

NOTABLE BOOKS 2009
CHOSEN BY THE LIBARIANS OF THE EMMAUS PUBLIC LIBRARY

NON-FICTION

AARP Retirement Survival Guide: How to Make Smart Financial Decisions in Good Times and Bad. What we must know now to effectively plan for our futures.

Abrahams, Kyria. **I'm Perfect, You're Doomed: Tales from a Jehovah's Witness Upbringing.** Oddly engrossing, a very funny memoir.

Ahamed, Liaquat. **Lords of Finance: Bankers Who Broke the World.** There are many books on the current global economic crisis; this is one of the best.

America's Top Doctors; 8th edition. A reference book to give you a guide for help with a particular specialty.

Aykroyd, Peter. **A History of Ghosts: The True Story of Seances, Mediums, Ghosts and Ghostbusters.** The father of the star of Ghostbusters, with a long family history of ghosts, séances and psychic talents.

Beeman, Richard. **Plain, Honest Men; the Making of the American Constitution.** A day-by-day account including the clashing of personalities.

Bizony, Piers. **How to Built Your Own Spaceship: the Science of Personal Space Travel.** Okay, this isn't really a how-to book, but it is an enthusiastic update on progress in the space travel business.

Brand, Stewart. **Whole Earth Discipline: an Ecopragmatist Manifesto.** Brand devised the Whole Earth Catalog in the 1970s; he's still fighting for the environment.

Bittman, Mark. **Food Matters: a Guide to Conscious Eating with more than 75 Recipes.** A well-written treatise about the current state of agriculture and food.

Bronson, Po. **Nurtureshock; the New Thinking about Children.** Positive alternatives to what have become modern child-rearing practices, backed by comprehensive research.

Chabon, Michael. **Manhood for Amateurs: The Pleasures and Regrets of a Husband, Father, and Son.** Essays on family life by the noted fiction author.

Collins, Billy. **Bright Wings: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems about Birds.** Illustrated by David Allen Sibley, this is a lovely treasure of a book.

Collins, Gail. **When Everything Changed: the Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present.** How far women have come in 50 years!

Cooper, Gwen. **Homer's Odyssey; a Fearless Feline Tale, or How I Learned about Love and Life with a Blind Wonder Cat.** The title says it all.

Doxiadis, Apostolos. **Logicomix: an Epic Search for Truth.** Bertrand Russell's mathematical quest told in graphic arts form.

Dutton, Denis. **The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure and Human Evolution.** Why art is central to human existence.

Duncan, Dayton. **The National Parks: America's Best Idea.** The companion to the recent Ken Burns series; a remarkable story.

Ebbesmeyer, Curtis. **Flotsametrics and the Floating World: How One Man's Obsession with Runaway Sneakers and Rubber Ducks Revolutionized Ocean Science.** What floating debris tells us about currents and health of the ocean.

Eggars, Dave. **Zeitoun.** The story of a Syrian Muslim who has adopted New Orleans as his home and what befell him when he stayed behind during Hurricane Katrina.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. **Bright-sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking has Undermined America.** One of our best social commentators finds another fascinating area to study.

Eisenberg, John. **That First Season: How Vince Lombardi Took the Worst Team in the NFL and Set it on the Path to Glory.** Everyone loves a rags-to-riches tale.

Ellard, Colin. **You are Here: Why We Can Find our Way to the Moon but Get Lost at the Mall.** An anecdotally-rich look at spatial intelligence.

Epstein, Greg M. **Good Without God: What a Billion Nonreligious People Do Believe.** Harvard's humanist chaplain's response to both atheists and religious leaders.

Evans, Richard J. **The Third Reich at War.** The last volume of the author's masterful trilogy on WWII in Germany..

Farmer, John. **The Ground Truth: the Untold Story of America under Attack on 9/11.** Insight into the events of September 11, based on recently released documents.

Feiler, Bruce. **America's Prophet: Moses and the American Story.** Feiler finds that the United States is the land of many Moseses.

Fitzgerald, Paul. **Invisible History: Afghanistan's Untold Story.** An important study of a vital region.

Fleeson, Linda. **Waking up in Eden; in Pursuit of an Impassioned Life on an Imperiled Island.** How the National Tropical Botanical Garden in Hawaii attempts to save endangered plants.

Foer, Jonathan Safran. **Eating Animals.** The author of Everything is Illuminated and Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close, asks us to reconsider the food choices, menus, and myths we grew up with.

Freeman, John. **The Tyranny of E-mail: the Four-thousand Year Journey to Your Inbox.** Does email bring us closer together, or, as this author wonders, does email actually drive us apart?

Gillon, Steven M. **The Kennedy Assassination 24 Hours after: Lyndon B. Johnson's Pivotal First Day as President.** Using recently released documents, Gillon creates a page-turner with new facts about a mystery that intrigues us all.

Goodall, Jane. **Hope for Animals and Their World; How Endangered Species are being Rescued from the Brink.** The world famous animal advocate tells success stories.

Gopnik, Adam. **Angels and Ages: a Short Book on Lincoln, Darwin, and Modern Life.** Lincoln and Darwin were born the same day; this dual biography follows both men.

Grandin, Temple. **Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals.** Grandin describes her work and how simple changes can make animals' lives better.

Gupta, Sanjay. **Cheating Death: the Doctors and Medical Miracles that are Saving Lives against all Odds.** Fascinating tales told in a storytelling manner.

- Hallinan, Joseph T. **Why We Make Mistakes: How We Look Without Seeing, Forget Things in Seconds, and Are All Pretty Sure We are Way Above Average.** Huh?
- Heyhoe, Kate. **Cooking Green: Reducing your Carbon Footprint in the Kitchen – the New Green Basics Way.** A well-explained guide to reducing your “cookprint”.
- Holzer, Harold., editor. **The Lincoln Anthology: Great Writers on his Life and Legacy from 1860 to Now.** An excellent tribute to Lincoln on the 200th anniversary of his birth.
- Joya, Malalai. **A Woman Among Warlords: the Extraordinary Story of an Afghan Who Dared to Raise Her Voice.** An extraordinary story of courage.
- Keegan, John. **The American Civil War: a Military History.** Keegan uses the topography of the American continent as the basis for his analysis of the war.
- Keller, Michael. **Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*: a Graphic Adaptation.** This story works well in pictures.
- Kidder, Tracy. **Strength in What Remains.** The ultimate American immigrant’s story: a poor immigrant’s journey from Africa to a medical career in America.
- Kurlansky, Mark. **The Food of a Younger Land... from the Lost WPA Files.** Short vignettes about food, from the 1930s and 40s, each with an introduction by the author.
- Kushner, Harold S. **Conquering Fear: Living Boldly in an Uncertain World.** Reassurance from the author of When Bad Things Happen to Good People.
- Lacey, Robert. **Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists, and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia.** A well-written and evenhanded portrait of a powerful nation and its struggles with modernity.
- Levitt, Steven D. **Superfreakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes, and Why Suicide Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance.** A maverick’s look at global economics.
- Lih, Andrew. **The Wikipedia Revolution: How a Bunch of Nobodies Created the World’s Greatest Encyclopedia.** Even the naysayers use Wikipedia!
- MacMillan, Margaret. **Dangerous Games: the Uses and Abuses of History.** A small, highly readable study on why history matters.
- Maass, Peter. **Crude World: the Violent Twilight of Oil.** The oil economy is not sustainable. It can impoverish nations.
- Masson, Jeffrey Moussaieff. **The Face on Your Plate: the Truth About Food.** Aside from health concerns, the author details the amount of energy that goes into meat production.
- McEnany, Jack. **Brush Cat: On Trees, the Wood Economy, and the Most Dangerous Job in America.** Independent loggers in New England have a dangerous job, but they are environmentally responsible.
- Meyerson, Daniel. **In the Valley of the Kings: Howard Carter and the Mystery of King Tutankhamun’s Tomb.** Find out how Carter knew where to look for King Tut.
- Miller, Donalyn. **The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child.** Ideas to encourage children to read often and everywhere and to become lovers of reading.
- Mlodinow, Leonard. **The Drunkard’s Walk: How Randomness Rules our Lives.** A science geek’s delight.

Mortenson, Greg. **Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan.** The author's gripping story, told first in *Three Cups of Tea*, continues as his Central Asia Institute makes peace, one school at a time.

Murphy, Terry. **Life in Rewind: the Story of a Young Courageous Man Who Persevered over OCD and the Harvard Doctor Who Broke All the Rules to Help Him.** For fans of psychological case studies, this tells of what may be the worst example of obsessive-compulsive disorder ever chronicled.

Niman, Nicolette Hahn. **Righteous Pork Chop: Finding a Life and Good Food beyond Factory Farms.** Factory farms create many problems, but there are ways to raise livestock that are humane, productive, and profitable.

Owen, David. **Green Metropolis: What the City Can Teach the Country About True Sustainability.** How can New York City be the most eco-friendly place in America?

Paglen, Trevor. **Blank Spots: the Dark Geography of the Pentagon's Secret World.** Cover-ups, maps with no names, small planes carrying workers into an anonymous world.

Posner, Gerald. **Miami Babylon: Crime, Wealth, and Power, a Dispatch from the Beach.** The real Miami vice—high finance, the Mob, and a sleepy beach community.

Powell, Diane Hennacy. **The ESP Enigma: the Scientific Case for Psychic Phenomena.** We have a funny feeling that some people will love this book.

Sanderson, Eric. **Mannahatta: a Natural History of New York City.** Using maps from Revolutionary War times and computer graphics, you can actually get a realistic glimpse of what Manhattan was like before urban development took over.

Shell, Ellen Ruppel. **Cheap: the High Cost of Discount Culture.** Cheap can equal shoddy, and cheap devalues the notion of craft. *Wegman's* is shown to be an ideal company.

Sherwood, Ben. **The Survivor's Club: the Secret and Science That Could Save Your Life.** What does it take to survive a natural catastrophe?

Showalter, Elaine, editor. **A Jury of her Peers: American Women Writers from Anne Bradstreet to Annie Proulx.** Valuable literary history.

Sorkin, Andrew. **Too Big to Fail: The Inside Story of How Wall Street and Washington Fought to Save the Financial System---and Themselves.** What else didn't we know?

Steiner, Leslie Morgan. **Crazy Love: a Memoir.** Steiner recounts her experiences as an abused wife, including the reasons she stayed with her husband as long as she did.

Williams, David B. **Stories in Stone: Travels through Urban Geology.** The stones that make buildings or cities famous often have fascinating stories of their own.

Wrangham, Richard. **Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human.** The hearth and cooked food extended both food supplies and hospitality.

Zinczenko, David. **Eat This, Not That.** There are several recent titles in this series, with illustrations for both food items and a comparison of their ingredients and healthfulness.

FICTION

- Ali, Monica. **In the Kitchen**. Immigrants working in a London kitchen.
- Barclay, Linwood. **Fear the Worst**. A Connecticut family's worst nightmare: a missing daughter.
- Bell, Madison Smartt. **Devil's Dream**. About Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Confederate general.
- Bennett, Vanora. **Figures in Silk**. In fifteenth century England, a woman attempts to improve the silk trade in London and meets a mysterious man who will be king.
- Bolton, S. J. **Sacrifice**. A body is found in the Shetlands; named a top crime novel this year.
- Boyle, T. C. **The Women**. Frank Lloyd Wright was a famous architect and a many-times married man.
- Bradley, Alan. **The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie**. 1950s England, a manor house in depressed circumstances, and a precocious 11-year old chemist.
- Bundrick, Sheramy. **Sunflowers: a Novel of Vincent Van Gogh**. A vibrant, rich novel.
- Casey, Kathryn. **Singularity**. Texas Ranger criminal profiler Sarah Armstrong tracks a serial killer.
- Cleave, Chris. **Little Bee**. A Nigerian girl flees to London to find the couple who had befriended her.
- Dallas, Sandra. **Prayers for Sale**. A Colorado mining town in 1936 is the setting when an older woman meets a young woman who needs desperately to make a friend.
- DeCastrique, Mark. **The Fitzgerald Ruse**. Asheville, NC has a rich literary heritage, and some murderous villains.
- Doctorow, E. L. **Homer and Langley**. An inside look into the lives of two brothers, each with a hindrance to a normal life in New York City from the twenties to the seventies.
- Dunant, Sarah. **Sacred Hearts**. A very reluctant candidate for the cloister and the dispensary nun who unwittingly becomes her ally.
- Dunne, Dominick. **Too Much Money**. The late author's take on Manhattan's elite in the age of Madoff.
- Ford, Jamie. **Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet**. Seattle, 1942; a vivid picture of a confusing time.
- Franklin, Arianna. **Grave Goods; A Mistress of the Art of Death Novel**. Are the skeletons those of King Arthur and Guinivere?
- Gappah, Petina. **An Elegy for Easterly: Stories**. These searing tales are set in Zimbabwe.
- Godwin, Gail. **Unfinished Desires**. A gripping tale of power and jealousy in a Catholic girls school.
- Goolrick, Robert. **A Reliable Wife**. In 1907 Wisconsin, a woman answers an ad for a reliable wife, but is it she or her husband who falsifies the background information?
- Grant, Andrew. **Even**. A thriller about British Naval Intelligence, the FBI, Iraq, and organ harvesting.
- Green, George Dawes. **Ravens**. A novel of increasing psychological suspense about a pair who win the lottery, but are beset by criminals intending to take it all.

Gregory, Philippa. **The White Queen.** Elizabeths, Henrys, Johns, and Richards. A look at one part of the War of the Roses.

Hamilton, Masha. **31 Hours.** 31 hours in the mind of an Islamic terrorist. An *American* Islamic terrorist.

Howe, Katherine. **The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane.** An island near Salem, Massachusetts provides the framework for a story of several generations of wise women in modern times.

Humphreys, Helen. **Coventry.** A single night – the bombing of Coventry, England in World War II, and three people whose lives intersect briefly but are changed forever.

Huston, James. W. **Marine One.** A White House helicopter crashes and a gripping thriller ensues.

Jiles, Paulette. **The Color of Lightening.** A former slave and his family venture into Texas in 1863. The Comanche and Kiowa are brutal and the Indian Affairs agent tries to work out a peaceful arrangement.

Johnson, Shelton. **Gloryland.** The charismatic park ranger from the Ken Burns series on national parks has written a wonderful novel of the part the Buffalo Soldiers played in Yosemite's history.

Kanon, Joseph. **Stardust.** Hollywood, 1945. What may be a suicide may not be. Great period detail.

Kalogridis, Jeanne. **The Devil's Queen; a Novel of Catherine de Medici.** Turbulent times, superstitions and soothsayers, a very interesting slice of history.

Kingsolver, Barbara. **The Lacuna.** Take a young man with aspirations to be a writer and place him in Depression Washington, D.C., Mexico in the 1940s, and Red Scare America.

Larsson, Stieg. **The Girl who Played with Fire.** The middle entry of the author's trilogy that began with *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*---both top notch thrillers.

Lethem, Jonathan. **Chronic City.** A tiger roams the streets of Gotham City.

Levin, Daniel. **The Last Ember.** Antiquities theft and hidden tunnels under Rome.

Littell, Robert. **The Stalin Epigram.** A poet and the absurdity and tyranny of Stalin's era.

Mantel, Hilary. **Wolf Hall.** A remarkable telling of the story of Cromwell in the time of Henry VIII.

McCall Smith, Alexander. **La's Orchestra Saves the World.** A charming tale set in the time of the London Blitz, from the author of the No.1 Ladies Detective Agency and the Sunday Philosophy Club novels.

McCann, Colum. **Let the Great World Spin.** This book, a vivid novel of 1970's New York City, won the 2009 National Book Award.

McCorkle, Jill. **Going Away Shoes.** A short story collection that prompted Library Journal to say that this book belongs in every library.

Millett, Lydia. **Love in Infant Monkeys.** A fun collection of fictional stories that take people from history and even the tabloids and place them in parable-like tales.

Munro, Alice. **Too Much Happiness.** These stories demonstrate this masterful author's work at its best. This title won the Man Booker International Prize for fiction.

Niffenegger, Audrey. **Her Fearful Symmetry**. Twin girls inherit the London apartment of their mother's twin sister, of whose existence they did not know.

Pamuk, Orhan. **The Museum of Innocence**. The Turkish Nobel prize-winning author writes of obsessive love and kleptomania in Istanbul.

Penny, Louise. **The Brutal Telling**. You must like these mysteries from Quebec, the town of Three Pines and its residents.

Quick, Matthew. **The Silver Linings Playbook**. Our hero believes in two things: a happy ending to his marital woes and the Philadelphia Eagles. A funny, heartwarming novel.

Robertis, Carolina de. **The Invisible Mountain**. Set in Uruguay, this novel recounts an extraordinary tale of rebirth.

See, Lisa. **Shanghai Girls**. Fleeing from a Shanghai overtaken by the Japanese, two sisters travel to America to be with the husbands from their arranged marriages who are living in Los Angeles.

Sheck, Laurie. **A Monster's Notes**. What Frankenstein's monster might have written, had he had the time.

Smith, Tom Rob. **The Secret Speech**. Harrowing, but gripping tale of the gulag by the author of Child 44.

Stockett, Kathryn. **The Help**. An inside look into the lives of Junior Leaguers and their maids in 1960s Jackson, Mississippi. One of the very best books of the year.

Toibin, Colin. **Brooklyn**. An Irish girl finds a new life in New York, until she finds herself torn between her family in Ireland and her chance at a marriage.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. **Into the Beautiful North**. A sad and funny story of a woman coming to El Norte to recruit immigrants return to her small Mexican village that is all but bereft of men.

Verghese, Abraham. **Cutting for Stone**. Twin boys, literally separated at birth, become doctors, but still continue to search for their father, a surgeon.

Wall, Carolyn. **Sweeping up Glass**. Depression-era Kentucky with hardship, secrets and mystery.

Walls, Jeannette. **Half Broke Horses**. A biographical novel of the author's grandmother who broke horses and ran a ranch.

White, Stephen. **The Siege**. A hostage situation in a secret society "tomb" on the Yale campus.

Zama, Farahad. **The Marriage Bureau for Rich People**. A charming look at modern day India.

BIOGRAPHY

Agassi, Andre. **Open: an Autobiography** Agassi's candid autobiography will fascinate both those who are fans of tennis and those who don't know a game from a set.

Aldrin, Buzz. **Magnificent Desolation: the Long Journey Home from the Moon**. His view from the moon and from a survivor of the aftermath of celebrity.

Appel, Marty. **Munson; the Life and Death of a Yankee Captain**. Thurman Munson, a young man from Canton, Ohio and his amazing ascent in 1970s Yankees baseball.

Barra, Allen. **Yogi Berra: Eternal Yankee**. Who doesn't love Yogi?

Brinkley, Douglas. **The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America.** A magisterial biography, the first to focus on Roosevelt's outdoor life.

Bruni, Frank. **Born Round: the Secret Life of a Full-time Eater.** A series of juicy details about the restaurant review business and the author's own battle with his weight.

Buckley, Christopher. **Losing Mum and Pup; a Memoir.** An inside peek into a fabled New York family.

Caron, Leslie. **Thank Heaven: a Memoir.** She's bracingly honest in recounting her not always easy life.

Damone, Vic. **Singing was the Easy Part.** Show business was a glittering one, but the Mob controlled much, threatening many of the entertainers.

Eliot, Marc. **American Rebel: the Life of Clint Eastwood.** A thorough biography of the talented actor and award-winning director.

Gavin, James. **Stormy Weather: the Life of Lena Horne.** Likely to be the definitive biography of the pioneering African American singer who fought hard for her success.

Geary, Rick. **Trotsky; a Graphic Biography.** Trotsky's life follows the Russian Revolution, World War I, and the spread of world Communism.

Hack, Richard. **Duchess of Death: the Unauthorized Biography of Agatha Christie.** The mystery writer's life had its own share of unexplained events.

James, LeBron. **Shooting Stars.** LeBron's early career as five young boys pursue their dream of a national basketball championship.

Jamison, Kay Redfield. **Nothing Was the Same: a Memoir.** Psychologist Jamison has written of her struggles with depression; here she explores mortality, loss, and grief.

Janzen, Rhoda. **Mennonite in a Little Black Dress: a Memoir of Going Home.** Can a city girl go back to the country?

Johnson, Paul. **Churchill.** The eminent historian proves there is much still to say about Churchill, and he says it in a concise, fascinating little book.

Kennedy, Ted. **True Compass.** Written as the late senator struggled with brain cancer, this is a fascinating review of his rich family life and his political philosophy.

King, Larry. **My Remarkable Journey.** Larry King has talked to everyone; he provides a genial atmosphere for his interviews.

Levy, Shawn. **Paul Newman; a Life.** A stellar acting career and a truly wonderful life.

Sullenberger, Chesley. **Highest Duty: My Search for What Really Matters.** The story of an ordinary guy who had to perform extraordinarily above the Hudson River.

Wells, Jeff. **All My Patients Have Tales: Favorite Stories from a Vet's Practice.** Humorous stories.

Williams, Andy. **Moon River and Me: a Memoir.** It's hard to believe that he was told his title song was not right for him.

Wolfe, Rich. **Remembering Harry Kalas: Wonderful Stories from Friends Celebrating a Great Life.** The late Phillies broadcaster is remembered by many friends and colleagues.