her life especially during the time she was imprisoned at Theresienstadt concentration camp. Alice continued to practice the piano three hours a day until her death on February 23, 2014 at age 110. Her optimism and laughter cannot help but inspire you and make you smile. The film won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short this year — one week after her death. Enjoy!

Nancy Bernardi, Musselman Library

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**Lee Daniels’ The Butler directed by Lee Daniels (2013)**

*Lee Daniels’ The Butler* is inspired by a true story. Academy Award-winner Forest Whitaker stars as Cecil Gaines, the devoted husband and White House butler who served eight American presidents over three decades. This film sheds light on his story, his family issues and his involvement in the Civil Rights Act. Oprah Winfrey gives a stellar performance as Gloria, the Butler’s wife, a lazy alcoholic who turned her life around as she grew older. This star-packed drama uses a true story to trace the Civil Rights struggle from the 1950s to the present day.

Gale Baker, Musselman Library

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**My House in Umbria directed by Richard Loncraine (2003)**

This is a lesser-known gem starring the extraordinary Maggie Smith. Based on the William Trevor novel, it explores the friendships that develop among an eclectic group of strangers, thrown together after a terrorist attack at the start of the film. Most of the movie, however, is very gentle and set in the lovely Italian countryside. It is filled with both humor and profound emotion.

Sunni DeNicola, Musselman Library
Rhymes for Young Ghouls directed by Jeff Barnaby (2013)

I had a chance to watch a number of great films at ImagineNATIVE, an Indigenous Arts and Media Festival held in Toronto, Canada. Many young up-and-coming Indigenous artists showcased their work. Here's one gem: *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* by Jeff Barnaby. Quirky, part horror, part historical fiction about the "residential school" experience in Canada, Rhymes presents a compelling and gutsy first-time protagonist (Kawennahere Devery Jacobs), a great supporting cast, and a plot of twists and turns. No spoiler alerts but the film does include some disturbing scenes that, as fellow filmmaker Ariel Smith explains, re-presents horror as the "monstrosity of colonialism." Barnaby might be to Indigenous film what Sherman Alexie is to Indigenous literature.

Salma Monani, Environmental Studies

Shakespeare Behind Bars directed by Hank Rogerson (2005)

A group of male inmates in a Kentucky prison are cast in a production of *The Tempest* and during their yearlong rehearsal, you watch them learn and grow in their acting skills and in their understanding of themselves. Think we should just lock criminals up and forget about them? This movie will likely change your mind about that. You certainly don’t need to be a connoisseur of Shakespeare to enjoy this movie; it’s not about the Shakespeare.

Wendee Dunlap, Annual Giving / Alumni Relations

The Silent Holy Stones directed by Pema Tseden (2005)

Pema Tseden (*The Search, Old Dog*) is the first Tibetan graduate of the Beijing Film Academy, and this is his dramatic feature debut. Made on location in a village in the Amdo region, Qinghai province, Northwestern China, the film follows a young lama assigned for Tibetan New Year to attend to the seven-year-old Living Buddha (tulku) of a mountain monastery. The young lamas try to balance their strict training with explorations of the outside world through the novelty of television, and make some surprising choices. *The Silent Holy Stones* has the immediacy of a documentary, and Tseden delivers an intimate insider’s view of everyday life in his home town.

Jing Li, Asian Studies
Twenty Feet from Stardom directed by Morgan Neville (2013)

This Oscar-winning documentary will open your eyes to some of the most infamous backup singers in recent musical history. It’s hard to imagine the Rolling Stones’ “Gimme Shelter,” without the vocal accompaniment of Merry Clayton, but until

It’s a great watch and will definitely impact the way you listen to music going forward.

Twenty Feet from Stardom most people have never heard her name. The documentary also addresses the struggle of being so close to fame, but so far away. It’s a great watch and will definitely impact the way you listen to music going forward.

Mallory Jallas, Musselman Library
This year was an off year for me personally, at least film viewing-wise. Unlike previous years, I was not able to attend any international film festivals, and thus have few gems to report from the global film scene. Then again, in the past I have made suggestions knowing full well that it was a crap shoot: more than likely a film I have seen at a festival will not receive any DVD distribution, the sad fate of an estimated 80% of the films that appear at film festivals in any year. Last year, for example, I reported on films I saw at the Festival des 3 Continents in Nantes, France. Yet none of the recommendations I made were made available on either DVD or Netflix as far as I know. (Two other films I did see at that same festival — but which I did not recommend — suddenly showed up among the suggestions in my Netflix account. I quickly clicked on “Not Interested.” …Sigh…)

Still, there are a couple of recommendations I can make of films that I know are available on DVD. As most of you know, this was a banner year for the Oscars, and the majority of films nominated were, in fact, good films. (Twelve Years a Slave, American Hustle, Inside Llewyn Davis and Nebraska were directorial masterpieces by the way — Gravity was a mere technical marvel… but who listens to me? Viagra-added members of the Academy of Motion Picture Sciences? My students? Ha!) Yet this was no less true of the Academy’s nominees for Best Foreign Language Picture. One is a harrowing Danish film called The Hunt. This is about how a man’s life is turned upside down when a young girl falsely accuses him of sexual molestation. This is directed by Thomas Vinterberg, famed director of The Celebration (1998), a film I have used in my course on comparative national cinemas; a film that astonishes my students. (Okay, I recommend that as well.) The other is the recent film by the Iranian director, Asghar Farhadi, whose previous work was the unforgettable A Separation, which won both the Golden Globe and the Oscars for Best Foreign Language picture in 2012. The Past (Le Passé) is very similar, only now the focus is on a web of relations between Iranian
expats living in Paris, and an Iranian who returns to finalize a divorce. These are both heavy, sad films. My recommendation is to watch these on June 21, or whichever date is actually the longest day of the year. You’re gonna need the additional sunshine.

A couple of courses I am currently teaching bring to mind that older films offer endless treasures. In my film history class, for example, some of my students are comparing a 1930s Italian film with another that was completed in 1942, The Children Are Watching Us. The latter is the long-forgotten early work by Vittorio De Sica, who later would make famed Italian neorealist masterpieces such as The Bicycle Thieves (1948) and Umberto D (1952). However, The Children Are Watching Us was made at the end of the Fascist era, and was literally lost for a long time since it never got released. Yet it shows how open the film culture in Italy was compared to Nazi Germany. (After seeing a film made under Mussolini’s rule, Goebbels apparently told Mussolini’s son that had that same film been made in Germany, the director would have been shot!) In any case, this is another De Sica film with an ending you will never forget.

Much more cheerful — in fact just utterly delightful — is a film from 1932 that was part of a 300-level seminar on genres. (It is possible that in years past I already recommended this film, but no matter — this is worth recommending twice anyhow.) Trouble in Paradise is considered one of the last, yet best, of a trend that began in the 1920s known as the “sophisticated comedy.” Directed by the true master of this genre, and of comedy in general, Ernst Lubitsch, this film is so suave, subtle, witty in its dialogue that one student actually said to me “How can a film from 1932 be that good?”

With television — well, I probably watch too much television. Then again, there is now so much good television, and I am studying media nowadays, so I’m covered. Did we watch all of House of Cards within two weekends? Of course we did. Did I give it five stars on my Netflix rating system? Yes. But why tell you something you all already know about? I equally recommend Netflix’s Orange is the New Black, for those of you who have not yet seen it, and that would be good summer viewing. Still, if there is one show from American TV that I rate at the top along with, say, The Americans or Breaking Bad, it is a show nearly everyone missed: Enlightened. This played for only two seasons on HBO, but the format, the premise, and the acting made this an absolute gem about the travails of an idealistic woman who gains enlightenment, only to return home and find herself on the very bottom of a rather nefarious corporate hierarchy. Kudos to Laura Dern! No matter what she does from here on out, this will be a piece she can be proud of to her dying day.

But there is so much great TV made outside of the United States these days. Of course, Scandinavian crime shows are all the rage in Europe, and there seem to be really poor American remakes of these, such as The Killing, which thankfully did not get renewed by AMC. But will the Americans do something quite like The Fall or Top of the Lake, or in the same way? And as for the latter, is Elizabeth Moss literally good in anything she does, not just as Peggy on Mad Men?
Yet there is one trend where I think the Americans are now being outdone, a subgenre the Americans essentially invented: the zombie film/show. The fact is, I judge horror differently than many. I could not care for the gore in the least. The best horror is profoundly philosophical, dealing with some fundamental issues of what it means to be human, facing head on questions many prefer to not face, which is why this has often been a “disreputable” genre throughout history. The second half of the current season of The Walking Dead has somewhat redeemed the show in my view.

Getting the group out of the prison and splitting them up, and getting rid of a cardboard bad guy, namely the Governor, has allowed the show to rediscover its characters somewhat. (Sorry if you disagree, but I am being paid for my opinions here … wait a minute. I’m NOT BEING PAID FOR THIS!) Still, I suspect the writers of this show have noticed much more thoughtful takes on this sub-genre elsewhere. The BBC show, In the Flesh, presents a zombie apocalypse that does not take down civilization, but where instead they find a partial cure for zombies that allows them to regain their personhood and lose their flesh-eating proclivities. But therein lies the rub: how do you reintegrate them into society? See the fascinating way this show deals with that scenario.

Nevertheless, even this show pales in comparison to a French program called The Returned, my number one pick of the year, film or TV. As suggested by a friend and colleague in the French department, the French are so ingrained into cinema that they have been behind the curve with the recent trend of ground-breaking television. No more. In eight unforgettable episodes, this was one of the creepiest, most haunting, most thought provoking, most beautifully shot and best acted shows I have ever seen. In a beautiful alpine setting, certain dead people return home not realizing they are dead, some for over three decades. They also do not know why they have returned. All they know they are hungry — all the time. Only they have no interest in human flesh — just croissants and somewhat undercooked animals. They also do not know if they are ultimately good or bad. The townspeople are not certain either. Every episode ended in a way that my better half and I would just look at each other, mouths open, otherwise silent. Only in the end when a horde of the dead returns, do we realize what the dead are truly capable of. Even then, one wonders whose fault this all is, the living or the dead? Rarely have I read so much about a show in advance online, and yet none of that spoiled the effect of the actual show. I am still haunted by the last two scenes.

By the way, ABC clearly stole this premise for their new show, Resurrection. It’s AWFUL! See the French original.

Happy summer viewing.
WEDNESDAY NIGHT
Movie Memories

June 4, 2014
The Majestic (2001)

June 11, 2014
Meet Me in St. Louis (1944)

June 18, 2014
The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1939)

June 25, 2014
Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)

July 2, 2014
The General (1927)

July 9, 2014
Oliver! (1968)

July 16, 2014
Wuthering Heights (1939)

July 23, 2014
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon (1949)

July 30, 2014
Auntie Mame (1958)

August 6, 2014
Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)

August 13, 2014 Double Feature
Laurel & Hardy in The Music Box (1932)
W.C. Fields in It’s a Gift (1934)

August 20, 2014
The Third Man (1949)

August 27, 2014
The Producers (1967)

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