



Summer 2015

You've Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at Musselman Library (2015)

Musselman Library
Gettysburg College

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You've Gotta Read This: Summer Reading at Musselman Library (2015)

Abstract

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

With the 2015 collection, we again bring together recommendations from across the Gettysburg College campus—the books, movies, TV shows, graphic novels and even podcasts that have meant something special to us over the past year. Ninety faculty, administrators and staff offer up a list of 175 recommendations that includes spy novels and military histories, young-adult comedies and adult romances, murder mysteries and historical epics. Happy reading!

Keywords

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

Disciplines

English Language and Literature | Library and Information Science


You've Gotta **READ** This!



Summer Reading @ Musselman Library 2015



Cover photo taken at Ormond Beach, FL.
Courtesy of Sunni DeNicola



Dear Reader,

Summer is a time for opening windows long shut. An open book does for our inside what an open window does for our outside – exposes it to light, air, and atmosphere. It refreshes mind and body with warmth and growth. It brings us closer to the sights, sounds, and sensations that are around us all the time, but that often don't register until we make a point of looking.

Through an open window comes a fresh breeze. Through an open window also comes hay fever and bugs. But that's the bargain we strike by engaging with the world, by not shutting ourselves in. Opening a book is no different. Each one is a vista on the human wilderness, the landscape of history, the world outside one's own mind, rendered in the unique language and emphasis of an individual perspective. Reading a book, we may respond with exhilaration, or with fear; we may laugh bitterly, or cry happily; we may come away saddened, or rise up inspired. That is the meaning of adventure and experience, and no one who loves reading would want it any other way.

There are, of course, the genre books and ongoing series we return to for the irreplaceable pleasure of the familiar – spy novels and military histories, young-adult comedies and adult romances, murder mysteries and historical epics. Here, we gaze through the window of literature on a favorite scene or beloved horizon, a remembered place whose gradual changes and subtle variations can sustain a lifetime's faithful attention.

With this collection, we again bring together recommendations from across the Gettysburg College campus – the books, movies, TV shows, graphic novels, and even podcasts that have meant something special to us over the past year. Each one is a window on the tastes and perceptions of our colleagues, admitting breeze of the familiar or jolt of the unexpected: in short, a chance to engage with the world outside in all its beauty, humor, danger, and splendor.

From the staff of Musselman Library

May 2015

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FICTION FICTION



***All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr**

One of the most beautiful books I've ever read. Powerful, sad, evocative. Doerr took 10 years to write this book, and it shows in every sentence. His theme is goodness, how

*Doerr took 10 years to write this book,
and it shows in every sentence.*

hard it is to be sure that we are the good guys, how easy it is to slip into the hostile exercise of power and recklessly destroy others. Set during World War II in Germany and France, the narrative traces the interconnected lives of a German boy who becomes a bullet in the Nazi machine and a French girl who cannot see. Nevertheless, each tries to obey her grandfather's injunction: "Open your eyes, and see what you can with them before they close forever."

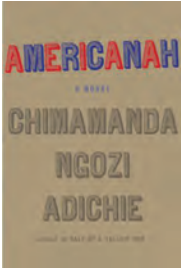
Temma Berg, English / Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies

This beautifully-written book tells the story of two children growing up before and during World War II. In alternating sections, we read about Werner, a German orphan who is fascinated with radios, and Marie-Laure, the blind daughter of the keeper of the locks at the Museum of Natural History in Paris. As the Nazis rise to power, Werner is recruited to an elite training school for engineers and Nazi officers. Marie-Laure and her father flee the Occupation to live in St. Malo, where they hide a legendary gem from the museum collection. Eventually Werner and Marie-Laure's stories intersect, as you might expect. The insightful characterizations and the vivid portrayal of the terrors, limited choices, and moral compromises of wartime kept this book in my thoughts long after I finished it.

Kathy Cain, Psychology

I'm sure I will not be the only reader to recommend this novel, but I'm endorsing it anyway because it was my favorite book in 2014. This historical novel begins in 1934 and features two main characters: an orphaned German boy and a blind French girl. The narrative alternates between their two lives, which ultimately intertwine during the war. Doerr's use of language and description of detail are an important part of this book's success. I learned so much about radios and whelks and locks and birds, but in the most beautiful way. Ultimately, the story is about power and resistance, bravery and cowardice, and learning to know the difference. I'll be rereading this, and checking out earlier works by Doerr.

Janelle Wertzberger, Musselman Library



***Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

A novel about what it means to be black in the U.S., in the U.K., and in Nigeria. This book captures, amongst many themes, the interplay of being a majority group-member in the heritage country (e.g., middle/upper middle class black in Nigeria) and a minority-group member in the host country (e.g., being black in the U.S./U.K).

Sahana Mukherjee, Psychology



***Aubrey/Maturin Series* by Patrick O'Brian**

The first book about British naval officer Jack Aubrey and physician/natural philosopher/intelligence officer Stephen Maturin is *Master and Commander*. But it is how the friendship and adventures of these two very different men develop over time that makes the series so wonderful. In addition, the reader will learn a great deal about the state of science, society, naval tradition, geography and more while being entertained by O'Brian's wit and sometimes beautiful writing.

Kay Etheridge, Biology



***Beautiful Chaos* by Robert M. Drake**

Short poetry that takes a unique viewpoint on love and life.

Amanda Davis, Athletics



***The Berlin Stories* and *A Single Man* by Christopher Isherwood**

Isherwood was my great fiction discovery of last year. Like many of the best English novelists, he is so subtle that he seems at first merely entertaining. We relish the scansion of the sentences, the incidental wit of the dialogue, and the glancing, off-kilter observations. Then the patiently laid themes take shape, culminations approach, and the last pages surge with mystery and meaning. *The Berlin Stories* – an omnibus comprising the discrete but interrelated novels *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* (1934) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939) – is poised at that moment just before Hitler produced a knife and held it to Europe's collective throat; while sinister and sardonic, it is also dreamlike, full of random encounters and sudden vanishings.

(continued)

Published in 1964, *A Single Man* is a day in the life of an English expatriate teaching literature at a Los Angeles college. More than just a witty novel of academia, it's a character study in which objective narration and interior monologue are joined in one organic voice. It's also one of the most emotionally devastating novels I've ever read. Isherwood's materials are the strange depths underlying polite exteriors; his achievement is to make the world feel emptier for his characters' absence.

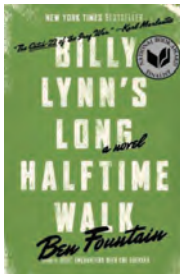
Devin McKinney, Musselman Library



***Big Little Lies* by Liane Moriarty**

This is a great book! It is a light, easy-to-read story that packs a big punch with hidden depth. It takes place in modern Australia – but could take place in anywhere USA. The interconnectedness of the lives we live, especially those of us with kids, influences so much of our day to day activities and choices. A great, fun read!

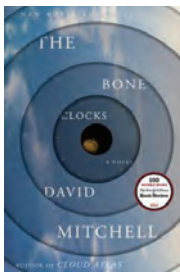
Irene Hawkins, Environmental Studies



***Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* by Ben Fountain**

I have a feeling I won't be the only one promoting this summer read. As one of the books the First-Year Common Book Committee reviewed last year, this one definitely had our attention. Billy Lynn – decorated war hero from the Iraq war, yet only in his early twenties – has a brief hiatus from the war front. He's being honored on a home tour with his surviving squadron mates. On the agenda is his appearance on a Cowboys' halftime show (which will also feature Beyonce). Through this fictional set-up, Fountain's writing elicits sardonic social commentary through a stellar mix of absurdity, humor, and tragedy.

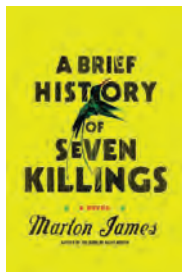
Salma Monani, Environmental Studies



***The Bone Clocks* by David Mitchell**

This is the only novel I have ever bought in advance of its release. I am a big David Mitchell fan and this one did not fail to entertain. *The Bone Clocks* was far more of a fantasy novel than *Cloud Atlas* or *Number9Dream*, and its writing was clearly an experiment. While I typically don't have a taste for magical vampire people, I can forgive Mitchell this indulgence since he is such an engrossing writer.

Ryan Kerney, Biology



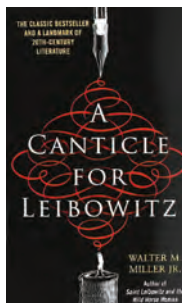
***A Brief History of Seven Killings* by Marlon James**

James's 700-page novel details gang violence and Cold War politics in a turbulent Kingston, Jamaica, awash in music, drugs, and confusion. Opening with a four-

Gang leaders and their underlings, journalists and spies, and ordinary Jamaicans struggling to stay alive occupy this dense novel.

page character list and narrated from multiple perspectives over three decades, the story centers upon an assassination attempt on Bob Marley, referred to as "the Singer," before the Jamaican general elections of 1976. This ambitious book, which spans decades but centers on Kingston in the 1970s, is a complicated portrait of a society ruled by violence. Gang leaders and their underlings, journalists and spies, and ordinary Jamaicans struggling to stay alive occupy this dense novel.

Jack Ryan, Provost's Office



***A Cantic for Leibowitz* by Walter M. Miller, Jr.**

Set hundreds of years after nuclear war has nearly destroyed humanity, Miller tells the story of a group of monks in the American Southwest who devote themselves to the preservation of knowledge, holding on to the hope that civilization can be rebuilt, and the past will not be repeated. *A Cantic for Leibowitz* served as a warning after its publication during the Cold War, but its insight on the cyclical nature of our history, and the importance of cultural memory, are just as relevant in our uncertain times.

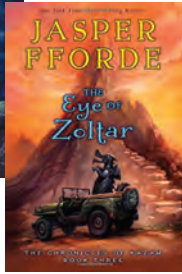
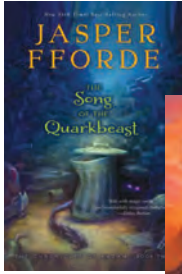
R.C. Miessler, Musselman Library



***Chasers of the Light: Poems from the Typewriter Series* by Tyler Knott Gregson**

Simply put, Tyler Knott Gregson writes beautiful poems and mostly on a typewriter. Prepare to dog-ear the majority of this book.

Abby Kallin, Admissions

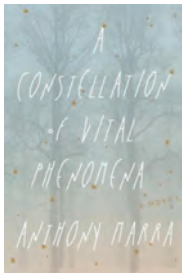


The Chronicles of Kazam by Jasper Fforde **(*The Song of the Quarkbeast* and *The Eye of Zoltar*)**

Sixteen-year-old Jennifer Strange and the eccentric band of sorcerers that she supervises at Kazam Mystical Arts Management are back, delivering pizzas, rebuilding bridges, tracking rogue Quarkbeasts, and trying to save the Kingdom of Snodd from a ruthless takeover. This is the second book in Fforde's *The Chronicles of Kazam* series, his recent foray into children's literature that depicts a world where magic is slowly being replaced by technology and magicians have been relegated to odd jobs like unclogging drains and rewiring houses. Similar to his other books aimed at adults, Fforde's *The Song of the Quarkbeast* employs absurd humor to comment on politics, media, and human nature.

In the third book in Fforde's *The Chronicles of Kazam* series, young Jennifer Strange must once again try to save the last of the dragons, whose unexpected survival in the first book in the series has led to a breach of contract between the Ununited Kingdoms and the powerful sorcerer originally hired to kill them four centuries earlier. The Mighty Shandar agrees to trade the lives of the dragons for the Eye of Zoltar, leading Jennifer and friends into the wilds of the Cambrian Empire on an adventure, which due to a lack of approval by the Questing Federation, they cannot call a quest.

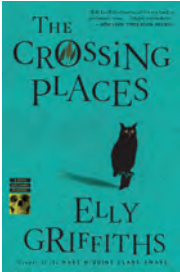
Carrie Szarko, Instructional Technology



***A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* by Anthony Marra**

Anthony Marra explores love, loss, and survival through the lives of individuals whose lives have been shaped (often torn apart) by the wars in Chechnya. Throughout the book he balances the brutality of life during war with the depth of the human spirit: the child of a disappeared father dreams of sea anemones and trusts no one, the worst doctor in Chechnya fills a town with exquisite portraits of the disappeared, a lonely surgeon treats the residents of a bomb-blasted city in a hospital with murals of the streets painted on wood covering shattered windows. Marra weaves history and memory, childhood aggressions and adult regrets, together to create a story that will linger in your thoughts.

Chloe Ruff, Education



***The Crossing Places* by Elly Griffiths**

The first in a mystery series featuring forensic archaeologist Ruth Galloway. Asked by the local police to help identify a body found in the saltmarsh near her home in Norfolk, England, Ruth gets drawn into the efforts to find two missing children. Sympathetic characters, a mysterious setting, and the urgency to the search make this a compelling read.

Julie Hendon, Anthropology



***Dear Committee Members* by Julie Schumacher**

This novel is a light but enjoyable read. Deftly satirizing modern academia, it is rendered entirely in the form of letters of recommendation produced by a churlish English professor wondering if he has made the right choices in life.

Timothy Shannon, History



***The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* by Stieg Larsson**

It had been long since a book has trapped me so strongly as this one (and the sequels in the Millennium Trilogy). *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* revolves around a heroine who fights stereotypes as strongly as she battles violence against women. The book has a clever story line, praises the work of journalism and that of the intelligence in individuals with Asperger syndrome. At the same time it transports the reader to an intense story of suspense and secrets in society.

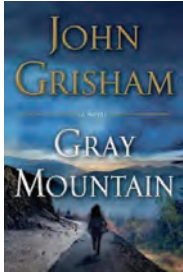
Ivanova Reyes, Economics



***Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch* by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett**

The final battle between Heaven and Hell is about to commence...but someone has misplaced the Antichrist. A full cast of both human and supernatural characters race to hasten/prevent the end of days, and among Pratchett and Gaiman's humor and wit, there is an insightful discourse on the nature of free will, as well as what it means to be human.

R.C. Miessler, Musselman Library



***Gray Mountain* by John Grisham**

A fabulously interesting book with many plot lines running through it. It keeps you completely interested from the start. This book has a little bit for everyone, from action and suspense, to history and romance. I can't wait to read the next book in this series.

Mike Bishop, Dining Services



***Hell Week* by Rosemary Clement-Moore**

Maggie Quinn never thought she'd find herself rushing a sorority during her freshman year of college, but she quickly realizes she can use her experiences from rush to write an exposé on Greek life that she hopes will land her a spot on the college paper. Maggie runs with her disguise, the "Phantom Pledge," pledging a powerful sorority whose sisters seem particularly successful. But by the time Maggie realizes that joining this twisted sisterhood is going to be a lot more like *The Initiation of Sarah* than she bargained for, there's no turning back. This novel, set at a small liberal arts college not unlike our own, gives a whole and terrifying new meaning to the phrase "Hell Week."

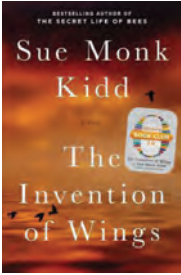
Jacob Brintzenhoff, Musselman Library



***High-Rise* by J.G. Ballard**

The opening line of Ballard's *High-Rise* captures attention: "As he sat on his balcony eating the dog, Dr. Robert Laing reflected on the unusual events that had taken place in this huge apartment building." A story of humanity in decay, *High-Rise* is about what happens when the social agreements we all cleave to erode inside a closely packed environment. Ballard deconstructs the concept of civilization with chilling precision and dark humor.

Jack Ryan, Provost's Office



***The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd**

In the opening scene of this book, a slave girl called Handful is tied with ribbon and given as a birthday gift to 11-year-old Sarah Grimké, the daughter of a wealthy Charleston family. Sarah Grimké is a historical figure who became a famous (or notorious) abolitionist and feminist, and she really did receive a slave girl as a birthday gift. The character of Handful, though, is almost completely fictional. In the novel, we read side by side the stories of painfully shy, stammering, and repressed Sarah, who becomes strong and outspoken despite her family's determined efforts to stop her, and outspoken and clear-thinking Handful, who dreams of freedom and tries to obtain it. I listened to the audio version of this book, narrated by Jenna Lamia and Adepero Aduye, and I often found myself driving out of my way so I could listen to more of it.

Kathy Cain, Psychology

I really enjoyed this book, probably classified as historical fiction. It is the story of a family from Charleston that owns slaves. The book explores the lives of the slaves as well as the wealthy white family that owns the slaves. I am not sure how accurate the story is, but it is quite interesting to read about this early abolitionist and feminist, Sarah Grimké, and the slave that was given to her for her birthday, Hetty (aka Handful). Sarah tries to refuse this gift, and she rebels by teaching Hetty to read and write. Scandal, drama, mystery, and more in this book!

Sarah Principato, Environmental Studies



***Just One Evil Act* by Elizabeth George**

Whose action was evil enough to tip the balance into disaster, and how many generations will pay? If the only way you know Elizabeth George's Inspector Lynley and D.S. Havers is through the truncated plots and sad casting of PBS' *Inspector Lynley Mysteries*, do yourself a favor and savor the original. Intricately plotted, not very cozy, not gritty police procedurals, the mysteries – especially this one – are always about the character of the characters. Easy enough to start the series here and then sign up for the back story with the previous dozen plus, but start with the prequel, *A Suitable Vengeance*, then follow the order written.

Christine Benecke, Development / Research



***The Kreutzer Sonata* by Leo Tolstoy**

Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* is a story of passion and obsession revealed by a stranger on a train, but that's only the beginning. After reading Tolstoy's story, one needs to listen to the music that inspired the story. A CD will do, but check out the YouTube performance by Patricia Kopatchinskaja & Fazıl Say. It's 32.41 minutes of pure obsession. Then one gets caught up in the story behind the music. Why did Beethoven rename one of his most famous sonatas? What was that argument really about? Back to the story, Mrs. Tolstoy finally gets her say in the recently published *The Kreutzer Sonata Variations*. Other members of the family weigh in with essays and stories of their own. Then there is Rita Dove's book, *Sonata Mulattica*, in which she explores the life of the virtuoso violinist, George Bridgetower, who was the first to actually play the Kreutzer Sonata No. 9, the man Beethoven had the argument with, the one whose name would have been on the piece, if not for the... Do I dare say it? Kreutzer becomes an obsession.

Ellen Hathaway, Gettysburg Review



***Lisette's List* by Susan Vreeland**

France, 1930s. Lisette, a young Parisian who dreams of working in an art gallery, relocates to rural Provence when her husband's grandfather, Pascal, becomes ill. She cares for Pascal out of a sense of duty while she longs to return to the art world of Paris. Pascal had worked in the region's ochre mines and later sold pigments to painters such as Pissarro and Cezanne. He built his own small collection of paintings, which he shows to Lisette. When World War II begins, Lisette realizes she will be in Provence for years, and she begins to develop a new relationship to Pascal's paintings and to the region. To write more would give away too much, so I'll just say that this book was a quiet delight that brought Provence and Vichy, France to life for me. It is also a meditation on what it means to be an artist.

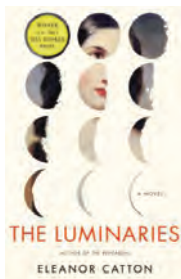
Kathy Cain, Psychology



***The Lizard Cage* by Karen Connelly**

Although I came upon this novel as preparation for a trip to Myanmar, I cannot praise it highly enough. The writing is exquisite and relationships in the story truly sensitive. The main character, imprisoned by the Junta for writing songs about democracy and Aung San Suu Kyi, befriends a young orphan who brings food to his cell. Although the story takes place entirely in a small space, the reader's engagement is extraordinary. How did this young Canadian novelist research her novel? Having lived several years with former political prisoners in a Burmese refugee camp in Thailand makes her story truly authentic.

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



***The Luminaries* by Eleanor Catton**

Brilliant homage to the 19th century novel, historical mystery, masterful tale, ambitious plot, study in beautiful prose – *The Luminaries* is all of this and more. Set

*Brilliant homage to the 19th century novel,
historical mystery, masterful tale, ambitious plot,
study in beautiful prose . . .*

in the coastal towns of New Zealand during the Gold Rush of the 1860s, full of atmosphere, this big novel introduces at least twenty major characters, including two unforgettable women, who reveal themselves through an unfolding web of interactions. Only in her twenties, for this remarkable work Eleanor Catton became the youngest winner of the Man Booker Prize.

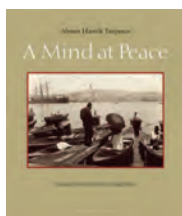
Dan DeNicola, Philosophy



***The Martian* by Andy Weir**

The Martian is a story about how an astronaut stranded on Mars in the not-too-distant future tries to stay alive on his own. It has a balanced combination of wit, science, and adventure that make this quick read believable. At the end of 2015 it will be released as a movie by director Ridley Scott, so be sure to read this one before seeing it on the big screen!

Tim Funk, Chemistry



***A Mind at Peace* and *The Time Regulation Institute* by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar *Memed, My Hawk* by Yashar Kemal**



I recommend three remarkable novels that explore Turkish society's attempts to deal with modernity and find its place in the world. Should it embrace the West uncritically or find a synthesis between East and West? The stories particularly resonate with me as I reflect on the similarities with Latin America.

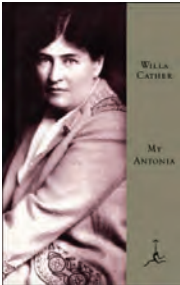
A Mind at Peace is set in Istanbul just before the start of World War II and centers on Mümtaz, who is being raised by cousins after his parents

(continued)

were killed in the First World War. The anxiety of rapid social change leaves him torn between clinging to the past and embracing his future. In *The Time Regulation Institute*, it is mandated that all the clocks in Turkey to be set to Western time. This spoof of modern bureaucracy is described by the author Ohran Pamuk as “an allegorical masterpiece.”

Memed My Hawk focuses on a boy growing up in an impoverished village dominated by a cruel landlord. He longs for a better life, but when he tries to escape he is caught and nearly beaten to death. Eventually he is successful in his flight. Stories like Memed’s enter Turkish folklore in songs, where characters are celebrated as outlaws and possible saviors. I loved this novel because it brought me back to the Dominican Republic, my homeland, where we have had countless Memeds.

Emelio Betances, Latin American Studies



***My Ántonia* by Willa Cather**

I confess a soft spot for Cather since we share the same hometown. Still, this book is a classic for good reason. It provides a wonderful example of the strength and character of pioneers and the mixture of people who made up the settlement and migration to the Great Plains.

Rob Bohrer, Provost's Office



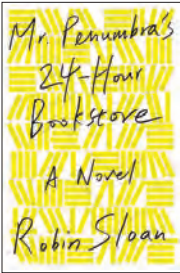
***Nocturnes: Five Stories of Music and Nightfall* by Kazuo Ishiguro**

Nocturnes is a collection of five short stories with a common theme of music and nightfall. The gentle but questionable narrators, the sly comedy, and heartbreak

The gentle but questionable narrators, the sly comedy, and heartbreak under the surface of the main characters are what make this book so charming and addictive.

under the surface of the main characters are what make this book so charming and addictive. The theme of music, with all of the emotion by proxy contained therein, can be loud and brash but also sweet and tender.

Celia Hartz, Musselman Library



Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore by Robin Sloan

This book follows the story of Clay Jannon, an out-of-work graphic designer in San Francisco whose life takes a major turn when he applies for a nightshift job in a dusty bookstore. With the help of friends who provide tech support and some start-up funding, Clay attempts to make sense of the odd books and the stranger collection of customers in an adventure that spans countries, centuries, and nearly exhausts the computing power of Google.

Chloe Ruff, Education

This is a book lover's book. And possibly a Google lover's book.

This is a book lover's book. And possibly a Google lover's book. An unemployed graphic designer takes a night-shift job at a 24-hour bookstore and soon discovers there is much more contained in the "way back" of the store than simply books. Mystery, intrigue, secret societies, and clues hidden in books make this novel a captivating and fun summer read.

Klara Shives, Musselman Library



The Ocean at the End of the Lane by Neil Gaiman

Returning to his boyhood home for a funeral, our unnamed narrator is drawn back to the old Hempstock farmhouse at the end of the lane that he first visited when he was seven. Home of a young girl who might not be either and sitting on the edge of a pond that might be an ocean, he recalls the story of what happened when he first came there. Alternately dark and whimsical, Gaiman mines multiple folktales into a unique modern story. Gaiman is quite possibly the best writer of adult fairy tales working today, and *Ocean* is a small gem of a book for folks who might find reality wanting.

Eric Remy, Instructional Technology



One For the Money: A Stephanie Plum Novel by Janet Evanovich

There is no other fictitious character in a book that has ever made me buy a product... until Stephanie Plum. She and her sidekick, Lula, shovel down so many Tastykake products that I just had to buy and eat some (the jury is still out on that one)! Janet Evanovich's twenty-one novels to date are page-turners and make me laugh out loud. It took me about three books (they are short) before I really came to love the characters, but then I was hooked. There is something for everyone here – people of all races, ages, heights and weights, along with romance, food, hijinx, one hilarious grandmother, and an excessive amount of accidentally ruined cars. Great summer reading.

Eleanor J. Hogan, Asian Studies

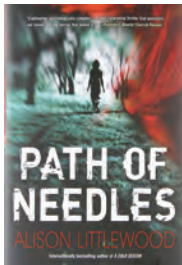


Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline

I resisted this book initially because so many people were recommending it, but I borrowed it from our library over winter break and the story held my interest. It is the unlikely friendship that develops between a young Maine teen, Molly Ayer, who will soon age out of foster care, and Vivian, an old woman who was a young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City and sent to the Midwest by train with hundreds of other children. The relationship between Molly and Vivian shows them that they have more in common than they first suspect. Orphan trains were another sad chapter in U.S. history between 1853 and 1929. It was a supervised welfare program that transported

orphaned and homeless children by train from mostly Eastern cities to foster homes located largely in Midwestern rural areas. Whether the children's lives improved depended on where they ended up.

Patti Lawson, Government & Community Relations



Path of Needles by Alison Littlewood

When a young police detective discovers a murder staged to resemble the tale of Snow White, she seeks the help of a local college lecturer who specializes in fairy

*I've always loved retold fairy tales and murder mysteries,
and this book is the perfect combination.*

tales to help profile the killer. I've always loved retold fairy tales and murder mysteries, and this book is the perfect combination. The elements of magical realism add an extra twist to this thriller, and left me breathless with anticipation until the end.

Angela Badore, Musselman Library

(continued)

Fairy tales make for great reading – they're full of magic, mystery, disguises...and lots of blood and gore. At least the original versions are, and it's those dark and gory fairy tales that drive the plot of *Path of Needles*. When the police start finding murdered girls posed in ways that eerily mirror fairy tale princesses, they call in a university lecturer who specializes in fairy tales and folklore. But she seems to know a little too much about the murders, and then there's the matter of that unusual blue bird that keeps showing up everywhere. Woe betide you if you stray from the path through this gripping thriller.

Jacob Brintzenhoff, Musselman Library



***The Plague of Doves* by Louise Erdrich**

This novel begins in 1911 with the gruesome slaughter of a farm family in the small town of Pluto, North Dakota located on the edge of the Ojibwe reservation. Narration is shared by teen Evelina Harp, who is part Ojibwe and part white, her grandfather, Mooshum, the repository of family and tribal history, and Judge Antone Bazil Coutts, who not only bears witness to Pluto's past but understands the weight of historical injustice more than anyone. The secrets surrounding the unsolved murders and disturbing aftermath haunt future generations living on and around the reservation. As with all of Erdrich's novels, you may have met some of these individuals before, as minor characters in her other books. Genealogy advisory: Erdrich is best read with a pencil in hand, sketching the family tree as you read.

Robin Wagner, Musselman Library



***Shanghai Girls* by Lisa See**

I love a riveting fiction story that inspires me to learn more about things I didn't know I wanted to know more about (e.g., beautiful girls, paper sons, iron fans, and Angel Island). *Shanghai Girls* follows the story of the Chin sisters beginning in 1937 and concludes 20 years later, following not just their physical journey, but their journey from spoiled and freewheeling girls to life-weary and perceptive adult women. Lisa See's writing creates extraordinary imagery with well-developed characters.

Wendee Dunlap, Annual Giving / Alumni Relations



***A Spool of Blue Thread* by Anne Tyler**

This is Anne Tyler's most recent book that focuses on aging and mortality. This is a story about a multigenerational saga with many memorable characters. It is, of course, set in Baltimore and in my neighborhood so I found it very appealing. She depicts aspects of everyday life with sensitivity and humor as she tells the story of Red and Abby Whitshank, a contractor and a social worker, and their four children.

Barbara Fritze, Enrollment and Educational Services



***Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel**

Arthur Leander's end-of-life experience happens to coincide with the beginning of the collapse, a time when a global virus wipes out life on earth. Told between flashbacks and the present-day reality decades after the pandemic, we follow the survival of those once connected to Arthur and, unexpectedly, to each other.

Ruth de Jesus, Intercultural Advancement

There is probably an overabundance of post-apocalyptic fiction at the moment, but this one stuck with me more than most. On the surface, this darkly compelling novel is about surviving the collapse of civilization after a deadly flu virus wipes out most of humanity. Yet that plot line takes a backseat to the characters themselves, and their connections to each other through the life (and death!) of one particularly ambitious actor. I found Mandel's depictions of life and art before and after "the collapse" beautiful and inspiring. The novel's mantra – a line pulled from *Star Trek*, no less – is conveyed to the reader early and best represents the heart of the novel: "Because survival is insufficient."

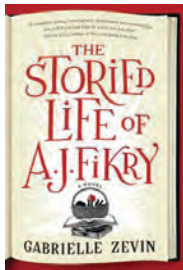
Klara Shives, Musselman Library



***Stone Mattress: Nine Tales* by Margaret Atwood**

Nine fairly gruesome short stories, but they are so skillfully constructed with dark humor in language and plot. I wouldn't buy it for my shelf, but it was a pleasure to read a master's prose, even if the characters made me want to run a mile away.

Christine Benecke, Development / Research



***The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin**

I cannot recommend this book enough. Anyone who has talked to me in the past year has almost certainly heard me say how much I love it. This slender novel is a celebration of the joys of reading good literature, a tribute to independent bookstores, a bit of a mystery, and a story about friendship, family ties, secrets, and love. A.J. Fikry is the cranky and really rather unpleasant, but immediately intriguing, owner of the only independent bookstore on an island off the coast of Massachusetts (more or less a fictional Martha's Vineyard). The reader quickly learns why A.J. is so irascible, and the novel takes off from there. I will say only that a publisher's rep, an abandoned toddler,

This slender novel is a celebration of the joys of reading good literature, a tribute to independent bookstores, a bit of a mystery, and a story about friendship, family ties, secrets, and love.

and a wonderful police officer help move along A.J.'s story. Many things delight about this book, and one is the preface to each chapter – A.J.'s reader's notes from selected well-known works of literature. Coincidentally, my mom and I tore through this book at about the same time, but she faster than me, because she started it one evening, read much later than she had intended, woke up in the morning, and immediately started reading again and didn't stop until she finished. It's that good.

Allison Singley, Parent Relations



***The Third Reich* by Roberto Bolaño**

German professional war gamer Udo Berger is spending his summer vacation with his girlfriend on Spain's Costa Brava, relaxing on the beach, socializing with other tourists, and working on new strategies for his favorite board game, The Third Reich. Yet this idyllic summer can't last when a friend and fellow tourist vanishes one night, Udo's girlfriend heads back to Germany without him, and Udo finds himself playing The Third Reich against a strange disfigured local...with his own life as prize! This posthumously published novel by the late Roberto Bolaño turns beach reading on its head, the summer sun and crashing waves, the nights of drinking and dancing, all of them a facade for the dark anxiety and tension that come with trying to win. More approachable than Bolaño's epic 2666 or *The Savage Detectives*, if you enjoy Borges or Cortázar then give *The Third Reich* a read.

R. Jess Lavolette, English



***A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini**

One of my all-time favorites, Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a story about the enduring power of friendship in the face of turmoil. Hosseini's two main characters, Laila and Mariam, are brought together under extraordinary circumstances in Afghanistan. Through their experiences, Hosseini is able to talk about the value of love, friendship, resiliency, and sacrifice that is womanhood. A truly brilliant read!

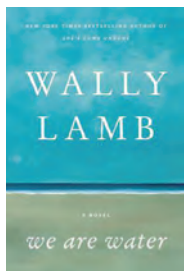
Daisy Chebbet, Counseling Services



***Tides* by Betsy Cornwell**

This book is a quick read and will introduce you to folklore about selkies, which are seals who transform into humans (or are they humans who transform into seals?). Although this is young adult literature, don't let that prevent you from enjoying this story and sharing it with the young people in your life. It addresses important issues such as bulimia, body image, and same-sex relationships.

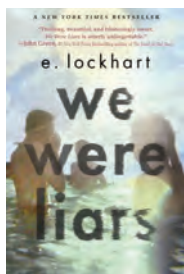
Betsy Lavolette, Language Resource Center



***We Are Water* by Wally Lamb**

I love everything that Wally Lamb writes, and *We Are Water* is no exception. This contemporary story about a family of five is told from alternating points of view, revealing the complexity of the characters and their relationships right up to the final page. It is a moving book – and a page-turner.

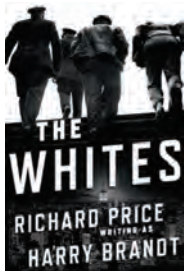
Janet Morgan Riggs, President



***We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart**

Lockhart wrote an amazing story that has stuck with me and I've been itching to read it again. I loved the brokenness of the main character Cady, and her desire to learn what happened the summer of her accident. Looking back, I see the foreshadowing now, but while reading, I had so many ideas of what had happened to Cady that I never saw the truth coming. Lockhart's prose is absolutely beautiful, interesting and fresh, which made for a truly pleasant read. It is a book that you just cannot put down and it will make for a fantastic summer read.

Celia Hartz, Musselman Library



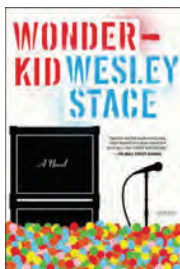
***The Whites* by Richard Price writing as Harry Brandt**

The Whites, by Richard Price, writing as Harry Brandt (a shout-out to his long-time and now deceased literary agent, Carl Brandt). In the Amazon-produced crime series, *Bosch*, the title character tells a colleague that someone once said, “When you circle around a murder long enough you get to know a city.” She asks, “Who?” Bosch

... a verbal shpritz studded with cultural references in the service of dead-on comparisons.

responds, “I don’t remember.” Richard Price readers will recognize the line. *The Whites*, Price’s ninth novel, confirms that fact that Price knows cops and New York City. The novel’s title refers to things cops can’t forget, and, ultimately, can’t neglect. Written with cinematic zest and an uncanny ear for speech, metaphor, and despair, *The Whites* moves at breakneck speed through a working New York, propelled by Price’s language, which is a verbal shpritz studded with cultural references in the service of dead-on comparisons.

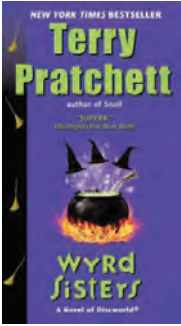
Jack Ryan, Provost’s Office



***Wonderkid* by Wesley Stace**

I’m generally a sucker for novels about the music industry, but even within that genre this one really was a great read. The story of the rise and (inevitable, as always) fall of a British band that gets pigeon-holed (somewhat against their will, but not entirely) as a children’s band in the U.S., the book is funny and heartwarming and a very compelling read. It probably helps that the author is Wesley Stace, aka the singer/songwriter formerly known as John Wesley Harding, whose insider knowledge of the industry certainly gives the whole thing a feeling of veracity. But Stace is also a very good writer with a sly wit and a big heart, and the book is a fun summer read!

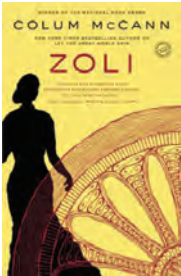
Darren Glass, Mathematics



***Wyrd Sisters* by Terry Pratchett**

Well, I had to put a Terry Pratchett book on my list as a RIP to a wonderful author. Revisionist histories (fictional or otherwise), especially when told from the point of view of maligned and sidelined groups have always fascinated me. So what do the three witches from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* have to say? In this quick, absorbing time-stream shift into Pratchett's alternative universe of the Discworld, you'll have a chance to find out!

Salma Monani, Environmental Studies



***Zoli* by Colum McCann**

This past year was notable for my discovery of Colum McCann, an Irish writer whose work is remarkable for a wide range of stories and exceedingly fine style. The first of his novels I read was *Let the Great World Spin*, which I heartily recommend, although some find it difficult going. It's actually a 9/11 novel in which the event is never mentioned, but the twin towers are central. My favorite, though, is *Zoli*, about a Czech Roma singer whose songs are so extraordinary that they are published by the narrator, who also bears some responsibility for a tragic though well-meaning attempt to bring "advantages" of modern life to the gypsies.

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

Getting to Know **GRAPHIC NOVELS**

The term “graphic novel” entered the lexicon in 1978, when it stepped out of the shadow of its comic book and manga cousins. The library’s Browsing Room offers more than 60 titles, but the genre is still misunderstood by many. We turned to graphic novel-aficionado **Sharon Birch**, the College’s senior instructional technologist and artist at heart, for help.



What is the biggest misconception about graphic novels?

That the “graphic novel” is a single thing. There are as many different types of graphic novels as there are regular novels. I think some folks try one that they don’t care for, and then paint them all with that brush. This would be like picking up a detective novel, deciding you don’t like mystery, and then never reading any type of fiction again.

Another problem is the word “novel.” That’s a misnomer as many are *nonfiction* – memoirs, histories, travelogues and more. Graphic novels are not just illustrated stories; part of the story is told through the images. The images should evoke the feeling of place and communicate the action of the stories. Another fallacy is that graphic novels are just for kids; this genre really began for adults.

How do you select one to try? Most people have only heard of *Persepolis* or *Maus*...

Persepolis and *Maus* hit some kind of sweet spot in mainstream culture and were particularly attractive to people interested in that period of history or place. They are both very, very good. A lot of their reviews, however, are apologetic for the form – like, it’s good *even though* it’s a graphic novel.

Other types of graphic novels require a little practice to enjoy fully – just as it can be hard to engage with a specific genre fiction until you get used to the conventions and norms of the writing style.

People read and select books differently, so I can just talk about my approach. I prefer ones that are written and illustrated by the same person. I think the story and the art are so entwined that having different people do different creative aspects of the project somehow limits it.

I often follow certain authors. I also read annual “best of” collections (***The Best American Comics*** is a favorite), book reviews and blogs for ideas. But if I just walk into a bookstore, I start by judging a book by its cover, because the cover illustration is usually something from the inside.





What are favorites that you'd recommend?



Chris Ware has an amazing style of drawing and layout, although it can be hard for some people because it is not particularly linear. His stories, however, are just wonderful – everyday people and the things that have shaped them and how they manage to trudge through their lives. **Jimmy Corrigan, The Smartest Kid on Earth** hit many bestseller lists and is visually more accessible than some of his earlier work.



I really like Guy Delisle, whose non-fiction books describe times when he has lived in interesting places. He has a simple, but expressive drawing style and I love how he conveys the sense of life in other countries. **Pyongyang, A Journey in North Korea** is a good place to start.



Lynda Barry is great. I recommend her **What It Is** to anyone who wants to be more creative or write. It is basically the textbook for her workshop on writing and creativity, combined with some personal history of her work as a cartoonist and writer, but it is an amazing piece of art. It will make you a better writer, hands down, if you do the exercises.



Jeff Lemire creates nice stories that combine the real everyday parts of people's lives with things that are a bit odder. His graphic style is well suited to his stories. **Essex County** is his collection, and it's great.



And, while not at the top of my list, **Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?** by Roz Chast, is one that anybody dealing with aging family members should read. The story is very good, and the artwork helps lighten things up a bit.

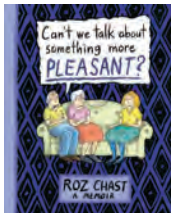


I also love graphic novels for kids. **Robot Dreams** by Sara Varon is a wordless tale of friendship and is one of my all-time favorites. Anything by Shaun Tan is worth the time, but I think **The Arrival** is his best known. Gene Luen Yang has great stories for children about ethnicity, family, and history. He's best known for **American Born Chinese**.



If you'd like to learn more, I recommend a great new book that covers the history and theory of graphic novels – **The Graphic Novel: An Introduction** by Jan Baetens.

Other **GRAPHIC NOVEL** Suggestions



***Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant? A Memoir* by Roz Chast**

With spot-on observations and brilliant wit, Chast addresses her experiences when dealing with aging parents. The book is heartbreaking and hysterical, and lets you know it is okay to find humor and tragic irony in this life passage. As a writer and cartoonist, she illustrates so many feelings and frustrations to which those of us of a certain age can relate. It is a relief to know these are not unique or wrong, and that I'm not really losing my mind when I start talking to myself after some of these "senior moments."

Sunni DeNicola, Musselman Library



***Safe Area Gorazde and Palestine* by Joe Sacco *Asterios Polyp* by David Mazzucchelli**

I'd like to recommend two graphic novel favorites: Joe Sacco's *Safe Area Gorazde* and *Palestine*. Both do well to capture and explore humanity in warfare. For a lighter and somewhat existential read, try *Asterios Polyp* whose protagonist is reminiscent of an aged George Costanza or Art Vandelay for "Seinfeld" fans.

Jeremy Garskof, Musselman Library



***The Wicked + The Divine: The Faust Act* by Kieron Gillen and Jamie McKelvie**

"Just because you're immortal, doesn't mean you're going to live forever." Welcome to a world where gods are pop stars, and the term celebrity worship is often meant quite literally. Every 90 years, a pantheon of twelve gods is revealed, and they flood the world with artistic inspiration. At the end of their two years, every member of the pantheon dies, hoping they've left some kind of mark. But this comic isn't just about fans and haters, it's a quick-witted commentary on pop culture and the value of art.

Jacob Brintzenhoff, Musselman Library

'19 READS: CIRCUMSTANCES, CHOICES, CHALLENGES



**This summer, join
the Class of 2019
in reading *Flight*
by Sherman Alexie**

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

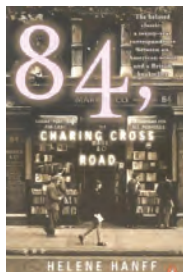
Things to do this summer:

- ✓ Read the book
- ✓ Join the discussion
- ✓ Plan for the author visit on September 8, 2015
- ✓ Questions? Contact orientation@gettysburg.edu



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NONFICTION NONFICTION



***84, Charing Cross Road* by Helene Hanff**

For the reader, there is no greater joy than knowing that there is a kindred spirit out there ready to match you to your next book. For New Yorker Helene Hanff, it was London bookseller Frank Dole. My recommendation for this summer is to enjoy reading their letters as published by Helene in 1970 as *84, Charing Cross Road*. But, don't stop there. Be sure to watch the film version (1987) featuring Anne Bancroft and Anthony Hopkins. Anne was so taken with the book that her husband Mel Brooks bought the film rights for her as a birthday gift. The film is truly a quiet testament to the truth that books come to us when it is our time to read them.

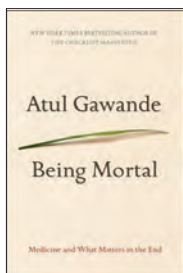
Carolyn Sautter, Musselman Library



***The Arcanum: The Extraordinary True Story* by Janet Gleeson**

Not to be confused with a more recent title, Gleeson's *The Arcanum* is a creative nonfiction tale of how a historic bait-and-switch saved an overconfident alchemist from extinction and turned Meissen into Europe's porcelain center. In an age of 3-D printing, a time when the formula for white glassy clay was as treasured and exciting as gold is as otherworldly as it is captivating.

Sue Baldwin-Way, Communications and Marketing



***Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande**

In *Being Mortal*, physician Atul Gawande looks at how American medicine does (or does not) deal with the end of life. Using his father's final illness as a case study that threads through the book, Gawande considers how the lack of training in end-of-life care, medicine's culture of denying death, and poor communication between doctors and patients can reduce both the quality and quantity of life for the dying. This is a must-read for anyone who may need to deal with end-of-life issues.

Jean Potuchek, Sociology / Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (emerita)

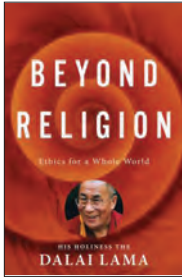
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NONFICTION

Gawande is a wonderful physician-author and everything he writes is worth reading. In *Being Mortal*, he thoughtfully explores the strengths and challenges of modern medicine.

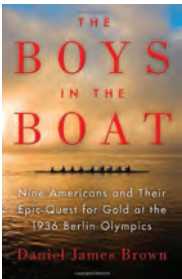
Kristin Stuempfle, Provost's Office



***Beyond Religion: Ethics For A Whole World* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama**

A short and engaging book by the Dalai Lama putting forth a call for secular ethics in the modern world. He argues that secular ethics derive from compassion, the foundational cross-cultural spiritual principle from which all other positive values emerge, and that mindfulness and attentiveness cultivate the compassion needed for creating cultures of nonviolence and inter-religious harmony.

Megan Adamson Sijapati, Religious Studies / Globalization Studies



***The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel James Brown**

One of the reasons I love this book is because although I knew the outcome, the writing and the story are so engaging that I was enthralled throughout, especially during the account of each crew race – I felt deeply the tension, the suspense, and

Impeccably researched, this is a great story told very well.

the excitement, and I had to put the book down and decompress after the shells crossed the finish line. Often I shed a tear or two along the way as well. There is so much to like about this book, telling the story of the men's eight that won gold in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. If you're a rower or a former rower (like me), you'll appreciate the history of the University of Washington's crew program, descriptions of famous rowing personalities like George Pocock, the legendary boat builder, and vivid explanations of crew practices in the biting cold, wind, and rain. But readers also will learn a lot about the state of Washington in the early decades of the 1900s, the intense rivalry between Washington and Cal Berkeley, and the planning and execution of the 1936 Olympics. Perhaps most moving and engaging of all is the story of Joe Rantz, a freshman Husky in the fall of 1933; through Joe's incredible biography, we follow the formation of an exceptional young man and the victory of the 1936 gold medal-winning crew. Impeccably researched, this is a great story told very well.

Allison Singley, Parent Relations



***A Chosen Exile: A History of Racial Passing in American Life* by Allyson Hobbs**

Historian Hobbs explores the emotional and psychological costs of passing for white or passing as free (or both). Using a variety of sources, Hobbs tries to get at what the experience was like at different moments in American history. While passing for white or as a freed person may have conferred advantages, Hobbs emphasizes the personal and familial costs as well.

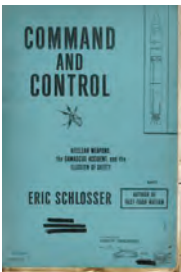
Julie Hendon, Anthropology



***Color: A Natural History of the Palette* by Victoria Finlay**

Years ago I borrowed this book from my sister's bookshelf. Two chapters in, I returned the book and bought my own copy. Journalist and writer, Victoria Finlay travels the world tracking down the source of the pigment for each color in her paint box and her discoveries are fascinating as well as a wonderful adventure. One of my favorite books!

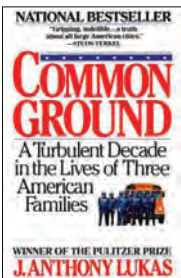
Lisa McNamee, Musselman Library



***Command and Control: Nuclear Weapons, the Damascus Accident, and the Illusion of Safety* by Eric Schlosser**

Eric Schlosser's latest work, *Command and Control*, presents a comprehensive review of nuclear weapons safety within the United States, intertwined with a narrative description of the Damascus Incident, which involved the accidental explosion of a Titan Missile in rural Arkansas in the early 1980s. This is a fascinating and truly frightening book which will challenge your thinking about the safety of complex technical systems, particularly those involving nuclear weapons.

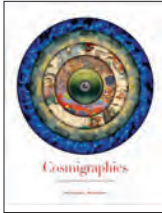
Christopher J. Zappe, Provost



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

A book on racial tensions may not make for light summer reading, but this Pulitzer Prize-winning book is newly resonant in the wake of the events in Ferguson, Missouri. *Common Ground* is a political and legal page-turner, and an incredible piece of journalism.

Rud Platt, Environmental Studies

***Cosmographics: Picturing Space Through Time* by Michael Benson**

In this era of colorful digital images from the Hubble Space Telescope one would scarcely expect this: a book of 300 astronomical illustrations containing only drawings and paintings from the pre-photographic era, along with modern images in the form of maps, sketches and charts.

As an astronomer and collector of antiquarian books, I can attest to Benson's fine eye in selecting both archetypal and seldom-seen renderings of things astronomical. There are several colorful diagrams of the Aristotelian cosmos, my favorite being from Hartmann Schedel's 1493 *Liber Chronicarum*, showing nested celestial spheres with the earth at the center, surrounded by the planets, and at the outermost edge a host of angels, God on his throne. At the corners are the four winds, which seem to be keeping the whole thing in motion.

There's also a florid celestial map from Andreas Cellarius' *Harmonica macrocosmia* (1660), a print of which adorned my college dorm room. But I had never seen the colored engraving of a meteor shower observed from a balloon, which appeared in James Glashier's 1871 book *Travels in the Air*. Nor did I know of the most surprising image in the book – a black square on a white background, taken from a 1617 cosmological work by English mystic Robert Fludd, supposedly representing the universe prior to the "Fiat Lux" of Genesis. Dark and minimalistic, it provides a perfect opening to what is otherwise a brilliant and flamboyant collection.

Larry Marschall, Physics (emeritus)

***Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration* by Ed Catmull**

Should be required reading for every manager.

Should be required reading for every manager. Aside from the valuable advice and insights, there are great behind-the-scenes stories from Mr. Catmull's time at Pixar and Disney. I also enjoyed what he had to say about Steve Jobs. He's created a fantastic amalgamation of personal stories and workplace how-tos.

Wendee Dunlap, Annual Giving / Alumni Relations

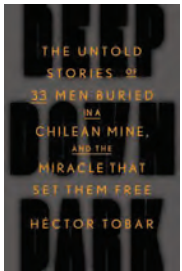


***Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* by Erik Larson**

A good summer read for the historically inclined.

Larson has made a career out of writing accessible popular history that still manages to be sophisticated and nuanced in its approach. His latest book about the Lusitania is no exception and shows once again that he is a good narrator and a good analyst. The publishing of the book also marks the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the famed ship. A good summer read for the historically inclined.

William Bowman, History



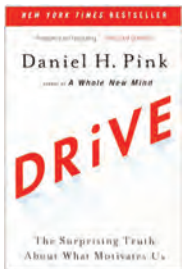
***Deep Down Dark: The Untold Stories of 33 Men Buried in a Chilean Mine, and the Miracle That Set Them Free* by Héctor Tobar**

I heard about *Deep Down Dark: The Untold Stories of 33 Men Buried in a Chilean Mine, and the Miracle That Set Them Free* on NPR, when writer Ann Patchett recommended it as the first book for Morning Edition's new book group. Her description was gripping, and I put in my request at the library as soon as I got out of the car. As Patchett noted, even though we know what happened to the miners, Tobar's recreation of the 69 days they spent trapped is spellbinding. The writing is beautiful, and Tobar gets at both small moments of wonder and big questions of the value of life.

Emily Clarke, Development, Alumni and Parent Relations

This gripping story digs deeply into the lives of the people who survived this incredible disaster, shedding light on the human spirit in a very entertaining and inspirational way.

Andy Hughes, Garthwait Leadership Center



***Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* by Daniel H. Pink**

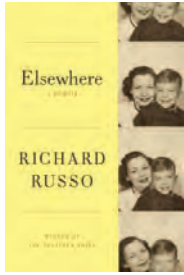
If you ever wonder why your students, your staff, your faculty, or your kids at home do not seem to engage in their work or their lives – this is a must-read book. If you are fabulously driven and want to understand how your surroundings, your bosses, your leaders have enabled that to happen, read this. Decades of research into human motivation shows the “mismatch between what science knows and what business does”...that autonomy, mastery, and purpose are the recipe for full-tilt motivation.

Tina Gebhart, Art & Art History



NONFICTION

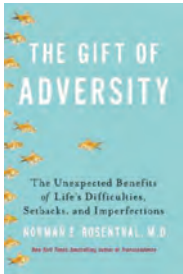
NONFICTION



***Elsewhere* by Richard Russo**

Richard Russo is best known for his fiction, and if you are looking for a laugh-out-loud novel, be sure to read *Straight Man*. *Elsewhere*, however, is a memoir that brings to life the author's relationship with his mother, who, legally separated from her husband while Russo was still a boy, had an unrivaled influence on her son. This is both a moving and hilarious chronicle of the mother-son relationship and Russo's attempts to please a woman who was always focused elsewhere, which resulted in adventures as well as tribulations lifelong. Indeed, readers familiar with *Madame Bovary* will inevitably think of Emma and her incessant search for an ailleurs.

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



***The Gift of Adversity: The Unexpected Benefits of Life's Difficulties, Setbacks, and Imperfections* by Norman E. Rosenthal**

As a milestone birthday came and went for me – self-reflection and reinvention are on my mind. This title offered a series of stories from the author's life experiences that often felt relatable. Kinder inner dialogue, confirming self-worth from within, all timely reminders for every reader.

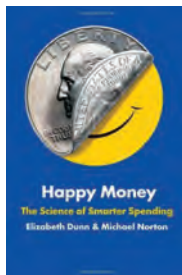
Natalie Hinton, Musselman Library



***The Glass Cage: Automation and Us* by Nicholas Carr**

If you are wondering what the side effects of all the gadgetry that is already in common use – through our mobile phones, computers, and automation at work everywhere one looks, this is a very, very well researched and thoughtful exposition. He starts with automation in the cockpit...planes running largely on autopilot and examines readiness to deal with the unexpected. (Hmmm – how about driverless cars, you may wonder!) When systems like IBM's Watson – adapted for medical use – “suggest” diagnoses and treatments to physicians, what will be the effect on their practice? Many issues to think about for our future. Highly recommended!

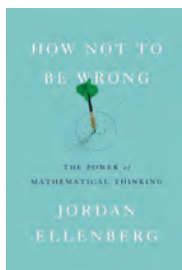
Dave Moore, Musselman Library



***Happy Money: The Science of Smarter Spending* by Elizabeth Dunn and Michael Norton**

If you think that money cannot buy happiness then you are not spending it the right way. In this quick read, the authors focus on five key principles (Buy Experiences; Make It a Treat; Buy Time; Pay Now, Consume Later; and Invest in Others) to help you understand how you can get more happiness for your money.

Bob Kallin, Development, Alumni and Parent Relations



***How Not to Be Wrong: The Power of Mathematical Thinking* by Jordan Ellenberg**

This will probably sound like hyperbole, but I think the world would be a better place if everyone read this book. In it, Jordan Ellenberg tries to explain how mathematical thinking – not the arithmetic you learned in grade school or the differentiation rules

This will probably sound like hyperbole, but I think the world would be a better place if everyone read this book.

you learn in Math 111, but actual mathematical thinking and reasoning – is critically important but also that it is inevitable and the kind of thing that most people already do, and by amping it up just a little bit we could all make better decisions in life. As he says, mathematics is just a set of “X-ray specs that reveal hidden structures underneath the messy and chaotic surface of the world.”

If I have made this sound at all dry then I have not done the book justice. Along the way, Jordan brings in examples ranging from the Powerball to politics and from planes getting shot down to the Baltimore Orioles, and he writes with a huge amount of humor and clarity. He is not afraid to use equations when needed, but he also does not revel in them and hide behind them the way that some mathematicians do. In short: you should read this book. Whether you are a math major or you gave up on math because of a bad high school geometry experience, you will benefit from it.

Darren Glass, Mathematics



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

Bryan Stevenson, executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative and NYU law school professor, has written a gripping account of our justice system's oppression of our most vulnerable citizens, people of color and those who are poor. The stories, while gut-wrenching, are told with warmth and compassion. They are intertwined with the author's own story of growing up as a poor, rural African American whose experiences helped shape his determination to find a voice for the unjustly condemned.

Harriet Marritz, Counseling Services



***The Land Where Lemons Grow: The Story of Italy and Its Citrus Fruit*
by Helena Attlee**

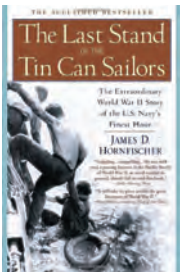
If you are an Italophile reader of travel narratives in search of a fresh experience to augment the Italy of your imagination, then this book by a Brit might be just your

If you are an Italophile reader of travel narratives in search of a fresh experience to augment the Italy of your imagination, then this book by a Brit might be just your cup of Campari and orange juice.

cup of Campari and orange juice. Attlee's overland excursions extend from Lombardy and Liguria in the north to Calabria and Sicily in the south. Those through time encompass the Romans, the Medici, and the marmalade factory of the moment. The groves themselves offer bergamot, lemons, citrons, blood oranges, mandarins, and more.

The narrative is a nice mix-up of personal stories, political and economic history, and horticulture. The author's learning, though prodigious, is lightly worn and the science is presented with great lucidity. Also, there is a chapter on the Piedmontese town of Ivrea, where no citrus is grown but whose citizens pelt each other with oranges once a year in celebration of Lent and the joys of class warfare.

Fritz Gaenslen, Political Science

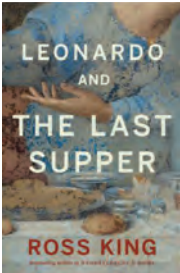


***The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors: The Extraordinary World War II Story of the U.S. Navy's Finest Hour* by James D. Hornfischer**

I read this narrative and was absolutely glued to each page. It tells the gripping story of a group of U.S. ships caught in a Japanese trap off of the Philippine Islands in October 1944. The Battle off Samar almost saw the Imperial Fleet inflict a horrific bombardment upon vulnerable U.S. troop landing positions on Leyte Island. Primarily four U.S. destroyers, captained by selfless and utterly intrepid sailors, took it upon themselves to charge into the teeth of much larger and heavily armed Japanese

battleships and cruisers – and they took a beating. Several salvos of torpedoes from these “tin cans” found their mark, but the Japanese sunk most of them, and their crews drifted in small packs among the detritus as sharks attacked the unlucky. The stand has gone down in the annals of U.S. Naval history as a perfect example of courage under fire and quick-thinking employed to resolve a perilous situation. The destroyer crews, working in tandem with carrier-launched aircraft, saved the lives of countless hundreds of Americans on Leyte. Hornfischer brings this amazing story to life, and if you enjoy history, great writing, and a spellbinding tale, you can't go wrong with this choice.

Alan Perry, Italian



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

Ross King gives us another excellent treatment of a famed Renaissance artist, this time, Leonardo da Vinci. King gives an excellent, in depth treatment not just of the painting of the Last Supper but an array of important social, historical, religious, political and artistic concerns that apply to all of Leonardo's life and work. A must read for Leonardo fans.

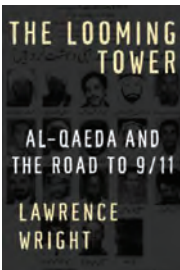
Felicia Else, Art & Art History



***Letters of Note: An Eclectic Collection of Correspondence Deserving of a Wider Audience* compiled by Shaun Usher**

This collection of more than 125 letters, many accompanied by beautiful scans of the original letters, will make you marvel at the spirit of kindness and concern people have expressed to one another throughout history via the lost art of letter writing. As the title suggests, it is indeed an eclectic collection of letters from presidents, authors, musicians, scientists, inventors, and many more that reveal the true character of the letter writer. Case in point – a wonderful letter from 11-year-old Grace Bedell to future president Abraham Lincoln suggesting that he let his “whiskers grow” and his lovely reply back to her.

Kate Martin, Musselman Library



***The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* by Lawrence Wright**

Written in 2007, this book traces the roots of the terrorism “movement” and the evolving roles of Bin Laden, Zawahiri, and other movers and shakers leading up to 9/11 and to the points of view of the extremists acting out as they are now. I found it illuminating to read about Sayyid Qutb who some call the father of modern fundamentalism and Godfather of the Muslim Brotherhood. Qutb's 1949-51 visit to the U.S. inspired writings underpinning the Muslim attitudes toward America as “The Great Satan.” The book provides an excellent context for understanding at least some of the current political tidal forces operant in the Middle East. The narrative is so well written and the exposition so clear that *Looming Tower* was for me a riveting, page-turning read.

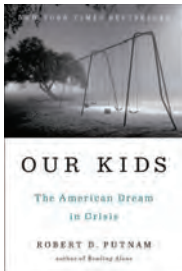
Dave Moore, Musselman Library



Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic by Mark Anthony Wilson

In recent months, I've gained a greater appreciation for the art of magic performance. Consider how a good magic effect is like a good punchline. The humor of many jokes is in the surprise of a defeated verbal expectation. Similarly, many good magic tricks delight the viewer with a defeated visual expectation. In my recent readings on magic, there is one introductory volume that stands out as an excellent general introduction to magic with cards, coins, balls, and everyday objects: *Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic*. I hope that others might find a similar delight dabbling in the art of magic performance through this very accessible introduction.

Todd Neller, Computer Science



Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis by Robert D. Putnam

Robert Putnam, a political scientist, is best known for his 1995 book, *Bowling Alone*, in which he described our national trend away from collective activities and social engagements and toward more isolated endeavors. In 2010, he scored again with *American Grace*, a tome about religious polarization and pluralism and how America has moved to cope with their divisive impulses. This year, he and his research team produced *Our Kids*, a close look at how widening income gaps have resulted in changes to family life, neighborhoods and schools. He documents what may be obvious, but which is distinctly unpretty and strongly in need of our collective attention. While his policy recommendations are not new or startling, his politically unbiased approach is refreshing. If you're looking for a happy read at the beach, this isn't it. But if you're concerned about the effects of our rapidly growing income gap, Putnam will raise your level of alarm.

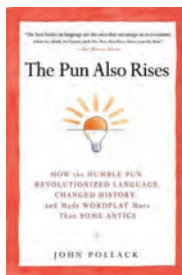
Ken Mott, Political Science



Perfect: The Rise and Fall of John Paciorek, Baseball's Greatest One-Game Wonder by Steven K. Wagner

John Paciorek was a teenage, major league baseball player for the Houston Colt .45's. The story follows John's amazing day in 1963 when, on the last game of the regular season, John had the perfect game. On offense John went 3 for 3, recorded 3 RBI and scored 4 times. On defense his glove was magic as he cleanly fielded everything hit to him in the outfield. When the game ended so did his dream of playing in the Major Leagues. A back injury sent him down to the Minor Leagues where he never made it back to the majors. Great read for anyone who ever played baseball or ever dreamed of the perfect day.

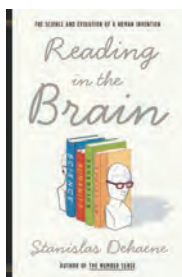
Michael Kotlinski, College Bookstore



The Pun Also Rises: How the Humble Pun Revolutionized Language, Changed History, and Made Wordplay More Than Some Antics by John Pollack

A colleague and friend recommended this book, as we enjoyed a bit of word play at the circulation desk. This background on the noble pun, and refresher on some language components, carried me back to my childhood dinner table. My father fancied himself a wordsmith, and our vocabulary lessons and punny dinner table banter took us kids a long way past the weekly spelling test. This one was a fun summer read on a long cross-country trip.

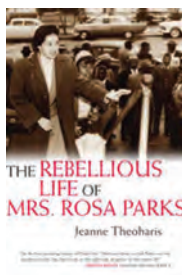
Natalie Hinton, Musselman Library



Reading in the Brain: The Science and Evolution of a Human Invention by Stanislas Dehaene

Reading, which we rely on for everything from getting shampoo instead of conditioner at the drugstore to understanding the latest scholarly debates, is fascinating. Dehaene is a clear and engaging writer who uses everything from 19th century autopsies to the latest functional MRI results to explain how “monkey brains” that evolved under pressure to avoid predators and find food were able to adapt to looking at black marks on a page and turn them into meaningful ideas. This book is a fascinating, clearly written and understandable look at a complex activity that most people take for granted by the time they are half-way through elementary school.

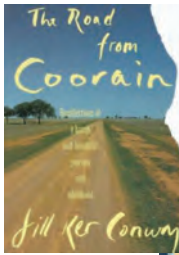
Michael Wedlock, Chemistry



The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks by Jeanne Theoharis

Most Americans would describe Rosa Parks, the heroine of the Montgomery bus boycott, as a tired seamstress who refused to move because her feet hurt and whose one act of defiance made her an accidental activist. Evidence has long been available that complicates this account, showing that Parks was a longtime activist and secretary of her local NAACP chapter and that Montgomery bus drivers sometimes refused to pick her up because she was a known troublemaker. In this political biography of Rosa Parks, Jeanne Theoharis presents the evidence to debunk the “Rosa Parks fable” and then goes on to look at Rosa Parks’ life of activism after she left Montgomery for Detroit. Most importantly, Theoharis provides a perceptive gender, race and class analysis of why the Rosa Parks fable has been so persistent. A fascinating read that turns what you think you know on its head.

Jean Potuchek, Sociology / Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (emerita)



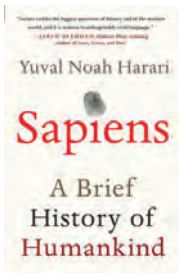
The Road from Coorain and True North: A Memoir by Jill Ker Conway



I'm a sucker for a first-rate memoir. For this summer, I recommend a two-part memoir by an Australian expat named Jill Ker Conway. *The Road from Coorain*, originally published in 1989, is a vivid and moving account of her growing up years on a sheep station in far western New South Wales, Australia. Her 1940s childhood idyll disrupted by drought and family tragedy, Jill Ker completed her secondary education in a Sydney suburb, then went on to further education at the University of Sydney and, ultimately, Harvard University for a history PhD, a subject covered in the second volume, *True North*. While there is plenty of shop talk here that would be of special interest to a historian,

Conway's narrative is really a coming-of-age account of a talented and sensitive woman's journey from hardscrabble daily life in an Anglo-centric, paternalist environment towards feminist assertiveness and professional distinction in a wider world.

Michael Birkner, History



Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari

A sweeping history of humankind, Harari charts the evolution of Homo sapiens through three distinct revolutions: cognitive, agricultural, and scientific. His characterizations are oversimplified yet profound and incredibly difficult to refute. Harari posits that most communication is gossip and that empires are defined by diverse populations and fluid borders. Part jeremiad, Harari reminds us that Homo sapiens are a relatively new species and that based on our current trajectory – of diseases, environmental chaos, and warfare – are unlikely to endure as long as our common ancestors.

Jeremy Garskof, Musselman Library



Sex on Earth: A Celebration of Animal Reproduction by Jules Howard

The chapter titles give it away: "Jurassic Pork," "The Cloaca Monologues," "Land of the Sexless Zombie Time-Travelers." Clearly zoologist Jules Howard doesn't take sex too seriously, and readers of this breezy little book are in for a bit of a romp.

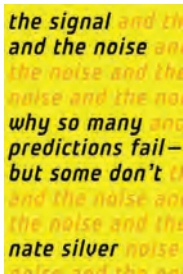
His brand of humor is that of the raconteur. In "The Cloaca Monologues," for instance, he takes us to the riverside grounds of Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. "Not the first place to think about vaginas," he riffs, "but worth a visit nonetheless... There are plenty of people here, but it isn't their genitals that I'm immediately interested in. No. Me? Please, officer, I'm only here for the ducks..." And so, as he watches drakes on the make, he muses on the duck's intricate system of avian sex.

(continued)

The female duck's reproductive tract is "built like a booby-trapped Inca temple," according to Howard. And, like a temple in an Indiana Jones adventure, the elaborate design aims to discourage intruders, in this case randy male ducks. But it's the male duck's reproductive appendage that provides the best lines for Howard: "There are some things in life that, once you've seen them, you can never unsee. Exploding duck penises are one such vision." (There are, believe it or not, slow-motion videos of this on the web: <http://www.newscientist.com/video/58486977001-duck-erection.html>.)

Behind Howard's clever patter are serious lessons about evolutionary biology, animal behavior and environmental preservation. But with plenty of dry monographs on these topics kicking around, it's a pleasure to welcome a writer who blends professional expertise in zoology with charm, wit and a cockeyed sense of humor.

Larry Marschall, Physics (emeritus)



***The Signal and the Noise: Why Most Predictions Fail – But Some Don't*
by Nate Silver**

I'm already feeling fatigue from the 2016 presidential election. One ray of light will be the engrossing forecasts of the FiveThirtyEight blog. Nate Silver's book reviews some of the promises and pitfalls of successful forecasting. The chapters cover seismology, economics, finance, climatology, Bayesian theorem, and poker. Silver's accessible writing makes this a great read regardless of your quantitative inclinations.

Ryan Kerney, Biology



***Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson**

I really enjoyed learning about the creative process that Jobs used at Apple and how he pushed the envelope to create something great. While not always the most collaborative and politically correct individual, I appreciated his drive to be perfect. The book inspired and motivated me.

Paul Redfern, Communications and Marketing



***Stuck in the Middle With You: A Memoir of Parenting in Three Genders* by Jennifer Finney Boylan**

New York Times bestselling author and Colby College English professor Jenny Boylan (and former office mate of author Richard Russo who is funny in his own right) writes her memoir about gender and parenting across both genders. As a transgendered person who transitioned from a man to a woman, and from a father to a mother, Jenny was a father for six years and a mother for ten when she wrote this memoir. In this thoughtful and, at times funny memoir, Jenny asks what it means to be a father, or a mother, and to what extent gender shades our experiences as parents. Through

her own story and incredibly insightful interviews with others, including Richard Russo, Edward Albee, Ann Beattie, Augusten Burroughs, Susan Minot, Trey Ellis, and Timothy Kreider she explores what it means to be a family, the different ways a family can be, and peoples' memories of their own childhood. It was a fascinating read including the interviews at the back of the book. An afterword by one of my favorite writers, Anna Quindlen was a bonus. For those of you who recall, Jenny Finney Boylan spoke on campus in spring 2007.

Patti Lawson, Government & Community Relations

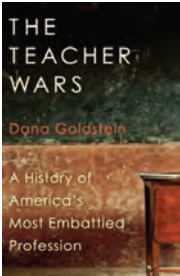


***Tales for the Son of My Unborn Child: Berkeley, 1966-1969* by Thomas Farber**

Published in 1971 and long out of print, this collection of vignettes about men and women searching for themselves, each other, and The Answer at the flashpoint of Bay Area ferment is a difficult book to describe, even to oneself while reading. Farber's style is so rich, and often so cryptic, that for a brief book it may take an inordinately long time to read. Though nonfictional, the pieces (centering on drugs, politics, cults, communes, drugs, sex, and drugs) are crafted like short stories. The people in them are not quite flesh and blood – Farber's sense of narrative time is fluid, his descriptions

impressionistic rather than reportorial – but neither are they made into stereotypes. They emerge for the reader as pure Zeitgeist, floating spirits of the time, unique in themselves but characteristic of broadly shared confusions and quests. The ultimate sense is of a moment that many of its inhabitants understood not in flesh-and-blood terms at all, but rather as a daily immersion in the unreal. That so many got lost in that unreality and never made it back suddenly becomes very easy to understand, and to feel.

Devin McKinney, Musselman Library



The Teacher Wars: A History of America's Most Embattled Profession
by Dana Goldstein

Teachers may be the most misunderstood professionals around: everybody thinks they know and understand what it takes to be a good teacher, and everyone seems to agree that teachers, in general, aren't as effective as they should be. Goldstein's book takes readers on a tour through the history of education that spotlights the contributions of individual teachers while also adding fresh insights about the way larger social and political forces shape what happens in our schools. You'll come away with a better sense of the complexity of teaching and of the important work that we still have to do – and will always have to do – to protect and defend public education.

Dave Powell, Education



Thug Kitchen: Eat Like You Give a F*ck by Thug Kitchen

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy some delicious recipes and some raw commentary. I really enjoyed making the Sriracha Cauliflower and peanut sauce. Enjoy!

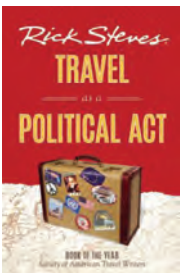
Courtney Wege, Admissions



Trafficked: My Story of Surviving, Escaping, and Transcending Abduction into Prostitution by Sophie Hayes

This book is not easy to read. It's heart-wrenching, disturbing, and uncomfortable. But Sophie's reason for sharing her story is to raise awareness about human trafficking and that is the reason I recommend it. A friend of mine read this book and her reaction was, "why didn't she just leave?" Proof to me that victim-blaming is still a problem. The reality is that human trafficking can happen to anyone. #SeeHope #SpeakHope #BeHope

Pam Eisenhart, President's Office



Travel As a Political Act by Rick Steves

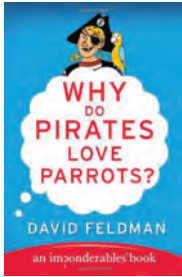
I am leading the College Jazz Ensemble on a European tour in July (one last time!) with performances in Turkey, Italy, and France. Steves' 2009 book has been a great read as we prepare for our time abroad. He offers many poignant, humorous, and profoundly sad stories about his personal encounters with people in places such as Iran, Yugoslavia, Turkey, and El Salvador. I came away with a much better understanding of "traveling with a purpose."

Buzz Jones, Sunderman Conservatory of Music



NONFICTION

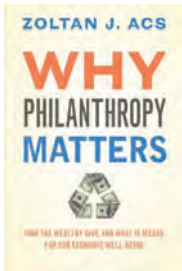
NONFICTION



***Why Do Pirates Love Parrots?* by David Feldman**

This is yet another book by Feldman that asks the questions that we ALL wonder about but were afraid to ask. It is the latest installment in his series of “imponderables” books that have titles such as: *How Does Aspirin Find A Headache?* and *When Do Fish Sleep?* Light, fun, entertaining and enlightening...perfect for summer!

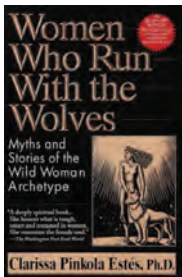
Darryl W. Jones, Admissions



***Why Philanthropy Matters: How the Wealthy Give, and What It Means for Our Economic Well-Being* by Zoltan J. Acs**

This fascinating book was part of our professional organization's education week, with a virtual conversation with the author. His analysis of the origins and nature of American capitalism and philanthropy (as opposed to charity) and their intertwined relationship, with capitalism producing innovation and by the philanthropy engendered by the wealth capitalism produces, contributing – ensuring? – future innovation and economic opportunity. I would like to sit, quiet as a mouse, while colleagues from across the academic disciplines discuss his points, just for the joy of the greater understanding I would get.

Christine Benecke, Development / Research



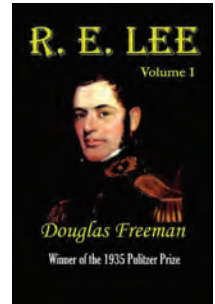
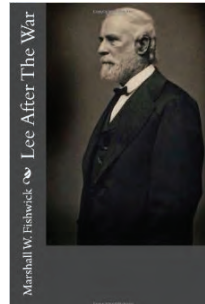
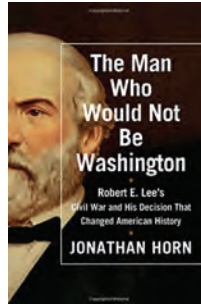
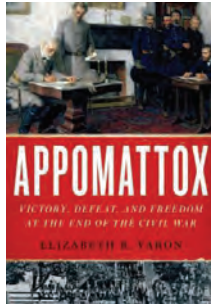
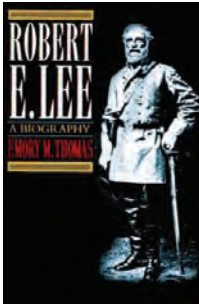
***Women Who Run With the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype* by Clarissa Pinkola Estés**

Many have read this over a decade ago, it is time to read it again. Those who have never read this, it is a great book! You can read the whole thing or just pick individual stories.

Courtney Wege, Admissions

GREAT READS FROM GUELZO

Recommendations by Allen C. Guelzo
Henry R. Luce Professor and
Director, Civil War Era Studies



As the Civil War Sesquicentennial comes to its close, it's a good moment to reflect on who lost as well as who won in 1865. The most interesting of the losers was Robert E. Lee, who, it seems, spent much of his life losing battles. His feckless father, Revolutionary War hero "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, deserted his family when Robert was a boy, leaving them almost destitute. Robert went to West Point, which (because it's tuition-free, courtesy of the American taxpayer) was all that his mother could afford.

When the Civil War broke out, Robert E. Lee was offered the chance of a lifetime – command of all the Union armies. But as a Virginian, he felt obliged to side with the Confederacy, and so ended up commanding the armies of a cause that he always knew had little likelihood of winning. Loss had become so much his companion, that at Appomattox, Robert E. Lee greeted defeat with extraordinary poise and dignity.

The last five years of his life, as president of Washington College, were the most productive of all, and left an ongoing legacy in Washington & Lee University. But even there, indignity has waited for him, in the form of a recent student protest over the display of Confederate flags at Lee's tomb on the campus.

The finest single-volume biography of Lee is Emory Thomas's ***Robert E. Lee: A Biography*** (1995). But for the sesquicentennial of Lee's surrender, the top nominee is Elizabeth Varon's ***Appomattox: Victory, Defeat and Freedom at the End of the Civil War*** (2013). A marvelous treatment of the high episodes of Lee's life is Jonathan Horn's ***The Man Who Would Not be Washington: Robert E. Lee's Civil War and the Decision That Changed American History*** (2014). Older, but short and graceful, is Marshall Fishwick's ***Lee After the War*** (1963), which had the advantage of being written by a member of the Washington & Lee faculty who knew intimately the institution and Lee's part in it.

But for those who cannot live without every detail, there is the Mt. Everest of all Lee studies, Douglas Southall Freeman's four-volume Pulitzer-Prize winning ***R.E. Lee*** (1935) — exhaustive in its research, comprehensive in its scope, but utterly worshipful in tone. Give *that* one your whole summer to read.



Before you head out on that long road trip or flight to your vacation destination this summer, consider taking along some podcasts. Podcasts have become very popular and there are a wide range of free talk shows available to download and listen to at your leisure on any phone, tablet or computer.

Janelle Wertzberger, Musselman Library's director of reference & instruction explains. "Many podcasts are simply 'reruns' of real radio programs and podcasts offer a convenient way to catch all your favorite programs asynchronously. I think an exciting part of the podcast landscape is that ANYONE can create a podcast and release it to the world. For example I have two that I enjoy that are about knitting – ***Ready Set Knit*** and ***Stash and Burn***."

If you are new to podcasts, **Paul Fairbanks**, the director of creative services in the College's communications and marketing office, recommends this website to help you get started: <https://lawyerist.com/79782/listen-podcasts>. Here are a few of his top picks:

TED Radio Hour

Sourced from TED talks, each show is centered on a common theme – such as the source of happiness, crowd-sourcing innovation, power shifts, or inexplicable connections – and injects soundscapes and conversations that bring these ideas to life.

99% Invisible

Short reports into design, architecture and the 99% invisible activity that shapes our world.

Freakonomics

If you liked the books, you must listen as they investigate "the hidden side of everything."

Clint Baugess, reference & instruction librarian, shares his favorites:

On Being

Hosted by Krista Tippett, *On Being* may be familiar to long-time public radio listeners, but I only ever catch it through the podcast. (The show also has an excellent app for Apple and Android.) Tippett's interviews with poets, theologians, artists, activists and many other people who would not normally cross my path, all lead to large questions about the human experience. What happens to the brain when we make art? What is the science behind attraction? What impact can Buddhist practice have on police officers? Each episode is like sitting down to have a *really* good conversation. I find myself thinking back to the episodes throughout the week.

99% Invisible

I love this short, weekly podcast. The episodes are usually 20 minutes long and focus on architecture and all of the hidden design choices that impact our lives. I've learned about everything from the architecture of Pizza Huts to the invention of the revolving door, and even color choices in Sci-Fi film computer interfaces. You'll gain a new appreciation for design in your everyday life.

BackStory with the American History Guys

This hour-long podcast on American History features historians Ed Ayers, Peter Onuf and Brian Balogh. Each episode focuses on a topic in U.S. history, like the history of oil, vegetarianism, death and mourning, corruption, and other, perhaps happier-sounding topics. It's on the longer side but perfect for a good drive. They also take questions if you have an American history puzzle that needs to be solved.



Serial

I binge listened to *Serial*, hosted by Sarah Koenig, during a long drive to see my parents for Thanksgiving. Like millions of other listeners, I was drawn into Koenig's weekly podcast, which focuses on the 1999 murder of Hae Min Lee in Baltimore, MD. Koenig conducts extensive interviews with figures central to the case, including Hae's ex-boyfriend Adnan Syed, who is currently in prison for her murder. If you haven't listened before, you have 12 episodes to enjoy. There is a rich online community filled with listeners who have created maps and timelines to accompany the podcast's own investigation. Season two of the show, which will focus on a new story, begins later in 2015.



Jacob Brintzenhoff, the library's user services assistant, is an ardent fan of ***Welcome to Night Vale* by Joseph Fink, Jeffrey Cranor**:

Welcome to Night Vale is written in the style of old-time serial radio dramas, filled with local news, community updates and weather reports. Night Vale is a town like Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon...if it was set in the Twilight Zone and written by H.P. Lovecraft! Cecil, the host and newscaster, is always entertaining, the music is great and the Sheriff's Secret Police probably won't arrest you for listening to the show. And remember, dogs are not allowed in the dog park.

FILMS FILMS



***À la folie...pas du tout (He Loves Me...He Loves Me Not)* directed by Laetitia Colombani (2002)**

This movie begins like many romance films about young love. Angelique, a beautiful young artist, falls madly in love with Loic, a successful, married cardiologist. Angelique seems content to wait patiently and lovingly while Loic's marriage deteriorates until finally she comes to the devastating realization that he has no intentions of leaving his wife. As Angelique spirals into a deep depression and her psyche begins to unravel, the viewer is given the first indications that the relationship between Angelique and Loic may never have been quite as it seemed.

Miranda Wisor, Musselman Library



***Crisis Hotline: Veterans Press 1* directed by Ellen Goosenberg Kent (2013)**

This 40-minute documentary is about the 24-hour Veterans Crisis Line that is the only call center in the United States that helps veterans in crisis. It focuses on the responders and their supervisors as they answer phone calls from veterans who are suicidal. You see the various emotions the workers go through after each call and how they help each other work through these feelings before they are needed for the next phone call. The film won the 2014 Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject. Definitely worth watching!

Nancy Bernardi, Musselman Library



***Happy Valley* created by Sally Wainwright (2014)**

Wainwright, a BBC veteran, captures the bleak existence in England's midlands in this small-town noir. The series rests on the shoulders of Sarah Lancashire, another BBC fixture who brings Sergeant Catherine Cawood, a dedicated cop with sharp edges that conceal the requisite personal demons of all fictional police, to life. At its best, *Happy Valley* is a grim, quietly fascinating drama about a woman adrift, and the workings of a small town caught in its own despair. Everyone in it seems to be grasping at slivers of hope down in the valley without hope.

Jack Ryan, Provost's Office



***Mapp and Lucia* directed by Donald McWhinnie (1985-1986) and
The Catherine Cookson Anthology directed by David Wheatley (1994-1999)**

The UK has a seemingly endless supply of high-quality made-for-TV dramas. Here are a couple of lesser-known gems you might rent. *Mapp and Lucia* (1985-1986) is a two-season series based on books by E.F. Benson (1867-1940). It is set in the village of Tilling (based on the author's home town of Rye on the southeast coast of England) where Mapp and Lucia compete for social prominence through games of one-upmanship in community events and gossip. Geraldine McEwan (Lucia) (1932-2015) is a familiar face, but this to me is her finest hour. Her affected voice modulations, pretentious dropping of Italian phrases and striking outfits are priceless. This understated farcical treatment of British middle-class status-seeking in the 1920s has led me to seek out both Benson novels (*Queen Lucia*, 1920, is the first in this series) and more McEwan performances.



The Catherine Cookson Anthology (1994-1999) is a sampling from the author's 90 novels set in northeast England (near Newcastle-Upon-Tyne) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Cookson (1906-1998) can spin a yarn like no other. Her willingness to develop characters in unexpected ways and to bump off one or two favorites if it furthers the plot keeps me interested and guessing. I always know that the horrible parts (some violence) will give way to a happy (or at least poetically resolved) ending. I have seen other British TV adaptations of Cookson novels as well, and they have all been good.

Charles F. Emmons, Sociology



***Only Lovers Left Alive* directed by Jim Jarmusch (2013)**

Jarmusch isn't interested in supernatural horror, romantic gore, or eternal love as the ultimate expression of teenage infatuation. Rather, Jarmusch is interested in vampire longevity. His Adam and Eve (Tom Hiddleston and Tilda Swinton), inspired by Mark Twain's take on the couple, possess wisdom and perspective on history, literature, and culture that ordinary humans can't achieve. These are weary adults out of touch with the modern world. Jarmusch draws cinematic atmosphere from the industrial wasteland of Detroit and the exotic streets and cafés in Tangiers, and generally commits himself foremost to the shape of the vampires' lives more than the direction.

Jack Ryan, Provost's Office



***The Rabbi's Cat* directed by Antoine Delesvaux and Joann Sfar (2011)**

This animated gem that I found quite by chance on Netflix should engage anyone interested in cats, discussions on religion (Judaism and Islam are central concerns of the film), and some beautifully crafted imagery of northern Africa. With its protagonist a talking cat, this might seem like a child's story at first glance but its quirky, philosophical ideas soon suggest a different and deeply thoughtful commentary on animals, humans, and the way we think of both.

Salma Monani, Environmental Science



***The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* directed by Ken Burns (2014)**

I don't typically watch many documentary films in my free time, but I was completely riveted when I started watching this latest Ken Burns film. It tells the story of Theodore, Eleanor, and Franklin Roosevelt in one sweeping century-long narrative and reveals the major trials and successes of each figure both personally and politically. With seven parts and 14 hours of viewing time, it took me about a week to get through the entire film, but I think it is definitely worth the length! Its near-comprehensive interpretation of one of America's most famous and influential families will inspire you to search the biography shelves to find more on the Roosevelt family.

Klara Shives, Musselman Library



***Selma* directed by Ava DuVernay (2014)**

Those looking for a compelling, complex film about the modern black freedom struggle should head straight for Netflix and download *Selma*. Unlike most Hollywood depictions of the civil rights movement, this portrayal of the campaign that gave rise to the Voting Rights Act rightfully places African Americans (both well-known figures such as Martin Luther King and John Lewis and grassroots activists such as Annie Lee Cooper and Jimmie Lee Jackson) at the center of their own story. More complex than most historical dramas, *Selma* explores the complicated relationship between the

federal government and the movement, including the near-constant surveillance of movement leaders by the FBI, tensions between different civil rights organizations, and the internal dynamics between activists. In this 50th anniversary year, as enforcement of the Voting Rights Act has shriveled, the film offers a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made to secure this legislation, and the importance of restoring it to full strength.

Jill Ogline Titus, Civil War Institute



***Snowpiercer* directed by Bong Joon Ho (2013)**

A nice horizontal companion to J.G. Ballard's vertical deconstruction of social order [see *High-Rise*, p. 8], Bong's film is a B-picture science fiction film that also captures

Gripping and beautifully shot, Snowpiercer is a genre picture with a purpose.

social decay, albeit captured inside a speeding train on a perpetual loop. This is an elaborate dystopian parable and socioeconomic allegory with an oppressed proletariat confined to the rear cars and oligarchic rulers up front. Gripping and beautifully shot, *Snowpiercer* is a genre picture with a purpose.

Jack Ryan, Provost's Office



***The Sopranos* created by David Chase (1999-2007)**

This is such an outstanding TV series! It is regarded by some as the greatest series of all time. It is about Tony Soprano, a New Jersey Mafia boss who regularly visits a psychiatrist because of the many problems he faces in balancing his personal and professional life. James Gandolfini, who sadly passed away in 2013, not only plays Tony Soprano – he *is* Tony Soprano! And the remaining cast members are superb. I was hooked from Episode 1 to the much-talked-about finale. It's worth watching – so please *don't* "Forget about it"!

Nancy Bernardi, Musselman Library



***The Straight Story* directed by David Lynch (1999)**

In his maybe most lighthearted film, David Lynch tells the story of a man using a lawn tractor to pay a visit to his brother two states away. At five miles per hour, this is probably the slowest road movie ever done, but it tells a very American, a very funny, and a very moving story about what is important in life. The main actor, Richard Farnsworth, received an Academy Award nomination for his portrayal of Alvin Straight.

Henning Wrage, German Studies



***We Are the Best!* directed by Lukas Moodysson (2013)**

Set in 1980s Stockholm, *We Are the Best!* is a movie about the formation of a punk band by three teenage girls. The band and their relationships with each other help them deal with school, boys, and their families. Thankfully, the filmmakers treat these characters and their concerns with respect, even when those around them do not.

Brent Harger, Sociology



***Relatos Salvajes (Wild Tales)* directed by Damián Sziffrón (2014)**

A finalist for the 2014 Oscar for the Best Foreign Language Film, this Argentine movie is a study in dark humor. It consists of six independent episodes in which individuals who have been wronged seek revenge. An over-the-top comedy, it is not for the faint of heart.

Kerr Thompson, Spanish



Resident guru a.k.a. Associate Professor of Film Studies, Jim Udden, weighs in on his picks for films and television shows.

In writing this year's "outtakes," I initially was not certain what I would actually write about. First off, despite claiming to be an expert on world cinema/media (with a special concentration in East Asia), I have not been to a viable international film festival since late 2012. (Bad boy.) Second, I have noticed how I have come to rely on Netflix instant streaming, that presently I no longer need to finagle the system so I make sure I get not less than two DVD/Blu-ray deliveries per week arriving at my house, i.e. via *actual* mail – and I mean that kind of mail where actual people *physically* deliver tangible objects to your house! (Very bad boy!) And yes, I worry even more about the future.

Serving on a committee this year with two student representatives, we all noticed that we old fogies (i.e. the faculty) needed the "big screens" of our laptops to peruse our documents; the students only need the itty bitty screens of their smartphones to presumably peruse same said documents. Those same diminutive screens are also where these young folks also watch most of their movies! (Very, Very VERY bad boys and girls! However, the female student, who is only first-year, did joke to me that she hopes when she graduates that she will get laser eye surgery as a graduation present! Funniest student comment ever.)

Still, there was no one show or film this year that matched the experience I had with *The Returned*, the French series I raved about a year ago. An American remake is now playing on A&E. I watched the first episode and was surprised how similar it was to the French original – but I still think you should see the French original.



I do recommend some memorable British shows now offered on Netflix, such as the second season of ***The Fall*** (where the male serial killer is played by the same male lead in *50 Shades of Grey* – a film I will never see unless I am subjected to the same treatment that Malcom MacDowell underwent in *A Clockwork Orange*), ***Happy Valley***, ***Southcliffe***, ***Peaky Blinders***, and above all else, ***Black Mirror***.



UDDEN'S OUTTAKES



Meanwhile, Netflix continues to hit with *House of Cards* and *Orange is the New Black*, but like everyone else, this newcomer was figured to fail at some point as it clearly has done with the hugely-budgeted and utterly sleep-inducing, *Marco Polo*.

If the days of cable are indeed numbered (you can blame the young for this, by the way, only you really can't blame them for trying to get around those ridiculous cable bills), it clearly is going down in a blaze of glory in the United States. **Better Call Saul**, after a really shaky premiere, has proved to be a superb follow up (really a prequel) to *Breaking Bad*. It will even make you look at Saul and Mike in a very different light, since neither set out to be as bad as they appeared in the original Vince Gilligan series.

HBO is still HBO, most of all with a new comic series in a hospital, **Getting On**, which I can recommend based only just three episodes we were able to see for free. (In one episode June Squibb of *Nebraska* fame returns with her indelible foulmouthed ways, only now because she has Alzheimer's.) There is one other HBO show I also recommend based on seeing only a couple of episodes. (As you might have figured out by now, we watch HBO when it is free for a week or two on Comcast. Bad? Or just plain smart?! This is **The Leftovers**, a haunting show about the complex societal aftermath of an inexplicable event where two percent of the world's population vanished into thin air.



But many of the most interesting new cable shows are found elsewhere. As much as it pains me to say it, (since it is owned by Rupert Murdoch's NewsCorp), FX is arguably the most consistent producer of interesting shows in recent times. I am convinced that *The Americans* and *Louie* will never lose interest for me, yet newcomers stood out such as **Married** (for married people who can appreciate how ridiculous it can be being married), and **Man Seeking Woman** (for single people who can appreciate how ridiculous it can be being single) and above all, **Fargo**, which was so cinematic and so compelling that it far exceeded the original film by the Coen brothers.



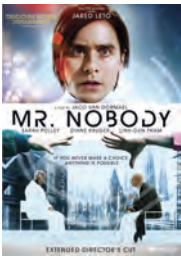
Meanwhile, the Golden Globe winner from Showtime, **The Affair**, is a must see. It sounds salacious, but it is something else entirely: in each episode an affair is presented in two halves: his version and her version. Both characters remember certain details in such contradictory ways that many have compared it to Akira Kurosawa's **Rashomon** (1951). (Actually, you should see that film as well if you have not already. I use it in my 101 course.)



So what of films? As it turns out, the only real contenders at the Oscars this year, **Birdman** and **Boyhood**, actually deserved the accolades. The former is simply a tour de force, but the latter is a rather original take on the "slice of life" tradition that one finds all over the world since the Italian neorealists first put this idea on the global map right after WWII.



The one blockbuster worth viewing is **Interstellar**, because frankly nobody does more intelligent blockbusters than Christopher Nolan. Another film that few saw is **Snowpiercer**, a Korean film done in English that is utterly implausible yet somehow works since it pits to 1% vs. the 99% on a post-apocalyptic train that never stops. (Seriously, that is the premise.) Other Asian films worth seeing are **A Touch of Sin** (China) **Like Father, Like Son** (Japan), and **The Lunchbox** (India). Or if you are curious what happens when an Iranian master, Abbas Kiarostami, makes a film in Japan, then see **Like Someone in Love**.



The European films that stood out are **Mr. Nobody** by Jaco van Dormael and **Beyond the Hills** by the Romanian Cristian Mungiu. For documentaries, I recommend Errol Morris' **The Unknown Known** about Donald Rumsfeld and his uncanny ability at doublespeak, and a film about back-up singers who should have been famous, **20 Feet from Stardom**. Films I will see when they become available are **Leviathan**, **Timbuktu**, **Two Days, One Night**, and **Taxi** from Iran, made by a director presumably still under house arrest, Jafar Panahi.



The European films that stood out are Mr. Nobody by Jaco van Dormael and Beyond the Hills by the Romanian Cristian Mungiu.

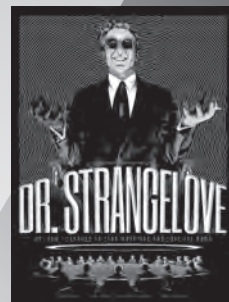


Finally, I might add that one can always go back and see what the fuss was about in years past. This year there were two shows we began to test again via binge watching to see how well they have aged: **Twin Peaks** and **The Sopranos**. I will say this: the first 14 episodes of the former are 14 of the best episodes ever produced. (I actually recommend stopping at episode 14.) But **The Sopranos**? We made it only back to the fourth season before deciding we were exhausted. Why? Because, for all the good shows that have been done since, **The Sopranos** still

never disappoints; it is still one of the greatest character studies to ever appear on television; it is still too good to be seen in one condensed time period of viewing. It needs to be savored.

And what are summers for, but to savor?





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WINGS (1927)

JUNE 10

It Happened One Night (1934)

JUNE 17

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JULY 1

The Best Years of Our Lives (1946)

JULY 8

Rio Grande (1950)

JULY 15

Carousel (1956)

JULY 22

Dr. Strangelove (1964)

JULY 29

Bye Bye Birdie (1963)

AUGUST 5

Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977)

AUGUST 12

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AUGUST 19

The Big Lebowski (1998)

AUGUST 26

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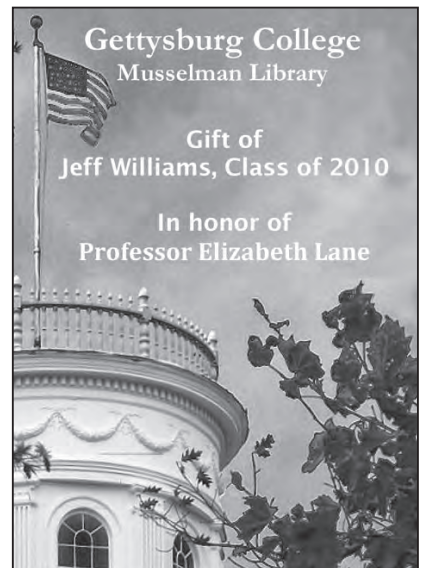
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