



The 2008 Book Club Master Book List

Grouped into a few categories, and sorted by author's name. Thinned by a few deletions and updated with all the hot new additions suggested at the Sunday gathering at Larrie & Suzanne's on January 13/2008 ...

Things in the Notes section are mainly taken from various Web pages or book jackets.

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Title / Author	Notes	Year
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Literary Fiction:

<p>Lucky Jim (Kingsley Amis)</p>	<p>In Lucky Jim, Amis introduces us to Jim Dixon, a junior lecturer at a British college who spends his days fending off the legions of malevolent twits that populate the school. His job is in constant danger, often for good reason. Lucky Jim hits the heights whenever Dixon tries to keep a preposterous situation from spinning out of control, which is every three pages or so. The final example of this--a lecture spewed by a hideously pickled Dixon--is a chapter's worth of comic nirvana. The book is not politically correct (Amis wasn't either), but take it for what it is, and you won't be disappointed.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>Oryx and Crake (Margaret Atwood)</p>	<p>Depicts a near-future world that turns from the merely horrible to the horrific, from a fool's paradise to a bio-wasteland. Snowman (a man once known as Jimmy) sleeps in a tree and just might be the only human left on our devastated planet. He is not entirely alone, however, as he considers himself the shepherd of a group of experimental, human-like creatures called the Children of Crake. As he scavenges and tends to his insect bites, Snowman recalls in flashbacks how the world fell apart.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>The Brooklyn Follies (Paul Auster)</p>	<p>Nathan Glass, a retired life insurance salesman estranged from his family and facing an iffy cancer prognosis, is "looking for a quiet place to die. Someone recommended Brooklyn." What he finds, though, in this ebullient novel by Brooklyn bard Auster, is a vital, big-hearted borough brimming with great characters. Auster meditates on the theme of sanctuary in American literature, from Hawthorne to Poe to Thoreau, infusing the novel's picaresque with touches of romanticism, Southern gothic and utopian yearning.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>According to Queeney (Beryl Bainbridge)</p>	<p>About Samuel Johnson in the last two decades of his life, it shifts the ground from the physical extremes of war and shipwreck to a setting of urban flux and clamor. But the same circumstances obtain: death looms everywhere, and a whole life is to be given meaning — books written, a past revisited, a final romance consummated — before the moment of extinction arrives. The tone, as always with Bainbridge, is complex: a kind of visceral, biting tenderness or wily, anguished admiration, as Johnson and his <i>objet d'amour</i>, Hester Thrale (the latter encumbered with a living husband, a dying mother, and numerous ailing children), fumble toward an understanding of their feelings for and expectations of each other. Snapping those fumbleings into focus is Hester's precocious daughter Queeney, whose jealous temper has a simultaneously sharpening and distorting effect on her insights.</p>	<p>2003</p>

<p>Jigsaw: An Unsentimental Education (Sybille Bedford)</p>	<p>Shortlisted for the Booker Prize, Sybille Bedford's latest novel walks the borderline between autobiography and fiction, leading us from the Kaiser's Germany into the wider Europe of the 1920s and the limbo between world wars. The narrator, Billi, tells the story of her apprenticeship to life, and of her many teachers: her father, a pleasure-loving German baron; her brilliant, beautiful, erratic English mother; and later, on the Mediterranean coast of France, the Huxleys, Aldous and Maria. Jigsaw, wrote the Sunday Times, is "the most unusual, most resonant of all Sybille Bedford's unusual and resonant books."</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>The Time In Between (David Bergen)</p>	<p>2005 Giller winner. A Vietnam War vet, returns to Vietnam 30 years after the war to try to come to terms with his accidental killing of a young boy in a village. After about a month in Vietnam, he disappears. Two of his grown children, Ada and Jon, who live in B.C., come to Danang to search for him but Charles does not want to be found. While there, Ada falls in love with Vu, an older, well-known Vietnamese artist. Meanwhile, Jon leaps into the expatriate gay scene. In essence, this is the story of a father and a daughter (the mother has died) and their attempt to understand the depth and meaning of their similarities and differences.</p>	<p>2007</p>
<p>The Night Season (Paul Bowdring)</p>	<p>Written by a Newfoundland writer, The Night Season is also set there. In brief (because I couldn't find more details on the Amazon.com Website) this is the story of an academic in St John's, going through a divorce.</p>	<p>1999</p>
<p>The Paperboy's Winter (Tim Bowling)</p>	<p>Set in 1976 in the West Coast fishing village of Chilukthan, Tim Bowling's nostalgic and lyrical first novel tells the story of how a strange, unkempt salmon fisher acquired, for a time at least, the stature of a comic-book superhero for two 10-year-old boys.</p> <p>With its hints of Harper Lee's classic To Kill a Mockingbird, this densely poetic meditation on middle childhood contains many beautifully evoked set pieces. The scenes in the "paper shack," that "cave of obscenity, laughter, violence, emotional torture and camaraderie" where Callum collects his bundles of <i>Vancouver Suns</i> each afternoon, are especially poignant. It is this respected poet's use of language (images like a man on a snowy field, "vivid as a blood smear") that lingers in a reader's mind. The story swirls away like a sudden spray of snowflakes.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>The New Confessions (William Boyd)</p>	<p>In this extraordinary novel, William Boyd presents the autobiography of John James Todd, whose uncanny and exhilarating life as one of the most unappreciated geniuses of the twentieth century is equal parts Laurence Stern, Charles Dickens, Robertson Davies, and Saul Bellow, and a hundred percent William Boyd. From his birth in 1899, Todd was doomed. Emerging from his angst-filled childhood, he rushes into the throes of the twentieth century on the Western Front during the Great War, and quickly changes his role on the battlefield from cannon fodder to cameraman. When he becomes a prisoner of war, he discovers Rousseau's Confessions, and dedicates his life to</p>	<p>2003</p>

	bringing the memoir to the silver screen. Plagued by bad luck and blind ambition, Todd becomes a celebrated London upstart, a Weimar luminary, and finally a disgruntled director of cowboy movies and the eleventh member of the Hollywood Ten. Ambitious and entertaining, Boyd has invented a most irresistible hero.	
Babel Tower (A. S. Byatt)	<p>“A.S. Byatt is most famous for her award-winning 1990 novel Possession, a literary puzzle in a high-comedy mode. It was playful, clever and yet rather hard. It also wasn't typical of her work till then, which had been more passionate and realistic.</p> <p>Byatt's most memorable earlier novels had been The Virgin in the Garden and Still Life. Both of these novels centered around a character called Frederica Potter. Byatt's latest novel, Babel Tower, also stars Frederica, and is now declared to be volume 3 of a projected quartet of novels.</p> <p>This isn't a classic linear modern novel like the earlier Frederica books. Byatt intertwines the story of the breakdown of Frederica's marriage, her refuge in London during the ferment of the 1960s and her experiences as a single mother, with sections from another story. Babbletower is a dystopian fantasy written by Jude Mason, whom Frederica meets in the course of one of her London jobs.”</p>	1997
Death Comes to the Archbishop (Willa Cather)	Death Comes for the Archbishop traces the friendship and adventures of Bishop Jean Latour and vicar Father Joseph Vaillant as they organize the new Roman Catholic diocese of New Mexico.	2001
On the Black Hill (Bruce Chatwin)	Travel Editor's Recommended Book, 10/15/97: Bruce Chatwin's fascination with nomads and wanderlust represents itself in reverse in On the Black Hill , a tale of two brothers (identical twins) who never go anywhere. They stay in the farmhouse on the English-Welsh border where they were born, tilling the rough soil and sleeping in the same bed, touched only occasionally by the advance of the 20th century. Smacking of a Welsh Ethan Frome , Chatwin evokes the lonely tragedies of farm life, and above all the vibrant land of Wales.	1998
George & Rue (George Elliot Clarke)	In 1949, George and Rufus Hamilton, who were cousins of the author, murdered a white taxi driver in rural New Brunswick. In less than a year they were hanged side by side. George Elliot Clarke shows us the murder in its bloodiest details on the first page of George and Rue , then he works back in time, setting up the lives of the murderers and their family and the poor black community that struggled in the harshness of the Canadian environment.	2006
Strange Heaven (Lynn Coady)	Strange Heaven , a study of the joys and frustrations of life, is both hilarious and heartbreaking, and one of the most astonishing fictional debuts I have read. Anyone who reads it - and I hope there will be many - will find it authentic and unforgettable.	1999
Life and Times of Michael K. (J. M. Coetzee)	In South Africa, whose civil administration is collapsing under the pressure of years of civil strife, an obscure young gardener named Michael K decides to take his mother on a long march away from the	2008

	guns towards a new life in the abandoned countryside. Everywhere he goes however, the war follows him. Tracked down and locked up as a collaborator with the rural guerrillas, he embarks on a fast that angers, baffles, and finally awes his captors. The story of Michael K is the story of a man caught up in a war beyond his understanding, but determined to live his life, however minimally, on his own terms.	
Eleanor Rigby (Douglas Coupland)	Liz Dunn isn't morbid, she's just a lonely woman with a very pragmatic outlook on life. Overweight, underemployed, and living in a nondescript condo with nothing but chocolate pudding in the fridge, she has pretty much given up on anything interesting ever happening to her. Everything changes when she gets an unexpected phone call from a Vancouver hospital and a stranger takes on a very intimate place in her life. From here the plot of Douglas Coupland's Eleanor Rigby skyrockets into a very bizarre world, rife with reverse sing-alongs and apocalyptic visions of frantic farmers. The style and plot paths are very identifiably Coupland--slightly mystical, off-kilter, and very, very smart. Ultimately a novel about the burden of loneliness, Eleanor Rigby takes its characters through strange and sometimes nearly unimaginable predicaments.	2008
JPod (Douglas Coupland)	Young Ethan Jarlewski works long hours as a video-game developer in Vancouver, surfing the Internet for gore sites and having random conversations with co-workers on JPod, the cubicle hive where he works, where everyone's last name begins with J. Before Ethan can please the bosses and the marketing department (they want a turtle, based on a reality TV host, inserted into the game Ethan's been working on for months) or win the heart of co-worker Kaitlin, Ethan must help his mom bury a biker she's electrocuted in the family basement which houses her marijuana farm; give his dad, an actor desperately longing for a speaking part, yet another pep talk; feed the 20 illegal Chinese immigrants his brother has temporarily stored in Ethan's apartment; and pass downtime by trying to find a wrong digit in the first 100,000 places (printed on pages 383–406) of pi. Like an ace computer coder loaded up on junk food at 4 a.m., Coupland derives his satirical, spirited humor's energy from the silly, strung-together plot and thin characters.	2008
Little, Big (John Crowley)	From an Amazon review: The story in essence is a tale (or Tale) of one family's (one large family) association with fairies. But this isn't a typical fantasy novel. For one thing the focus is entirely on the family, the story lunges backwards and forwards in time and the family tree in the beginning is given there for a reason . . . pay attention to it. There's isn't much action but frankly you don't miss it, the action that is there is implied, Crowley shows us the mold and lets our imagination fill the spaces in, the way the best writers do. And ah, the language. If only every fantasy novel could capture the elegance and sheer range of his words.	2006

<p>The Wreckage (Michael Crummey)</p>	<p>A truly epic, yet twisted, romance that unfolds over decades and continents. It engages readers on the austere shores of Newfoundland's fishing villages and drags them across to Japanese POW camps during some of the worst events of the Second World War. Haunting, lyrical, and deeply intimate, Crummey's language fully exposes his characters' vulnerabilities as they struggle to come to terms with their guilt and regret over decisions made during their impulsive youths.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>House of Leaves (Mark Z. Danielewski)</p>	<p>Years ago, when House of Leaves was first being passed around, it was nothing more than a badly bundled heap of paper, parts of which would occasionally surface on the Internet. No one could have anticipated the small but devoted following this terrifying story would soon command. Starting with an odd assortment of marginalized youth -- musicians, tattoo artists, programmers, strippers, environmentalists, and adrenaline junkies -- the book eventually made its way into the hands of older generations, who not only found themselves in those strangely arranged pages but also discovered a way back into the lives of their estranged children. Now, for the first time, this astonishing novel is made available in book form, complete with the original colored words, vertical footnotes, and newly added second and third appendices. The story remains unchanged, focusing on a young family that moves into a small home on Ash Tree Lane where they discover something is terribly wrong: their house is bigger on the inside.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Falling Man (Don DeLillo)</p>	<p>Falling Man concerns a survivor of the 9/11 attacks and the effect his experiences on that day have on his life thereafter. The book was received to wide critical praise and many consider it, apart from his magnum opus Underworld, DeLillo's finest novel.</p>	<p>2008</p>
<p>The Inheritance of Loss (Kiran Desai)</p>	<p>Set in mid-1980s India, on the cusp of the Nepalese movement for an independent state. Jemubhai Popatlal, a retired Cambridge-educated judge, lives in Kalimpong, at the foot of the Himalayas, with his orphaned granddaughter, Sai, and his cook. The makeshift family's neighbors include a coterie of Anglophiles who might be savvy readers of V.S. Naipaul but who are, perhaps, less aware of how fragile their own social standing is—at least until a surge of unrest disturbs the region. All of the characters struggle with their cultural identity and the forces of modernization while trying to maintain their emotional connection to one another. In this alternately comical and contemplative novel, Desai deftly shuttles between first and third worlds, illuminating the pain of exile, the ambiguities of post-colonialism and the blinding desire for a "better life," when one person's wealth means another's poverty.</p>	<p>2008</p>
<p>The House of Sand and Fog (Andre Dubus)</p>	<p>Andre Dubus III wastes no time in capturing the dark side of the immigrant experience in America at the end of the 20th century. House of Sand and Fog opens with a highway crew composed of several nationalities picking up litter on a hot California summer day. Massoud Amir Behrani, a former colonel in the Iranian military under the Shah, reflects on his job-search efforts since arriving in the U.S.</p>	<p>2003</p>

	<p>four years before: "I have spent hundreds of dollars copying my credentials; I have worn my French suits and my Italian shoes to hand-deliver my qualifications; I have waited and then called back after the correct waiting time; but there is nothing." The father of two, Behrani has spent most of the money he brought with him from Iran on an apartment and furnishings that are too expensive, desperately trying to keep up appearances in order to enhance his daughter's chances of making a good marriage. Now the daughter is married, and on impulse he sinks his remaining funds into a house he buys at auction, thus unwittingly putting himself and his family on a trajectory to disaster. The house, it seems, once belonged to Kathy Nicolo, a self-destructive alcoholic who wants it back. What starts out as a legal tussle soon escalates into a personal confrontation--with dire results.</p>	
<p>Baudolino (Umberto Eco)</p>	<p>It is April 1204, and Constantinople, the splendid capital of the Byzantine Empire, is being sacked and burned by the knights of the Fourth Crusade. Amid the carnage and confusion, one Baudolino saves a historian and high court official from certain death at the hands of the crusading warriors and proceeds to tell his own fantastical story. Born a simple peasant in northern Italy, Baudolino has two major gifts -- a talent for learning languages and a skill in telling lies. When still a boy he meets a foreign commander in the woods, charming him with his quick wit and lively mind. The commander -- who proves to be Emperor Frederick Barbarossa -- adopts Baudolino and sends him to the university in Paris, where he makes a number of fearless, adventurous friends. Spurred on by myths and their own reveries, this merry band sets out in search of Prester John, a legendary priest-king said to rule over a vast kingdom in the East -- a phantasmagorical land of strange creatures with eyes on their shoulders and mouths on their stomachs, of eunuchs, unicorns, and lovely maidens. As always with Eco, this abundant novel includes dazzling digressions, outrageous tricks, extraordinary feeling, and vicarious reflections on our postmodern age. This is Eco the storyteller at his brilliant best.</p>	2003
<p>Love Medicine (Louise Erdrich)</p>	<p>Multigenerational saga of two extended families who live on and around a Chippewa reservation in North Dakota.</p>	2007
<p>The Sound and the Fury (William Faulkner)</p>	<p>Some reviews:</p> <p>Easily one of the most amazing books I've ever read, The Sound and the Fury has the quality of streaming undifferentiated consciousness but is so well constructed that when you read the last sentence it spirals back to the first, the whole ascending in a kind of literary levitation seen only the most perfectly made pieces of art. It's the ultimate psychological saga, a tale of the Compson family's pathology and love and incest and general tragedy, revealing the feelings of three brothers for their sister Caddy.</p> <p>Is it possible that there is a better book than this? I have just requested in my will to be buried with two novels on either side of my body to carry with me into eternity...The Sound and the Fury and</p>	1998

	East of Eden. But why are you wasting your time reading my opinion, go get the book!!	
The Piano Man's Daughter (Timothy Findlay)	“This novel is vintage Findley. He is back on his familiar ground of historical Toronto, chronicling the lives of a dysfunctional family. The act that jump-starts the narrative is a sudden total passion that a young woman called Ede conceives for a man who visits her small Ontario town in order to demonstrate a new type of piano. Their immediate liaison results nine months later in the birth of a girl, Lily, in a corner of a field.”	1997
The Sportswriter (Richard Ford)	It's hard to imagine a book illuminating the texture of everyday life more brilliantly, or capturing the truth of human emotions more honestly, than Ford does in his account of an alienated scribe in the New Jersey suburbs. Frank Bascombe, Ford's protagonist, clings to his almost villainous despair in a way that Walker Percy's men don't, but the book is heavily influenced by Ford's fellow southerner nonetheless. Read this and you're ready for Ford's Pulitzer Prize-winning sequel, Independence Day.	2007
You Went Away (Timothy Findlay)	“It's 1942, a time when anything is possible - though everything seems impossible. A dashing, romantic young RCAF pilot captures the searching hearts of a married woman and her eleven-year-old son - while her philandering, hard-drinking husband jeopardizes his own Air Force career. This is the home front, where war can offer hope for reconciliation, for the possibility of forgiveness, even after loss and betrayal. It is a time defined by hilarity and sudden death - a time that tests a couple's love and a family's bonds. A story as only Timothy Findley could tell, you went away is a poignant, lyrical tale, funny and infused with indelible images and unforgettable characters.”	1997
The Book Shop (Penelope Fitzgerald)	From Kirkus Reviews , 07/01/97: It's 1959, and the “small, wispy and wiry” Florence Green, a widow and middle-aged, wants to open a bookshop in the little, bleak, remote, sea-swept East Anglian town of Hardborough. And so she borrows money to buy her stock and, as a place to house both it and herself, the High Street building known as Old House, over half a millennium old and faultless except for being damp and haunted. [...] Readers will learn the sorry end, while enjoying on the way a wondrous cast of townsfolk, including Florence's assistant, the sweetly tough Christine Gipping, who, at 11, as Florence says, “has the ability to classify, and that can't be taught,” though she does make an error (true human style) that costs dear. Pitch-perfect in every tone, note, and detail: unflinching, humane, and wonderful.	1998
The Corrections (Jonathan Franzen)	A panoramic vision of America at the beginning of the 21st century, seen through the turbulent lives of the Lambert family. At once a moving family drama and a dissection of American society in an age of greed and globalism, The Corrections emerges as a truly great American novel. Stretching from the Midwest at mid-century to the Wall Street and Eastern Europe of today, The Corrections brings	2003

	<p>an old fashioned world of civic virtues and sexual inhibitions into violent collision with the era of home surveillance, hands off parenting, do-it-yourself mental healthcare and globalised greed. Richly realistic, darkly hilarious and always deeply humane, The Corrections shows Jonathan Franzen as a brilliant interpreter of American society and soul.</p>	
<p>The Thief Lord (Cornelia Funke)</p>	<p>A Dickens tale with a Venetian setting, where hidden canals and crumbling rooftops shelter runaways and children with incredible secrets... Prosper and Bo are orphans on the run for their cruel aunt and uncle. The brothers decide to hide out in Venice, where they meet a mysterious thirteen-year-old boy who calls himself "the Thief Lord." Brilliant and charismatic, the Thief Lord leads a ring of street children who dabble in petty crimes. Prosper and Bo delight in being a part of this colorful new family. Then the Thief Lord invites them on a magical adventure to a land of forgotten mysteries that will change their lives forever.</p>	2004
<p>Sophie's World: A Novel About the History of Philosophy (Jostein Gaarder)</p>	<p>Wanting to understand the most fundamental questions of the universe isn't the province of ivory-tower intellectuals alone, as this book's enormous popularity has demonstrated. A young girl, Sophie, becomes embroiled in a discussion of philosophy with a faceless correspondent. At the same time, she must unravel a mystery involving another young girl, Hilde, by using everything she's learning. The truth is far more complicated than she could ever have imagined.</p>	2000
<p>Of Love and Other Demons (Gabriel Garcia Marquez)</p>	<p>In a South American seaport town, during the colonial era, when the division between the rich and the poor, the church and the state, and the saint and the demon were absolute, and people strutted and fretted about appropriately, 12-year-old Maria de Todos los Angeles, daughter of the marquis de Casalduero and his wife, the flatulent Bernarda Cabrera, meets with the misfortune of being bitten by an ash gray dog with a white blaze on its forehead. When it is learned that the dog is rabid, Maria's inevitable destruction begins. Garcia Marquez's new fantastic novel is farcical, incredible, malicious, and sadistic. Magical realism. A timeless artist, an old master, unraveling the mysteries of life, again</p>	2000
<p>Spook Country (William Gibson)</p>	<p>Set in the same high-tech present day as Pattern Recognition, Gibson's fine ninth novel offers startling insights into our paranoid and often fragmented, postmodern world. When a mysterious, not yet actual magazine, Node, hires former indie rocker-turned-journalist Hollis Henry to do a story on a new art form that exists only in virtual reality, Hollis finds herself investigating something considerably more dangerous.</p>	2008
<p>The Romantic (Barbara Gowdy)</p>	<p>Louise Kirk learns about love and loss at an early age. When she is nine years old, her former beauty queen mother disappears, leaving a note that reads only—and incorrectly—"Louise knows how to work the washing machine." Soon after, the Richters and their adopted son,</p>	2004

	<p>Abel, move in across the street. Louise's immediate devotion to the exotic, motherly Mrs. Richter is quickly transferred to her nature-loving, precociously intelligent son.</p> <p>From this childhood friendship evolves a love that will bind Louise and Abel forever. Though Abel moves away, Louise's attachment becomes ever more fixed as she grows up. Separations are followed by reunions, but with every turn of their fractured relationship, Louise discovers that Abel cannot love her as fiercely and exclusively as she loves him. Only when she faces another great loss is Louise finally forced to confront the costs of abandoning herself to another.</p>	
The White Bone (Barbara Gowdy)	<p>With The White Bone Gowdy continues her exploration of extraordinary lives, but this time human beings ("hindleggers") are on the periphery. And we're grateful when they're not around, since this gives her four-legged characters--elephants--a chance to survive.</p> <p>Gowdy's pachyderms include an orphaned visionary, She-Spurns (more familiarly known as Mud), and the "fine-scenter" She-Deflates, not to mention nurse cow She-Soothes and the bull Tall Time.</p> <p>This is a book heavy with omens and slaughter, and Gowdy makes each elephant so individual, so conscious, that their separate fates are impossible to bear.</p>	2000
Moth Smoke (Mohsin Hamid)	<p>Hamid subjects contemporary Pakistan to fierce scrutiny in his first novel, tracing the downward spiral of Darashikoh "Daru" Shezad, a young man whose uneasy status on the fringes of the Lahore elite is imperiled when he is fired from his job at a bank. Daru owes both the job and his education to his best friend Ozi's father, Khurram, a corrupt former official of one of the Pakistan regimes who has looked out for Daru ever since Daru's father, an old army buddy of Khurram's, died in the early '70s. As the story begins, Ozi has just returned from America, where he earned a college degree, with his wife, Mumtaz, and child. From the moment they meet, Daru and Mumtaz are drawn to each other. Mumtaz is fascinated by Daru's air of suppressed violence, and Daru is intrigued by Mumtaz's secret career as an investigative journalist; the two share a taste for recreational drugs, sex and sports. But their affair really begins after Daru witnesses Ozi, driving recklessly, mow down a teenage boy and flee the scene.</p>	2008
The Great Fire (Shirley Hazzard)	<p>2 men who have survived WWII & are now enduring the soiled peace, & one 17-year-old woman who has suffered beyond her years, are the characters around whom this narrative revolves. Aldred Leith, 32, the son of a famous novelist and the winner of a military medal for heroism, has come to postwar Japan to observe the conditions there for a book he's writing on the consequences of war within an ancient society. He meets teenaged Helen Driscoll & her terminally ill brother, Ben, who are the poetic children of a loathsome Australian army major & his harridan wife. Leith is drawn to the siblings, who live vicariously in classic literature, and he soon realizes that he's in love with Helen, despite the difference in their ages. Meanwhile, Leith's</p>	2004

	close friend Peter Exley, who interrogates Japanese war criminals in Hong Kong, faces a decision about what to do with the rest of his life. He dreams of becoming an art historian, but he lacks the courage to make a clean break from the law. When he suddenly acts rashly, the outcome is dreadfully ironic.	
For Whom The Bell Tolls (Ernest Hemingway)	Some critics think this novel about the impending death of an American in the Spanish War is Ernest Hemingway's finest work. Told in Hemingway's uncluttered style, its simple phrases speak volumes: "The world is a fine place and worth the fighting for and I hate very much to leave it." Those are the words of Robert Jordan as he lies upon a hillside with the enemy closing in. Jordan has drawn the assignment of blowing up a bridge, but as he flees, a shell explodes, toppling his horse and breaking the soldier's legs. Thus, Jordan not only faces the loss of his life but the loss of his love for Maria, a woman he met and fell for during his mountain tour of duty. Death, war, love, and passion, told in a way only Hemingway can.	1999
The Glass Bead Game (Herman Hesse)	Set in the 23rd century, this is the story of Joseph Knecht, who has been raised in Castalia, the remote place his society has provided for the intellectual elite to grow and flourish. Since childhood, Knecht has been consumed with mastering the Glass Bead Game, which requires a synthesis of aesthetics and scientific arts, such as mathematics, music, logic, and philosophy, which he achieves in adulthood, becoming a Magister Ludi (Master of the Game).	2006
Narcissus and Goldmund (Herman Hesse)	Hesse's novel of two medieval men, one quietly content with his religion and monastic life, the other in fervent search of more worldly salvation. This conflict between flesh and spirit, between emotional and contemplative man, was a life study for Hesse. It is a theme that transcends all time.	1998
Kiss of the Fur Queen (Tomson Highway)	Born into a magical Cree world in snowy northern Manitoba, Champion and Ooneemeetoo Okimasis are all too soon torn from their family and thrust into the hostile world of a Catholic residential school. Their language is forbidden, their names are changed to Jeremiah and Gabriel, and both boys are abused by priests. As young men, estranged from their own people and alienated from the culture imposed upon them, the Okimasis brothers fight to survive. Wherever they go, the Fur Queen--a wily, shape-shifting trickster--watches over them with a protective eye. For Jeremiah and Gabriel are destined to be artists. Through music and dance they soar.	2004
The Island (Victoria Hislop)	On the brink of a life-changing decision, Alexis Fielding longs to find out about her mother's past. But Sofia has never spoken of it. All she admits to is growing up in a small Cretan village before moving to London. When Alexis decides to visit Crete, however, Sofia gives her daughter a letter to take to an old friend, and promises that through her she will learn more. Arriving in Plaka, Alexis is astonished to see that it lies a stone's throw from the tiny, deserted island of Spinalonga - Greece's former leper colony. Then she finds Fortini, and at last hears	2007

	the story that Sofia has buried all her life: the tale of her great-grandmother Eleni and her daughters and a family rent by tragedy, war and passion. She discovers how intimately she is connected with the island, and how secrecy holds them all in its powerful grip...	
The Bat Tattoo (Russell Hoban)	Roswell Clark's life had arrived at the point when he felt he needed to get an optimistic-looking bat tattoo on his shoulder. His ideal bat image was featured on an 18th century bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum, but strangely, on a visit to the museum, he encountered a woman called Sarah Varley, who was clearly compelled by the same bat. What did it mean? Russell Hoban's delicious new novel combines much about art — traditional and conceptual — with new angles on Christ, crash-test dummies, antiques and pornography — a pleasure on every page and as mysterious and uplifting as bat wings.	2004
The Line of Beauty (Alan Hollinghurst)	Concerns the post-Oxford life of Nick Guest, who moves in as the lodger of one of his friends from university, Toby Fedden, whose father, Gerald, has just been elected as a Member of Parliament in the 1983 General Election. While Nick's sexuality develops — falling in love with a black male council worker — he becomes more confident. Gerald fosters an increasingly frantic desire for Margaret Thatcher. Nick finds himself caught in a situation where he is only partially accepted by the family — expected to make up the numbers at dinner and go on holiday with them, but always remaining semi-detached from them. He is not a natural part of the society in which they move, and his sexuality is tolerated only as long as it is hidden: he remains a "guest" for four years.	2008
How To Be Good (Nick Hornby)	In Nick Hornby's How to Be Good , Katie Carr is certainly trying to be. That's why she became a GP. That's why she cares about Third World debt and homelessness, and struggles to raise her children with a conscience. It's also why she puts up with her husband David, the self-styled Angriest Man in Holloway. But one fateful day, she finds herself in a Leeds parking lot, having just slept with another man. What Katie doesn't yet realize is that her fall from grace is just the first step on a spiritual journey more torturous than the interstate at rush hour. Because, prompted by his wife's actions, David is about to stop being angry. He's about to become good--not politically correct, organic-food-eating good, but good in the fashion of the Gospels. And that's no easier in modern-day Holloway than it was in ancient Israel. Hornby means us to take his title literally: How can we be good, and what does that mean? However, quite apart from demanding that his readers scrub their souls with the nearest available Brillo pad, he also mesmerizes us with that cocktail of wit and compassion that has become his trademark. The result is a multifaceted jewel of a book: a hilarious romp, a painstaking dissection of middle-class mores, and a powerfully sympathetic portrait of a marriage in its death throes. It's hard to know whether to laugh or cry as we watch David forcing his kids to give away their computers, drawing up schemes for the mass	2005

	redistribution of wealth, and inviting his wife's most desolate patients round for a Sunday roast. But that's because How to Be Good manages to be both brutally truthful and full of hope. It won't outsell the Bible, but it's a lot funnier.	
The Kite Runner (Khaled Hosseini)	Follows the story of Amir, the privileged son of a wealthy businessman in Kabul, and Hassan, the son of Amir's father's servant. As children in the relatively stable Afghanistan of the early 1970s, the boys are inseparable. They spend idyllic days running kites and telling stories of mystical places and powerful warriors until an unspeakable event changes the nature of their relationship forever, and eventually cements their bond in ways neither boy could have ever predicted. Even after Amir and his father flee to America, Amir remains haunted by his cowardly actions and disloyalty. In part, it is these demons and the sometimes impossible quest for forgiveness that bring him back to his war-torn native land after it comes under Taliban rule.	2006
Afterimage (Helen Humphreys)	Inspired by the Victorian photography of Julia Margaret Cameron, Canadian author Humphreys creatively invents the world behind the images of a costumed house maid. Acknowledging a debt to Jane Eyre, Humphreys sets her beguiling tale in the mid-19th-century English countryside, where doe-eyed Annie Phelan comes to work at Middle Road Farm. What she encounters there is alien to her strict, religious upbringing as a servant after her family died in the Irish famine. Her new mistress, Isabelle, is the unconventional daughter of local gentry and a passionate artist attempting to prove her skill in the new medium of photography. Isabelle uses her house staff as models in elaborately concocted photo shoots and discovers the obedient Annie to be an expressive and intriguing portrait subject. Viewing Annie dressed up as Ophelia, Sappho or the Madonna, 30ish Isabelle begins to feel an attraction to the younger woman the kind of attraction she no longer feels for her husband, Eldon. He is a mapmaker with ambitions to be a world explorer, and he also admires Annie, whom he calls "Phelan" when she becomes a participant in his imaginary expedition to the Arctic. He also helps her to satisfy her own obsession, which is reading, by allowing her to borrow books from his library. The atmosphere that encloses this evolving love triangle is sometimes erotic, sometimes poignant and always complicated by Victorian class issues.	2003
The Lost Garden (Helen Humphreys)	The story of an Englishwoman's search for her place in a world permeated by war. The narrator, 35-year-old Gwen Davis, is a horticulturist who flees bombed-out WWII London to manage a team of "land girls"-women who grow vegetables as part of the war effort-at a country estate. She struggles to manage her wayward charges, who are more interested in the Canadian soldiers billeted in the main house than in cultivating potatoes, and writes letters in her head to her idol Virginia Woolf, whose recent death has left her feeling bereft. She also tries to seduce the world-weary, hard-drinking Captain Raley,	2003

	<p>who has a secret of his own that dooms their relationship. Though her conflicts pale next to those of the soldiers waiting to be posted to battle and even those of her new friend, Jane, whose cousin is a casualty of war and whose fiance is missing in action, it is Gwen's quiet self-discovery that is at the center of the novel. Humphreys renders convincingly her first, fleeting experience of deep friendship and love. Unfortunately, the story is sometimes marred by overwrought or cloying prose, though Humphreys's language also has its moments of elegance (during the blitz, "houses become holes. Solids become spaces. Anything can disappear overnight"). Humphreys doesn't quite have the narrative energy of Pat Barker and Jane Gardam, but fans of those authors may enjoy this exploration of the impact of WWII on English life.</p>	
<p>Moses, Man Of The Mountain (Zora Neale Hurston)</p>	<p>Blends the Moses of the Old Testament with Moses of black folklore and song to create a powerful novel of the persecution of slavery, the dream of freedom, and the redemption of the faithful.</p>	1999
<p>Never Let Me Go (Kazuo Ishiguro)</p>	<p>Hailsham seems like a pleasant English boarding school, far from the influences of the city. Its students are well tended and supported, trained in art and literature, and become just the sort of people the world wants them to be. But, curiously, they are taught nothing of the outside world and are allowed little contact with it.</p> <p>Within the grounds of Hailsham, Kathy grows from schoolgirl to young woman, but it's only when she and her friends Ruth and Tommy leave the safe grounds of the school (as they always knew they would) that they realize the full truth of what Hailsham is.</p>	2006
<p>The Golden Bowl (Henry James)</p>	<p>Wealthy American widower Adam Verver and his daughter Maggie live in Europe, where they collect art and relish each other's company. Through the efforts of the manipulative Fanny Assingham, Maggie becomes engaged to Amerigo, an Italian prince in reduced circumstances, but remains blind to his rekindled affair with her longtime friend Charlotte Stant.</p>	2001
<p>Enemy Women (Paulette Jiles)</p>	<p>This outstanding first novel by poet Paulette Jiles leads us into new terrain, both geographic and historical, in the war between the states. Set in the Missouri Ozarks during the Civil War, Jiles's story focuses on the trying times of 18-year-old heroine Adair Colley. When a group of renegade Union militiamen attacks the Colley home, stealing family possessions, burning everything down, and taking away her father--an apolitical judge--Adair gathers the remnants of her clothes and mounts a rescue effort. Unfortunately, she is falsely accused of being a Confederate spy, a charge that lands her in a squalid women's prison run by a decent commandant embarrassed by his post. After he helps her escape, the two agree to seek out one another after the war; their separate, harrowing journeys and the evolution of each character throughout make for breathtaking action and powerful writing.</p>	2003

<p>Man In A Distant Field (Theresa Kishkan)</p>	<p>Theresa Kishkan has lived on both coasts of Canada as well as in Greece, England, and Ireland. She currently lives on B.C.'s Sechelt Peninsula with her husband and three children.</p> <p>Declan O'Malley came to the coast of British Columbia because it was as far away from Ireland as he could possibly go. Haunted by memories of his family's death at the hands of the Black and Tans, Declan is unable to escape his grief. He immerses himself in a new life, seeking to produce a more perfect translation of Homer's Odyssey while at the same time becoming closer to the family on whose property he is living.</p> <p>But Declan cannot free himself from his past, and when Ireland beckons, he is drawn to his own history and to the opportunity for a happier future.</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>Green Grass, Running Water (Thomas King)</p>	<p>With a totally fresh voice--carefully controlled yet without artifice--Thomas King presents a complex web of character, myth, folklore, and very contemporary experience. Green Grass, Running Water is a rich tale that ranges from a Blackfoot reservation to Hollywood, weaving magical humor, revisionist history, nostalgia and sacred humanity into one bright fabric.</p>	<p>1999</p>
<p>The City of Joy (Dominique Lapierre)</p>	<p>What irony that one of Calcutta's most devastating slums should be known as Anand Nagar, ``the City of Joy." By interweaving impressionistic glimpses from the lives of a French priest, a rickshaw driver, and an American doctor, Lapierre creates a searing vision of the struggle for survival, the flashing violence, and the social and cultural practices of the slum. His theme that from human misery can emerge joy might seem to some readers as a bogus acceptance of a terrible evil. Yet Lapierre's narrative slides skillfully in and out of both history and fiction to create an effective but horrible montage of disease, death, and destruction amid elements of charity, hope, and love.</p>	<p>2007</p>
<p>Crow Lake (Mary Lawson)</p>	<p>Canadian writer Mary Lawson's debut novel is a beautifully crafted and shimmering tale of love, death, and redemption. The story, narrated by 26-year-old Kate Morrison, is set in an isolated rural community [Crow Lake] where time has stood still. Crow Lake is a wonderful achievement that will ripple in and out of the reader's consciousness long after the last page is turned.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>The Earthsea Tetrology The Left Hand of Darkness Orsinian Tales The Compass Rose (Ursula LeGuin)</p>	<p>Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea cycle has become one of the best-loved fantasies of our time. The windswept world of Earthsea is one of the greatest creations in all fantasy literature, frequently compared with J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth or C.S. Lewis' Narnia. The magic had gone out of the world. All over Earthsea the mages had forgotten their spells, the springs of wizardry were running dry. Ged, Dragonlord and Archmage, set out with Arren, a highborn young prince, to seek the source of the darkness. This is the tale of their harrowing journey beyond the shores of death to heal a wounded land.</p> <p>The Left Hand of Darkness: A man is sent alone to make contact</p>	<p>1997</p>

	on a distant planet, “Winter”, with individuals who, at different times, can be man or woman.	
The Fortress of Solitude (Jonathan Lethem)	<p>This is the story of two boys, Dylan Ebdus and Mingus Rude. They are friends and neighbors, but because Dylan is white and Mingus is black, their friendship is not simple. This is the story of their Brooklyn neighborhood, which is almost exclusively black despite the first whispers of something that will become known as "gentrification."</p> <p>This is the story of 1970s America, a time when the most simple human decisions—what music you listen to, whether to speak to the kid in the seat next to you, whether to give up your lunch money—are laden with potential political, social and racial disaster. This is the story of 1990s America, when no one cared anymore.</p> <p>This is the story of punk, that easy white rebellion, and crack, that monstrous plague. This is the story of the loneliness of the avant-garde artist and the exuberance of the graffiti artist. This is the story of what would happen if two teenaged boys obsessed with comic book heroes actually had superpowers: They would screw up their lives.</p> <p>This is the story of joyous afternoons of stickball and dreaded years of schoolyard extortion. This is the story of belonging to a society that doesn't accept you. This is the story of prison and of college, of Brooklyn and Berkeley, of soul and rap, of murder and redemption.</p>	2004
The Diagnosis: a novel (Alan Lightman)	<p>From the bestselling author of Einstein’s Dreams comes this harrowing tale of one man's struggle to cope in a wired world, even as his own biological wiring short-circuits. As Boston’s Red Line shuttles Bill Chalmers to work one summer morning, something extraordinary happens. Suddenly, he can't remember which stop is his, where he works, or even who he is. The only thing he can remember is his corporate motto: the maximum information in the minimum time.</p> <p>Bill’s memory returns, but a strange numbness afflicts him. As he attempts to find a diagnosis for his deteriorating illness, he descends into a nightmarish tangle of inconclusive results, his company’s manic frenzy, and his family’s disbelief. Ultimately, Bill discovers that he is fighting not just for his body but also for his soul.</p>	2004
The Piano Tuner (Daniel Mason)	<p>In 1886 a shy, middle-aged piano tuner named Edgar Drake receives an unusual commission from the British War Office: to travel to the remote jungles of northeast Burma and there repair a rare piano belonging to an eccentric army surgeon who has proven mysteriously indispensable to the imperial design. From this irresistible beginning, The Piano Tuner launches its protagonist into a world of seductive loveliness and nightmarish intrigue. And as he follows Drake’s journey, Mason dazzles readers with his erudition, moves them with his vibrantly rendered characters, and enmeshes them in the unbreakable spell of his storytelling.</p>	2005

<p>So Long, See You Tomorrow (William Maxwell)</p>	<p>On an Illinois farm in the 1920s, a man is murdered, and in the same moment the tenuous friendship between two lonely boys comes to an end. In telling their interconnected stories, American Book Award winner William Maxwell delivers a masterfully restrained and magically evocative meditation on the past. "A small, perfect novel."</p>	<p>2000</p>
<p>The Way the Crow Flies (Ann-Marie MacDonald)</p>	<p>Ann-Marie MacDonald takes us back to a postwar world. For Madeleine McCarthy, high-spirited and eight years old, her family's posting to a quiet air force base near the Canadian-American border is at first welcome, secure as she is in the love of her family and unaware that her father, Jack, is caught up in his own web of secrets. The early sixties, a time of optimism infused with the excitement of the space race and overshadowed by the menace of the Cold War, is filtered through the rich imagination of a child as Madeleine draws us into her world.</p> <p>But the base is host to some intriguing inhabitants, including the unconventional Froehlich family, and the odd Mr. March, whose power over the children is a secret burden that they carry. Then tragedy strikes, and a very local murder intersects with global forces, binding the participants for life. As the tension in the McCarthys' household builds, Jack must decide where his loyalties lie, and Madeleine learns about the ambiguity of human morality -- a lesson that will become clear only when the quest for the truth, and the killer, is renewed twenty years later.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>Atonement (Ian McEwan)</p>	<p>Booker nominee</p> <p>While Amsterdam was a slim, sleek piece, Atonement is a more sturdy, more ambitious work, allowing McEwan more room to play, think, and experiment.</p> <p>We meet 13-year-old Briony Tallis in the summer of 1935, as she attempts to stage a production of her new drama "The Trials of Arabella" to welcome home her older, idolized brother Leon. But she soon discovers that her cousins, the glamorous Lola and the twin boys Jackson and Pierrot, aren't up to the task, and directorial ambitions are abandoned as more interesting prospects of preoccupation come onto the scene. The charlady's son, Robbie Turner, appears to be forcing Briony's sister Cecilia to strip in the fountain and sends her obscene letters; Leon has brought home a dim chocolate magnate keen for a war to promote his new "Army Ammo" chocolate bar; and upstairs, Briony's migraine-stricken mother Emily keeps tabs on the house from her bed. Soon, secrets emerge that change the lives of everyone present.... The interwar, upper-middle-class setting of the book's long, masterfully sustained opening section might recall Virginia Woolf or Henry Green, but as we move forward--eventually to the turn of the 21st century--the novel's central concerns emerge, and McEwan's voice becomes clear, even personal. For at heart, Atonement is about the pleasures, pains, and dangers of writing, and perhaps even more, about the challenge of controlling what readers make of your writing.</p>	<p>2003?</p>

	McEwan shouldn't have any doubts about readers of Atonement : this is a thoughtful, provocative, and at times moving book that will have readers applauding.	
Enduring Love (Ian McEwen)	<p>A synopsis:</p> <p>Joe Rose has planned a postcard-perfect afternoon in the English countryside to celebrate his lover's return after six weeks in the States. To complete the picture, there's even a "helium balloon drifting dreamily across the wooded valley." But as Joe and Clarissa watch the balloon touch down, their idyll comes to an abrupt end. The pilot catches his leg in the anchor rope, while the only passenger, a boy, is too scared to jump down. As the wind whips into action, Joe and four other men rush to secure the basket. Mother Nature, however, isn't feeling very maternal. "A mighty fist socked the balloon in two rapid blows, one-two, the second more vicious than the first," and at once the rescuers are airborne. Joe manages to drop to the ground, as do most of his companions, but one man is lifted sky-high, only to fall to his death.</p> <p>In itself, the accident would change the survivors' lives, filling them with an uneasy combination of shame, happiness, and endless self-reproach.</p>	1999
On Chesil Beach (Ian McEwen)	Not quite novel or novella, McEwan's masterful 13th work of fiction most resembles a five-part classical drama rendered in prose. It opens on the anxious Dorset Coast wedding suite dinner of Edward Mayhew and the former Florence Ponting, married in the summer of 1963 at 23 and 22 respectively; the looming dramatic crisis is the marriage's impending consummation, or lack of it.	2008
Summer Gone (David McFarlane)	A beautifully contemplative first novel about fathers and sons, memory, and the spirituality of wilderness. Bay Newling, divorced and on shaky ground with his close-to-adolescent son, has had a thing about summer ever since his one and only summer camp adventure. He clings to his vision of that brief idyll in a pristine and quiet land of lakes and canoes over the course of his less-than-ideal life.	2001
Moby Dick (Herman Melville)	Moby Dick is beyond all rating, far beyond. This is simply the greatest work of American fiction and one of the finest pieces of literature ever written. Of course, that said, it is not a simple read, a mere entertainment. It can best be compared to reading Dante's "Divine Comedy" or Milton's "Paradise Lost." You've got to get ready to take your time, think carefully, study a lot, read slowly and with the intent to savor, be humble and receptive.	2001
Dinosaur Grows Up (Aaron Michael)	The compelling saga of Dinosaur, growing up in a world where he no longer has a place. This first novel by a promising Canadian author shows great insight into the complex psychology of extinct amphibians. You'll laugh; you'll cry. Short-listed for Oprah's Book Club.	1998
A Fine Balance (Rohinton Mistry)	In 1975, in an unidentified Indian city, Mrs. Dina Dalal, a financially pressed Parsi widow in her early 40s sets up a sweatshop of	1998

	<p>sorts in her ramshackle apartment. Determined to remain financially independent and to avoid a second marriage, she takes in a boarder and two Hindu tailors to sew dresses for an export company. As the four share their stories, then meals, then living space, human kinship prevails and the four become a kind of family, despite the lines of caste, class, and religion. When tragedy strikes, their cherished, newfound stability is threatened, and each character must face a difficult choice in trying to salvage their relationships.</p>	
<p>Such A Long Journey (Rohinton Mistry)</p>	<p>Literary Fiction and Classics Editor's Recommended Book, 01/16/97:</p> <p>Mistry does something that only the really natural writers can do: without apparent effort, manipulation or contrivance, he creates characters you like instantly and will gladly follow for as long as the novel leads. The book is about an Indian family during the years of Indira Ghandi's rule; it's also a study of the times, its politics and corruption, and was especially interesting for me, who knows so little about life in the rest of the world. It had to be a good book: after I read Such a Long Journey, I wanted to go right out and buy a plane ticket and see India for myself.</p> <p>Synopsis:</p> <p>A moving domestic tragi-comedy that introduces readers to Gustad Noble, a devout Parsi and dedicated family man, who becomes enmeshed in the corruption of the Indira Gandhi years. His journey back to himself manages to be comical and heartbreaking, deeply compassionate and unsparing.</p>	1998
<p>The Pursuit of Love & Love In A Cold Climate (Nancy Mitford)</p>	<p>Few aristocratic English families of the twentieth century enjoyed the glamorous notoriety of the infamous Mitford sisters. Nancy Mitford's most famous novels, The Pursuit of Love and Love in a Cold Climate, satirize British aristocracy in the twenties and thirties through the amorous adventures of the Radletts, an exuberantly unconventional family closely modelled on Mitford's own.</p> <p>The Radletts of Alconleigh occupy the heights of genteel eccentricity, from terrifying Lord Alconleigh (who, like Mitford's father, used to hunt his children with bloodhounds when foxes were not available), to his gentle wife, Sadie, their wayward daughter Linda, and the other six lively Radlett children. Mitford's wickedly funny prose follows these characters through misguided marriages and dramatic love affairs, as the shadow of World War II begins to close in on their rapidly vanishing world.</p>	2005
<p>Beloved (Toni Morrison)</p>	<p>Born 1931; 1993 winner of Nobel prize for Literature “who in novels characterized by visionary force and poetic import, gives life to an essential aspect of American reality”</p> <p>“Set in rural Ohio several years after the Civil War, this profoundly affecting chronicle of slavery and its aftermath is Toni Morrison's greatest novel, a dazzling achievement, and the most spellbinding reading experience of the decade.”</p>	1997

<p>Paradise (Toni Morrison)</p>	<p>It is a fascinating story, wonderfully detailed by Morrison's shrewd and vivid portraits of Ruby's citizens and forebears. But the author has done more than that. Her town is the stage for a profound and provocative debate--always personified and always searching--about black identity and destiny in America's past and present</p>	<p>2000</p>
<p>Sylvanus Now (Donna Morrissey)</p>	<p>A fishing village on the Newfoundland coast is the scene of an unusual pairing, where a harsh landscape fuels the characters' daily existence. Fisherman Sylvanus Now is content, lacking only a wife, the object of his desire the beautiful, dissatisfied Adelaide. This errant coastline seems centuries removed from progress in the 1950's, small fishing fleets gradually replaced by the massive ships whose nets cull the ocean, delivering their quarry to the canneries for immediate processing. Seduced by government assurances, local fishermen invest in liners to harvest their catch, sheltered from the harrying of inclement weather in factories, where women stand on their feet for long shifts, hands frozen, all for a regular paycheck and a few well-deserved modern conveniences.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>Love Of A Good Woman (Alice Munro)</p>	<p>In the world of Alice Munro, the best route is not necessarily the shortest distance between two points. In her ninth superlative collection of short fiction, The Love of a Good Woman, the setting is once again western Canada, and the subject matter is classic Munro: secrets, love, betrayal, and the stuff of ordinary lives. But as is usual for this master of the short form, the path she takes is anything but ordinary.</p> <p>The fictions in this volume burn with a kind of dry-eyed anti-romanticism--even the ones whose plots verge on domestic melodrama. Densely populated, elliptical in construction, each story circles around its principal events and relationships like planets around a sun. The result is layered and complex, its patterns not always apparent on first reading: in other words, something like life.</p>	<p>1999</p>
<p>Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage (Alice Munro)</p>	<p>As always, Alice Munro surprises us. While the nine stories in this new collection could not be written by anyone else, they are subtly different. The title story, for example, ranges from small-town Ontario just after the war to a near-deserted hotel on the bald Saskatchewan prairie. The setting may be strange, uncharted Munro territory, but the plot is familiar, with two lives changed forever by a random act of mischief that can never be revealed. In this great book by one of the world's great writers, the settings may be Vancouver Island, small-town Ontario, Toronto, or Vancouver, but the stories are universal, and the characters – no, the people in the stories – are unforgettable.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Runaway (Alice Munro)</p>	<p>In Alice Munro's superb new collection, we find stories about women of all ages and circumstances, their lives made palpable by the subtlety and empathy of this incomparable writer.</p> <p>Throughout this compelling collection, Alice Munro's understanding of the people about whom she writes makes them as vivid as our own neighbors. Here are the infinite betrayals and</p>	<p>2005</p>

	surprises of love-between men and women, between friends, between parents and children-that are the stuff of all our lives. It is Alice Munro's special gift to make these stories as vivid and real as our own.	
The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle (Haruki Murakami)	<p>Japan's most highly regarded novelist now vaults into the first ranks of international fiction writers with this heroically imaginative novel, which is at once a detective story, an account of a disintegrating marriage, and an excavation of the buried secrets of World War II.</p> <p>In a Tokyo suburb a young man named Toru Okada searches for his wife's missing cat. Soon he finds himself looking for his wife as well in a netherworld that lies beneath the placid surface of Tokyo. As these searches intersect, Okada encounters a bizarre group of allies and antagonists: a psychic prostitute; a malevolent yet mediagenic politician; a cheerfully morbid sixteen-year-old-girl; and an aging war veteran who has been permanently changed by the hideous things he witnessed during Japan's forgotten campaign in Manchuria.</p> <p>Gripping, prophetic, suffused with comedy and menace, The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle is a tour de force equal in scope to the masterpieces of Mishima and Pynchon.</p>	2005
The Famished Road (Ben Okri)	<p>1991 Booker winner</p> <p>“Beautiful story about imagination, spirits, and growing up in Africa”</p>	1997
The Third Policeman (Flann O’Brien)	<p>A masterpiece of the 20th century - a book people will be reading while they pilot their spaceships toward a hard day's work on Venus or some such thing a kajillion years into the future. It is also one of the few satire's that doesn't succeed by denigrating us and one of the few post-modern works that does succeed by making us howl with laughter.</p> <p>I dare anyone to read the first line and then put this book down. Undoubtedly the best first line in English literature.</p>	2004
My Year of Meats (Ruth Ozeki)	<p>Veteran filmmaker Ruth Ozeki's novel has been hailed as "one of the heartiest and yes, meatiest debuts in years" (Glamour). It tells the story of a year in the lives of two ordinary women on opposite ends of the earth, brought together by a convergence of extraordinary circumstances. Jane, a struggling filmmaker in New York, is given her big break--a chance to travel through the U.S. to produce a Japanese television program sponsored by an American meat exporting business. But along the way, she discovers some unsavory truths about love, honor, and a particularly damaging hormone called DES that wreaks havoc with her uterus. Meanwhile, Akiko, a painfully thin Japanese woman struggling with bulimia, is being pressured by her child-craving husband to put some meat on her bones--literally. How Jane's and Akiko's lives intersect taps into some of the deepest concerns of our time--how the past informs the present and how we live and love in an ever-shrinking world.</p> <p>A cross-cultural, tragi-comic romp through America and Japan that is "wonderfully wild and bracing . . . a feast that leaves you hungry for</p>	2005

	whatever Ozeki cooks up next"	
Run (Ann Patchett)	Run is a novel with timeless concerns at its heart—class and belonging, parenthood and love—and if it wears that heart on its sleeve, then it does so with confidence. And so it should: the book is lovely to read and is satisfyingly bold in its attempt to say something patient and true about family. Patchett knows how to wear big human concerns very lightly, and that is a continuing bonus for those who found a great deal to admire in her previous work, especially the ultra-lauded Bel Canto . Yet one should not mistake that lightness for anything cosmetic: Run is a book that sets out inventively to contend with the temper of our times, and by the end we feel we really know the Doyle family in all its intensity and with all its surprises.	2008
Vernon God Little (DBC Pierre)	When sixteen kids are shot on high school grounds, everyone looks for someone to blame. Meet Vernon Little, under arrest at the sheriff's office, a teenager wearing nothing but yesterday's underwear and his prized logo sneakers. Moments after the shooter, his best buddy, turns the gun on himself, Vernon is pinned as an accomplice. Out for revenge are the townspeople, the cable news networks, and Deputy Vaine Gurie, a woman whose zeal for the Pritikin diet is eclipsed only by her appetite for barbecued ribs from the Bar-B-Chew Barn. So Vernon does what any red-blooded American teenager would do; he takes off for Mexico. Vernon God Little is a provocatively satirical, riotously funny look at violence, materialism, and the American media. Winner of the 2003 Booker.	2005
The Golden Compass (Philip Pullman)	Some books improve with age--the age of the reader, that is. Such is certainly the case with Philip Pullman's heroic, at times heart-wrenching novel, The Golden Compass , a story ostensibly for children but one perhaps even better appreciated by adults. The protagonist of this complex fantasy is young Lyra Belacqua, a precocious orphan growing up within the precincts of Oxford University. But it quickly becomes clear that Lyra's Oxford is not precisely like our own--nor is her world. For one thing, people there each have a personal daemon, the manifestation of their soul in animal form. For another, hers is a universe in which science, theology, and magic are closely allied. Philip Pullman has written a masterpiece that transcends genre. It is a children's book that will appeal to adults, a fantasy novel that will charm even the most hardened realist. Best of all, the author doesn't speak down to his audience, nor does he pull his punches; there is genuine terror in this book, and heartbreak, betrayal, and loss. There is also love, loyalty, and an abiding morality that infuses the story but never overwhelms it. This is one of those rare novels that one wishes would never end.	2006
The Nine Planets (Edward Riche)	Edward Riche's second novel, The Nine Planets , is a barrage of clever wit and caustic observation, a blackly funny and oftentimes	2004

	very nasty look at private schools, the "colonial inferiority complex" of Newfoundland, and late-1990s smugness.	
As For Me and My House (Sinclair Ross)	“[Canadian poet] Lorna Crozier says that Sinclair Ross' novel, As For Me and My House , was the most "important influence" in her writing career. "It was the first book I read that was set in the landscape where I grew up," says the poet. "It made me realize that someone from my area [Saskatchewan,] could actually be a writer and, in some ways, it gave me the courage to try.”	1997
The God of Small Things (Arundhati Roy)	Literary Fiction and Classics Editor's Recommended Book, 04/01/97: In her first novel, award-winning Indian screenwriter Arundhati Roy conjures a whoosh of wordplay that rises from the pages like a brilliant jazz improvisation. The God of Small Things is nominally the story of young twins Rahel and Estha and the rest of their family, but the book feels like a million stories spinning out indefinitely; it is the product of a genius child-mind that takes everything in and transforms it in an alchemy of poetry. The God of Small Things is at once exotic and familiar to the Western reader, written in an English that's completely new and invigorated by the Asian Indian influences of culture and language.	1998
The Tin Flute (Gabrielle Roy)	The story of a Quebecois family in the 1940s.	2001
Shalimar the Clown (Salman Rushdie)	The focus of this novel is extremism. It tells the tale of two Kashmiri villages whose inhabitants gradually get caught up in communal violence. As we know from Yugoslavia, hatred takes on especially horrific manifestations when neighbors turn against each other. The neighbors to whom Rushdie introduces us are memorable and emblematic characters, especially his protagonists, the Hindu dancer Boonyi Kaul and her childhood sweetheart, Shalimar the clown, son of a Muslim family. Their passion becomes a marriage solemnized by both Hindu and Muslim rites, but as conflict heats up, Boonyi seduces the American ambassador. The resulting transformation of Shalimar into a terrorist is easily the most impressive achievement of the book, and here one must congratulate Rushdie for having made artistic capital out of his own suffering, for the years he spent under police protection, hunted by zealots, have been poured into the novel in ways which ring hideously true. Bit by bit, Shalimar becomes a figure of supernatural menace.	2006

<p>The Sparrow and Children of God (Mary Doria Russell)</p>	<p>Mary Doria Russell's first novel, The Sparrow, made an unprecedented splash in the world of literary science fiction; at the end of the book, Emilio Sandoz, the lone survivor of a doomed Jesuit expedition to the planet Rakhat, states unequivocally that he will not return to Rakhat, where his body and spirit were brutally violated just when he had offered himself to God. At the beginning of Children of God, Sandoz is finally beginning to heal.</p>	<p>2001</p>
<p>The Cave (José Saramago)</p>	<p>Cipriano Algor, an elderly potter, lives with his daughter Marta and her husband Marçal in a small village on the outskirts of The Center, an imposing complex of shops, apartments, and offices to which Cipriano delivers his pots and jugs every month. On one such trip, he is told not to make any more deliveries. Unwilling to give up his craft, Cipriano tries his hand at making ceramic dolls. Astonishingly, The Center places an order for hundreds, and Cipriano and Marta set to work-until the order is cancelled and the three have to move from the village into The Center. When mysterious sounds of digging emerge from beneath their apartment, Cipriano and Marçal investigate, and what they find transforms the family's life. Filled with the depth, humor, and the extraordinary philosophical richness that marks each of Saramago's novels, The Cave is one of the essential books of our time.</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>Frankenstein (Mary Shelley)</p>	<p>Frankenstein, loved by many decades of readers and praised by such eminent literary critics as Harold Bloom, seems hardly to need a recommendation. If you haven't read it recently, though, you may not remember the sweeping force of the prose, the grotesque, surreal imagery, and the multilayered doppelgänger themes of Mary Shelley's masterpiece.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>Dropped Threads (ed: Carol Shields)</p>	<p>This revealing collection of writings, edited by Carol Shields and Marjorie Anderson, examines eclectic and rarely discussed topics that pertain to women. In Dropped Threads various celebrities as well as unknown housewives and academics discuss the experiences that have amazed and disappointed them. Each piece contains a “shock of recognition” that will certainly engage the aging female reader. Essays by such literary luminaries as Margaret Atwood, June Callwood, Eleanor Wachtel, Sharon Butala and Marni Jackson are included in this unusual collection.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>The Tale of Genji (Murasaki Shikibu)</p>	<p>Widely acknowledged as the world's first novel, this astonishingly lovely book was written by a court lady in Heian Japan and offers a window into that formal, mannered world. Genji, a man of passionate impulses and a lover of beauty, is the favorite son of the Emperor, though his position at court is not entirely stable. He follows his wayward longings through moonlight-soaked gardens and jeweled pavilions, with mysterious women such as the Lady of the Orange Blossoms, the Akashi lady, and his own father's Empress.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>Balzac and the Little Chinese</p>	<p>This beautifully presented novella tracks the lives of two teens, childhood friends who have been sent to a small Chinese village for</p>	<p>2006</p>

<p>Seamstress (Dai Sijie)</p>	<p>"re-education" during Mao's Cultural Revolution. Sons of doctors and dentists, their days are now spent muscling buckets of excrement up the mountainside and mining coal. But the boys-Luo and the unnamed narrator-receive a bit of a reprieve when the villagers discover their talents as storytellers; they are sent on monthly treks to town, tasked with watching a movie and relating it in detail on their return. It is here that they encounter the little seamstress of the title, whom Luo falls for instantly. When, through a series of comic and clever tricks and favors, the boys acquire a suitcase full of forbidden Western literature, Luo decides to "re-educate" the ignorant girl whom he hopes will become his intellectual match. That a bit of Balzac can have an aphrodisiac effect is a happy bonus. Ultimately, the book is a simple, lovely telling of a classic boy-meets-girl scenario with a folktale's smart, surprising bite at the finish.</p>	
<p>A Thousand Acres (Jane Smiley)</p>	<p>1992 Pulitzer prize winner Jane Smiley has set her rich, breathtakingly dramatic novel of an American family whose wealth cannot stay the hand of tragedy. It is the intense, compelling story of a father and his daughters, of sisters, of wives and husbands, and of the human cost of a lifetime spent trying to subdue the land and the passions it stirs.</p>	<p>1997</p>
<p>The Accidental (Ali Smith)</p>	<p>While the Smarts are a happy, prosperous British family on the surface, underneath they are as friable as a Balkan republic. Eve suffers from a block about writing yet another of her popular Genuine Article books (a series of imaginary reconstructions of obscure, actual figures from the past). Michael, her English professor husband, is a philanderer whose sexual predation on his students has reached critical mass. Teenaged Magnus, Eve's son by first husband Adam, is consumed by guilt around a particularly heinous school prank. And Astrid, Eve and Adam's daughter, is a 12-year-old channeling the angst of a girl three years older. Into this family drops one Amber MacDonald, a mysterious stranger who embeds herself in the family's summer rental in Norfolk and puts them all under her bullying spell.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>On Beauty (Zadie Smith)</p>	<p>"Truly human, fully ourselves, beautiful," muses a character in Smith's third novel, an intrepid attempt to explore the sad stuff of adult life, 21st century-style: adultery, identity crises and emotional suffocation, interracial and intraracial global conflicts and religious zealotry. Like Smith's smash debut, White Teeth, this work gathers narrative steam from the clash between two radically different families, with a plot that explicitly parallels <i>Howards End</i>. A failed romance between the evangelical son of the messy, liberal Belseys; Howard is Anglo-WASP and Kiki African-American; and the gorgeous daughter of the staid, conservative, Anglo-Caribbean Kipps leads to a soulful, transatlantic understanding between the families' matriarchs, Kiki and Carlene, even as their respective husbands, the art professors Howard and Monty, amass matériel for the culture wars at a fictional Massachusetts university.</p>	<p>2006</p>

<p>Kidnapped (Robert Louis Stevenson)</p>	<p>After the death of his father, David Balfour sets out to meet his uncle and claim his inheritance. This adventure takes him through the highlands of Scotland where he embarks upon a long journey back from treachery and deceit.</p>	<p>2008</p>
<p>Lie Down in Darkness (William Styron)</p>	<p>Beautiful, wrenching, impossible to put down. Never have I wanted to pound some sense into fictional characters as when I read William Styron's Lie Down in Darkness. The Loftiss family saga is sometimes hard to read because they hurt each other so easily and so often. But Styron's language is beautiful, and his understanding of the characters is deep. The account of Peyton's last day is especially heartbreaking and revealing. In short, this novel is one of my favorites simply because of its account of human frailty and the amazing way in which the story is told.</p>	<p>1997</p>
<p>Waterland (Graham Swift)</p>	<p>Some reviews: A pure masterpiece of fiction and non fiction History, mystery, murder and insanity in the fens of Olde England. Why the canals were built and the people who operated them and harvested the eels in them. Juxtaposed and interwoven with the life of the narrator, Mr. Crick, a professor of history who finds peace in the madness of the modern world. Waterland is profound, difficult, and thought-provoking. It is at once an eminently readable murder mystery, a complex reflection on history and the ways in which it shapes our actions and perceptions, and a paen to teaching as a profession and a calling. I consider it to be one of the best novels I've ever read; it is certainly my favorite. Waterland, to me, is by far Swift's best work. Reccomended by a friend, I had no idea of the power of this historical novel. Lovers of history, suspense and just plain beautiful prose will be stunned by the greatness of Mr. Swift, who should have won the Booker prize more than a decade ago rather than last year.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>The Little Friend (Donna Tartt)</p>	<p>Bestselling author Donna Tartt returns with a grandly ambitious and utterly riveting novel of childhood, innocence and evil. The setting is Alexandria, Mississippi, where one Mother's Day a little boy named Robin Cleve Dufresnes was found hanging from a tree in his parents' yard. Twelve years later Robin's murder is still unsolved and his family remains devastated. So it is that Robin's sister Harriet—unnervingly bright, insufferably determined, and unduly influenced by the fiction of Kipling and Robert Louis Stevenson--sets out to unmask his killer. Aided only by her worshipful friend Hely, Harriet crosses her town's rigid lines of race and caste and burrows deep into her family's history of loss. Filled with hairpin turns of plot and "a bustling, ridiculous humanity worthy of Dickens" (The New York Times Book Review), The Little Friend is a work of myriad enchantments by a writer of prodigious talent</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>Anna Karenina (Leo Tolstoy)</p>	<p>Anna, miserable in her loveless marriage, does the barely thinkable and succumbs to her desires for the dashing Vronsky.</p>	<p>2001</p>

<p>A Confederacy Of Dunces (John Kennedy Toole)</p>	<p>It's been hailed as a masterpiece and reviled as trash, but A Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole has never been lightly dismissed. By creating Ignatius J. Reilly, a bigger-than-life bag of wind stuffed with some of the most comically outrageous and disturbingly insightful opinions ever put to paper, Toole made an indelible mark on the landscape of American literature--a feat recognized with the posthumous publication of this, his one and only novel, followed by a Pulitzer Prize. Forced to wade the lower depths of New Orleans society, the gargantuan Ignatius, his poor mother in tow, takes us on a tour de force through the back alleys and juke joints of the French Quarter as he implores the gods, railing against the hypocrisy of contemporary politics and the crushing weight of late capitalism. "The luminous years ... dimmed into dross; Fortuna's wheel had turned... Having once been so high, humanity fell so low. What had once been dedicated to the soul was now dedicated to the sale." Toole's suicide at 32 silenced a uniquely promising literary voice, denying his critics and fans alike the opportunity to determine whether his talent was a flash in the pan or a first spark of genius. Read A Confederacy of Dunces and you'll no doubt have formed your own inflexible opinion, which you'll defend tenaciously against all reason.</p>	<p>1999</p>
<p>The Story of Lucy Gault (William Trevor)</p>	<p>Booker nominee In his latest novel, Trevor continues to build upon his reputation as Ireland's answer to Chekhov. He addresses the profoundest of questions-why do we exist?-and supplies a small piece of the answer. Lucy Gault grows up a Protestant in a Catholic part of Ireland in the 1920s. An only child, she enjoys an intimate relationship with her parents and is wedded to her family's lavish country home, the nearby beach and woods, and the house staff. When Lucy's parents decide to flee the persecution of arsonists and move to England, her life takes an unforeseen turn. Tragedy and heartbreak will haunt the Gault family, and their lives do not proceed as expected. As in his earlier works, such as Felicia's Journey and Miss Gomez and the Brethren, Trevor's smooth, spare prose captures the quirky workings of the heart, and compassion for the human condition mitigates the harsh blows that fate often deals his characters.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>The Last Crossing (Guy Vanderhaeghe)</p>	<p>Set in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the American and Canadian West and in Victorian England, this is a sweeping tale of interwoven lives and stories. Charles and Addington Gaunt must find their brother Simon, who has gone missing in the wilds of the American West. Charles, a disillusioned artist, and Addington, a disgraced military captain, enlist the services of a guide to lead them on their journey across a harsh and unknown landscape. This is the enigmatic Jerry Potts, half Blackfoot, half Scottish, who suffers his own painful past. The group that sets north and west into British Canada grows to include Caleb Ayto, a sycophantic American journalist, and Lucy Stoveall, wise and beautiful, who travels in the</p>	<p>2003</p>

	hope of avenging her sister's vicious murder. Later, the party is joined by Custis Straw, a Civil War veteran searching for salvation, and Custis's friend and protector Aloysius Dooley, a saloon keeper. This unlikely posse becomes entangled in an unfolding drama that forces each of them to come to terms with their own demons.	
The In-Between World of Vikram Lall (M.G. Vassanji)	2003 Giller winner Young Vikram Lall's in-betweenness as an Indian in Kenya is brought home to him when he and his sister Deepa become close friends with an African boy, Njoroge, and two English children, Bill and Annie. It is 1953, and while the Lall family celebrates Queen Elizabeth's coronation, Mau Mau rebels are slaughtering white families to protest against British colonial rule, aided by "faithful" African servants and even Indian sympathizers like Vikram's beloved Manesh Uncle. In that tempestuous "year of our loves and friendships," eight-year-old Vikram is initiated into a confusing world of contradictory loyalties and agonizing losses. The shifting moral and political sands of that in-between world will define everything Vikram comes to experience, eventually (as he says on the first page) causing him to be "numbered one of Africa's most corrupt men, a cheat of monstrous and reptilian cunning."	2004
Restlessness (Aritha Van Herk)	From The Globe & Mail: Restlessness combines the light, exuberant handiness of good mystery writing with a perfect vertiginous stillness reminiscent of Samuel Beckett's novels: intensely serious philosophical exploration with a transparent, seductive surface.	1999
Salamander (Thomas Wharton)	Governor General Award finalist Spellbinding, original, Salamander careens through a world of ideas and stories in which the transforming power of books, the thirst for knowledge, and the pursuit of immortality become erotic. It is also a universal story of love and obsession. Set in the 18th century, the narrative revolves around a world-spanning quest for the infinite book. Along the way the novel gathers stories that range from a Chinese tale of jealousy and lost love to the remarkable history of Alexandria's other great library and to epoch-making moments in the battlefields of colonial America. At the centre of the novel's cast of characters is the London printer Nicholas Flood, a dedicated craftsman who is unprepared for all that awaits him when he accepts an unusual commission. Intricate, humane, infused with humour and pathos, Salamander is an exhilarating, elegantly crafted novel.	2003
Look Homeward, Angel (Thomas Wolfe)	An elaborate and moving coming-of-age story about Eugene Gant, a restless and energetic character whose passion to experience life takes him from his small, rural hometown in North Carolina to Harvard University and the city of Boston. The novel's pattern is artfully simple -- a small town, a large family, high school and college -- yet the characters are monumental in their graphic individuality and personality. Through his rich, ornate prose, Wolfe evokes the	1997

	extraordinarily vivid family of the Gants, and with equal detail, the remarkable peculiarities of small-town life and the pain and upheaval of a boy who must leave both. A classic work of American literature, Look Homeward, Angel is a passionate, stirring, and unforgettable novel.	
The Waves (Virginia Woolf)	<p>I loved this book, for both what it says - about life, time and relationships - and for how it says it. It is also true, though, that it is one of her less accessible works, and can occasionally be frustrating in its vagueness. To anyone considering buying this book, DO - it's worth it - 2 things that I learnt, though:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is probably not good as an introduction to Virginia Woolf, modernism or 'stream of consciousness' writing - it may be a good idea to read "To The Lighthouse" first..... 2. If you're a genius or an English teacher you may understand this right off, I don't know - but for the rest of us, I think that it's worth a second read, the first to feel the rhythm, and the second to actually understand the message (if that doesn't sound too ridiculous!) - otherwise it is easy to get bogged down and frustrated, as I did the first time I read it. 	2001
To The Lighthouse (Virginia Woolf)	One of the greatest literary achievements of the 20th century and the author's most popular novel. The serene and maternal Mrs. Ramsay, the tragic yet absurd Mr. Ramsay, together with their children and assorted guests are holidaying on the Isle of Skye. From the seemingly trivial postponement of a visit to a nearby lighthouse, Virginia Woolf constructs a remarkable and moving examination of the complex tensions and allegiances of family life, and the conflict between male and female principles.	2003
Mrs. Dalloway (Virginia Woolf)	As Clarissa Dalloway walks through London on a fine June morning, a sky-writing plane captures her attention. Crowds stare upwards to decipher the message while the plane turns and loops, leaving off one letter, picking up another. Like the airplane's swooping path, Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway follows Clarissa and those whose lives brush hers--from Peter Walsh, whom she spurned years ago, to her daughter Elizabeth, the girl's angry teacher, Doris Kilman, and war-shocked Septimus Warren Smith, who is sinking into madness. Woolf explores the relationships between women and men, and between women. While Clarissa is transported to past afternoons with Sally, and as she sits mending her green dress, Warren Smith catapults desperately into his delusions. Although his troubles form a tangent to Clarissa's web, they undeniably touch it, and the strands connecting all these characters draw tighter as evening deepens. As she immerses us in each inner life, Virginia Woolf offers exquisite, painful images of the past bleeding into the present, of desire overwhelmed by society's demands.	2003

Counterculture / Underground:

<p>Sleeping Where I Fall (Peter Coyote)</p>	<p>Coyote not only survived the excesses of the Sixties and Seventies but emerged from years of journeying through the counterculture to achieve success as an actor. Considering the numerous casualties among radicals, who, like Coyote, were heroin junkies living on the edge of society, this is a rare feat. In this frank yet sensitive memoir of those years, Coyote contradicts romantic notions of communes by recalling the discord and petty disagreements typical in his own communal living experiences at Olema ranch and Red House. He describes the chaos created by the Diggers, an antiestablishment group of which he is usually considered a founding member and leader, famous for their stores where everything was given away free, and he remembers his stoned life in Haight-Ashbury. Eventually, he surfaced to work with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, for which he received a special Obie Award. Coyote's thoughtful, articulate writing displays a compassionate wisdom that puts this chronicle in a class above the typical actor's autobiography.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>It's Here Now, Are You? (Bhagavan Das)</p>	<p>Bhagavan Das is back. The 1970's guru of egregiousness, who inspired the title of Ram Dass' Be Here Now, has penned a spiritual memoir that is stranger than fiction, farther out than the Oort Cloud. We last saw our hero when he was a spiritual rock star touring the hippie circuit with Allen Ginsberg. Soon thereafter he dropped out of the scene and took a job at a Dodge dealership to support his second family. Peyote beckoned him to the desert, then he raised magic mushrooms, sold encyclopedias to Marines, dabbled in solar power, attended Bible college, and ended up selling overpriced car insurance to poor people--until his latest 18-year-old girlfriend flipped out on acid and ended his career.</p> <p>Bhagavan Das's writing is guileless. He neither boasts nor apologizes. He describes the manic ride he has been on since he left California after high school. For seven years he wandered around India and Nepal, practicing austerities, sitting at the feet of gurus, studying Buddhist scriptures, and getting laid. The common denominator in his pursuits seems to be a search for the ultimate high. Whether he is kissed on the forehead by a saint, standing at the foot of a 20-foot stone statue of Vishnu, lost in meditation, dropping acid, or being initiated into tantric sex, his descriptions are in the same terms: "mind-blowing," "out-of-body," "ultimate bliss," "beyond the beyond." An entertaining, vicarious journey through a life that you don't mind visiting, but you wouldn't want to live.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Be Here Now (Ram Dass)</p>	<p>It's easy to dismiss this as the relic of a whacked-out '60s acid tripper. Then you turn to the first page of the book, and you are suddenly sucked into the story of a Harvard psychiatrist who has reached the pinnacle of success, discovers the mind-expanding powers of acid, and ends up trooping through India with a 23-year-old holy</p>	<p>2003</p>

	<p>man from Laguna Beach, California. In the story, you see all the trappings of your own life and begin to wonder if India might hold the answers after all. Before booking your ticket, turn to the last section of the Be Here Now, "Cookbook for a Sacred Life." Ram Dass saves you the trouble by proffering a sober introduction to the basics of Hindu religion. Although he still can't resist CAPITAL LETTERS, he has done his homework, presenting a whole range of concepts and practices having to do with yoga postures, meditation, renunciation, dying, and sexual energy. So, for the most part, Be Here Now stands the test of time, and if you can entertain the center section in a retro kind of a spirit, it might be just what you're looking for.</p>	
<p>On the Road (Jack Kerouac)</p>	<p>On the Road is truly an influential work. Overnight, it propelled Jack Kerouac from unknown status to "king of the beats" and then helped awaken a nation of youth who shook America out of the 1950s and ushered in the excitement of the 1960s. The novel continues to inspire and has picked up a new generation of followers in the 1980s and 1990s. On the Road follows Sal Paradise as he traverses the American continent in search of new people, ideas, and adventures. But it's the way Sal and his friends--primarily Dean Moriarty--look at the world with a mixture of sad-eyed naivete and wild-eyed abandon that causes the rumbling in the soul of so many who read it.</p>	1998
<p>Dharma Bums (Jack Kerouac)</p>	<p>One of the best and most popular of Kerouac's autobiographical novels, The Dharma Bums is based on experiences the writer had during the mid-1950s while living in California, after he'd become interested in Buddhism's spiritual mode of understanding. One of the book's main characters, Japhy Ryder, is based on the real poet Gary Snyder, who was a close friend and whose interest in Buddhism influenced Kerouac. This book is a must-read for any serious Kerouac fan.</p>	1998
<p>Flashbacks: A Personal and Cultural History of an Era (Timothy Leary)</p>	<p>Dr. Timothy Leary, Harvard professor, ground-breaking psychologist, West Point graduate, psychedelic guru, honorary Beatle, icon of the most tumultuous decade in 20th century US history, or ...just plain Uncle Tim; has recounted the various intriguing events of his life in a very accessible, humorous, and poignant manner. This is an essential read for anyone interested in psychedelia, pop culture, counter-culture, modern history, psychology, sociology, philosophy and metaphysics; and a highly recommended selection for anyone who would enjoy the wit, wisdom, and adventures of a true American spirit.</p>	2003
<p>Goa Freaks: My Hippie Years in India (Cleo Odzer)</p>	<p>Not the most well-written book ever, but Goa Freaks a fascinating story about a culture and a way of life that will not come around again for a while. Odzer and her Freak compatriots rampaged across India like they owned it, and most of them ended up dead or with crippling drug habits. Still, they did have a good time on the way down, and Odzer is a lively narrator. This book is both fun and sad to read.</p>	1998

History / Historical Fiction:

<p>How The Irish Saved Civilization (Thomas Cahill)</p>	<p>In this delightful and illuminating look into a crucial but little-known "hinge" of history, Thomas Cahill takes us to the "island of saints and scholars," the Ireland of St. Patrick and the Book of Kells. Here, far from the barbarian despoliation of the continent, monks and scribes laboriously, lovingly, even playfully preserved the West's written treasury. When stability returned in Europe, these Irish scholars were instrumental in spreading learning, becoming not only the conservators of civilization, but also the shapers of the medieval mind, putting their unique stamp on Western culture.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>Pope Joan (Donna Woolfolk Cross)</p>	<p>"Was there ever a woman Pope? According to legend there was, and Cross gives us a fascinating account of what Pope Joan's life might have been like in the ninth century. Driven by her desire to learn and to heal, a brilliant Joan disguises herself as a man and rises through the ecclesiastical ranks to become Pope. Whether or not the reader accepts the author's premise, this novel is quite riveting, both for its description of the medieval era, and for its creation of a strong, sympathetic heroine"</p>	<p>1997</p>
<p>I, Claudius / Claudius the God (Robert Graves)</p>	<p>The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature , 04/01/95: Historical novel set in 1st-century-AD Rome by Robert Graves, published in 1934. The book is written as an autobiographical memoir by Roman emperor Claudius. Physically weak, afflicted with stammering, and inclined to drool, Claudius is an embarrassment to his family and is shunted to the background of imperial affairs. The benefits of his seeming ineffectuality are twofold: he becomes a scholar and historian, and he is spared the worst cruelties inflicted on the imperial family by its own members during the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, and Caligula. Palace intrigues and murders surround him. Claudius' informal narration serves to emphasize the banality of the imperial family's endless greed and lust. The story concludes with Claudius ascending to the imperial throne. A sequel, Claudius, the God and His Wife Messalina (1935), covers Claudius' years as Roman emperor.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus (Charles C. Mann)</p>	<p>1491 is not so much the story of a year, as of what that year stands for: the long-debated (and often-dismissed) question of what human civilization in the Americas was like before the Europeans crashed the party. The history books most Americans were (and still are) raised on describe the continents before Columbus as a vast, underused territory, sparsely populated by primitives whose cultures would inevitably bow before the advanced technologies of the Europeans. For decades, though, among the archaeologists, anthropologists, paleolinguists, and others have been making discoveries which Charles C. Mann brings together in 1491.</p>	<p>2007</p>
<p>Rob Roy (Sir Walter Scott)</p>	<p>This novel, first published in 1817, achieved a huge success and helped establish the historical novel as a literary form. In rich prose</p>	<p>1998</p>

	and vivid description, Rob Roy follows the adventures of a businessman's son, Frank Osbaldistone, who is sent to Scotland and finds himself drawn to the powerful, enigmatic figure of Rob Roy MacGregor, the romantic outlaw who fights for justice and dignity for the Scots. This is an incomparable portrait of the haunted Highlands and Scotland's glorious past.	
Memoirs of Hadrian (Marguerite Yourcenar)	The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature , 04/01/95: In the book, Yourcenar creates a vivid and historically accurate portrait of the 2nd-century Roman Empire under Hadrian's rule. The work is a fictional first-person narrative in the form of Hadrian's letters--mostly to his nephew Marcus Aurelius--written shortly before his death. Contemplative and analytical recollections of his accomplishments, his hopes for Rome, and his personal relationships, the letters reveal Hadrian to be a highly intelligent, often wise man, conscious of the great power he wields.	1998

Biography/Autobiography:

<p>Quicksands: A Memoir (Sybille Bedford)</p>	<p>Born in 1911, Sybille Bedford is nearly the last great representative of those amusing and intelligently cosmopolitan women writers who came to prominence in 1950s Britain: Nancy Mitford, Barbara Pym, Iris Murdoch, Muriel Spark (still with us). She has written only four novel, and all of them are, more or less, autobiographical. Again and again, she takes up her privileged family heritage (upper-class German, both Jewish and Catholic), her girlhood in France with a feckless art-connoisseur father, her adolescence in Italy with a beautiful, promiscuous mother, and her coming of age in Sanary on the Côte d'Azur, surrounded by eminent artists and writers (Thomas Mann and Huxley, above all), in the company of her restless Italian stepfather (15 years her mother's junior) and periodically exhilarated or wounded by heartbreaking infatuations. In Quicksands, Bedford returns again to her seductive parents and gypsyish early years, but now forgoes all the convenient chutes and ladders of art.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>One Long Tune: The Life and Music of Lenny Breau (Ron Forbes-Roberts and Gene Lees)</p>	<p>As you'd expect: a biography of Lenny Breau!</p>	<p>2007</p>
<p>Churchill: A Biography (Roy Jenkins)</p>	<p>Jenkins offers a bloated yet idiosyncratic and accessible life of England's greatest modern prime minister. Jenkins's wry wit and judgments of great men, untainted by awe, partly offset the fact that, as he admits, he has few new facts to add to an already exhaustively recorded life. American audiences may be drawn to Jenkins's revisionist views of Churchill's relationships with Roosevelt, with whom he sees "more a partnership of circumstance and convenience than a friendship of individuals," and with Eisenhower, a "political general" who was "always a little cold for Churchill's taste, with the famous smile barely skin-deep." Jenkins dwells only briefly on Churchill's family affairs, aside from expressing skepticism about his reputedly warm marriage to Clementine. Jenkins's judgments and the fact that he has boiled this eventful life down to a single volume will attract many readers to this entertaining, though often exasperating study.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>A Love Supreme: The Story of John Coltrane's Signature Album (Ashley Kahn)</p>	<p>What an amazing book about an amazing album. Coltrane has been one of my favorite musicians for many years. Kahn gives a wonderful, brief biography about Coltrane which I found to be one of the better accounts of his life, (although not an extremely detailed account). Kahn introduced new aspects to the music of "A Love Supreme" I had never thought of. The interviews with other jazz musicians were outstanding in bringing this book to life.</p>	<p>2003</p>

<p>Shake Hands With the Devil (Romeo Dallaire)</p>	<p>It was one of the fastest, most efficient, most evident genocides of modern history. And it could have been avoided. But the United States and France were content to sit back and watch as Hutu extremists slaughtered 800,000 Rwandans in ethnic pogroms in 1994. Roméo Dallaire, then a brigadier general in the Canadian Forces, was the commander of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Rwanda and witnessed first-hand the "unfolding apocalypse," as he calls it in his stunning book <i>Shake Hands with the Devil</i>. The gruesome experience and his futile attempts to convince the international community to intervene left him with emotional scars that still haven't healed.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>Chronicles (Bob Dylan)</p>	<p>The writing style is a bit tough at first, but as the book proceeds it grows easier to read. It starts with his arrival in Greenwich Village as a young folksinger and is filled with great character sketches and descriptions of places that no longer exist. With language that can be as sparse and yet pregnant with meaning as those of his best lyrics Dylan combines the real experiences with his impressions in a way that puts the reader right there.</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>No Plaster Saint: the Life of Mildred Osterhout Fahrni (Nancy Nickerbocker)</p>	<p>Throughout her life, Mildred Osterhout Fahrni walked with J.S. Woodsworth, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. She heard Ghandi tell the British of his dream of a free India in 1931. When the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation was born in Regina in 1933, Mildred was there. As a reporter she covered the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945. She walked and sang in Montgomery, Alabama, during the famous bus boycott of 1956. She was in Saigon in the 1960s; in Chile in the 1970s; and protested at the nuclear submarine base in Bangor, Washington and at the Nanoose Bay weapons testing site in the 1980s. She was a crusading socialist and an absolute pacifist. But this story of the most extraordinary life of one of Canada's pioneer peacemakers does not merely seek to sanctify her. Mildred's foibles and frailties are as much part of this story as her deep spirituality, selflessness and unquenchable dedication to social causes spanning six decades.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Wondrous Strange: the Life and Art of Glenn Gould (Kevin Bazzana)</p>	<p>Kevin Bazzana, a leading authority on the art of Glenn Gould, has now undertaken to give us the biography we have been waiting for. The life and times of a most unusual man, told with passion, intelligence, wit, and fair-mindedness.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>Frida (Barbara Mujica)</p>	<p>Mexican painter Frida Kahlo has become an icon of female power, creativity, and perseverance. Smart and tempestuous, narcissistic and gutsy, she lived a life of great drama and pain, and translated her struggles with the debilitating injuries she sustained in a horrific bus-trolley accident as a teenager, her miscarriages, her radical politics, and her difficult marriage to muralist Diego Rivera into galvanizing and indelible self-portraits. Her paintings are feminist banners, and the events of her life have become mythologized nearly to the point of a</p>	<p>2003</p>

	catechism. In her boldly visceral fictionalization, Mujica, a widely published fiction writer and critic, hasn't tried to portray Kahlo from the inside. Instead she filters her through the eyes of her simultaneously adoring and resentful sister, Cristina, an almost entirely invented character. This device works well, except for the unnecessary complication of having the deliciously self-serving narrator share her memories with an unidentified American psychologist. Otherwise, this is a tremendously involving, extravagantly sensuous, and imaginatively detailed and interpretative portrait of a fascinating and influential artist who lived a purposefully theatrical life while suffering profound traumas of the body and soul.	
On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft (Stephen King)	Short and snappy as it is, Stephen King's On Writing really contains two books: a fondly sardonic autobiography and a tough-love lesson for aspiring novelists. The memoir is terrific stuff, a vivid description of how a writer grew out of a misbehaving kid. You're right there with the young author as he's tormented by poison ivy, gas-passing babysitters, uptight schoolmarms, and a laundry job nastier than Jack London's. It's a ripping yarn that casts a sharp light on his fiction. King isn't just a writer, he's a true teacher.	2001
Shadow Maker: The Life of Gwendolyn Macewen (Rosemary Sullivan)	<i>Biography of the Canadian poet</i>	1998
Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley; & Careless Love: The Unmaking of Elvis Presley (Peter Guralnick)	Two-volume biography of an obscure, but influential singer.	2006
'Tis (Frank McCourt)	The sequel to Frank McCourt's memoir of his Irish Catholic boyhood, Angela's Ashes , picks up the story in October 1949, upon his arrival in America.	2001
Colin's Big Thing (Bruce Serafin)	Colin's Big Thing is not so much a personal memoir as history of the unique netherworld British Columbia does its best to hide from the outside world. Serafin has created an unyielding record of its end-of-the-land brutality, and of the human and intellectual toll it takes on anyone who lives outside the narrow strip of New Age chrome and brass that rings the outer shores of Burrard Inlet. The tourism industry calls this strip Vancouver, and it has a population of about 200,000 souls too well-heeled for their own good, frantically in search of today, tomorrow, the day after-and its shiniest commodities. Most British Columbians never get to live in this Vancouver, but a larger	2005

	<p>population lives within the physical and psychic wreckage of its frontier, trapped in a netherworld of their own-and late capitalism's Darwinist-expectations.</p> <p>Serafin has spent his adult life observing the B.C. netherworld at close quarters, refusing to accept the comforts of that glitzy Vancouver, which he loathes with a passion that is both instinctive and perverse. The result is Colin's Big Thing, which contains the most elegant and accurate-and depressing-depictions of the netherworld that have ever been put to paper</p>	
<p>Paul Robeson: A Biography (Martin Duberman)</p>	<p>A masterful study of a Nietzschean, larger than life US hero. Duberman, through obviously painstaking research (despite the voluminous material afforded him via Robeson's archives and the Freedom of Information Act's allowing for the research of FBI surveillance files) creates a portrait both panoramic in scope and theme and highly, meticulously detailed.</p> <p>He shows his profound love and respect for the man and his influence of and on American culture by staring unflinchingly at everything from his sexual proclivities and many mistresses to his powerful intellect and international appeal, to his consistent challenging of the prevailing moral schizophrenia of pre-Civil Rights movement America and the subsequent ruination of his career and sanity- all within the context of his familial and cultural ties and his immense talent. Duberman makes one of many things abundantly clear: no nerve on the body politic and the cultural fabric of twentieth century American society was not touched- often wrung, by the tenacity, stubbornness, courage, love and immense talent of the many avatars of Paul Robeson.</p>	1999
<p>Straight Life: The Story of Art Pepper (Art Pepper)</p>	<p>This book is an honest account of a life which was anything but straight. Art Pepper succeeded in becoming one of the finest alto saxophonists of all time despite his hopeless drug addiction. His autobiography holds nothing back, and gave me a real sense of what a powerful grip his singular weakness had over him throughout his life. This is a book I will never forget, and I recommend it even to those who have never heard about Art Pepper. It goes beyond jazz biography, as a book about life as a heroin junkie, criminal, prisoner, and about a man who could not help but destroy all his successes.</p>	2003
<p>Uncle Tungsten: Memories of a Chemical Boyhood (Oliver Sacks)</p>	<p>From the distinguished neurologist who is also one of the most remarkable storytellers of our time — an account of his youth, as unexpected and fascinating as his celebrated case histories. In this wonderful memoir, Sacks evokes, with warmth and wit, his childhood in wartime England. There was the large, scientifically minded family in which his very early fascination with meals was nurtured — particularly by “Uncle Tungsten.” There were his four years at the boarding school where he was sent at the outbreak of World War II to escape the bombings, and where, though he suffered extreme deprivation and cruelty, one can see the first gleam of his interest in</p>	2003

	the intellectual pursuits that would begin to shape him. And there was his return to London, an emotionally bereft 10-year-old who found solace in the secret garden of his passion for learning – about the nature of metals, gases and chemicals; about the hidden order of things outside himself. Uncle Tungsten radiates the magic, the delight and the wonder of the birth, in a young boy, of the unquenchable desire for knowledge. It is an unforgettable portrait of an extraordinary mind.	
Burning The Days: Recollection (James Salter)	This splendid autobiography had its inception in 1986, when the author wrote a trial-balloon recollection for <i>Esquire</i> , so he can hardly be accused of faddishness. But his book differs in another way from the current crop of memoirs, which often feature a forbidding gauntlet of familial or societal travails. Salter, contrarily, has led what many would consider a charmed life. Born an upper-middle-class "city child, pale, cared for, unaware," he attended West Point, served in the Korean War as a fighter pilot, and then seemingly ejected into a postwar period of undiluted glamour: [drifting] into the film business during the 1950s, and [spending] the next couple of decades ping-ponging from New York to Paris to Rome to Aspen and back.	1999
Clara (Janice Galloway)	A novel based on the life of Robert Schumann's wife. Clara Schumann - celebrated 19th-century concert pianist and composer, editor and teacher - was also the wife of Robert Schumann, the mother of his eight children, and the woman who cared for him through crippling mental illnesses. While also an account of two remarkable and dramatic musical careers, this is a novel primarily about timeless, common things: the inescapable influences of childhood, creativity and marital life, communication and silence, how art is made and may erode or save the life that nourishes it. Luminously written, mordantly political and disturbingly honest, Clara is at heart an examination of the place of love in a life of increasing isolation and alienation.	2003
I Put A Spell On You (Nina Simone)	Nina Simone is a great artist with a compelling story to tell. Unfortunately, little of that story comes across in this book. Ms. Simone shares all sorts of details about her lovers, but very little about her music. There is almost nothing in the book about her recording sessions or why she sings particular songs the way she does. While Ms. Simone is very frank about her personal life, I would have liked to have learned more about her music. The book is also confusing because Ms. Simone will spend many pages on just a few days, and then entire years will be dismissed by a sentence or two. Ms. Simone's collaborator should have edited the book better and drawn out more music-related stories from her.	2003
Kingdom of Fear (Hunter S. Thompson)	Kingdom of Fear traces the course of Hunter S. Thompson's life as a rebel -- from a smart-mouthed Kentucky kid flaunting all authority to a convention-defying journalist who came to personify a wild fusion of fact, fiction, and mind-altering substances. Call it the evolution of an outlaw. Here are the formative experiences that comprise Thompson's legendary trajectory alongside the weird and the ugly. Whether	2003

	detailing his exploits as a foreign correspondent in Rio, his job as night manager of the notorious O'Farrell Theatre in San Francisco, his epic run for sheriff of Aspen on the Freak Power ticket, or the sensational legal maneuvering that led to his full acquittal in the famous 99 Days trial, Thompson is at the peak of his narrative powers in Kingdom of Fear .	
Records of Shelley, Byron and the Author (Edward John Trelawny)	Tre' (as his friends knew him) was a privateer, a scoundrel, a lover of poetry, a freedom-fighter and a loyal friend of the most prolific literary talents of the romantic period. Records of Shelley, Byron and the Author is an account, not of Trelawny's extraordinary life & adventures, but of the two men that helped make that life so extraordinary. In his own words, he tells of the secret lives of Byron and the Shelley's, their romp through sunny Italy and the tragic death of Percy in the coast of Spezzia. The tale continues as Tre' follows Byron to the bloody civil war in Greece, where Byron too dies. To his credit, though, it is never "Trelawny's tale", but "Byron and Shelley's tale" as told by Trelawny. This deep, insightful book shows the poets as only a close friend could.	2006
Birth of a Bookworm (Michel Tremblay)	Michel Tremblay takes the reader on a tour of the books that have had a formative influence on the birth and early development of his creative imagination. As in the other two volumes in "the education of Michel Tremblay" Birth of a Bookworm is first and foremost a love story of Michel for his muses, ushered into his life and hovered over with the acute care and concern of his match-making mother. As in all of Tremblay's work, the physical and emotional world of his childhood is celebrated as the fertile ground on which his new, vivid way of seeing and imagining is built.	2004
In the Shadow of a Saint (Ken Wiwa)	This moving portrait is by Ken Wiwa, the son of Nigerian poet and environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwi. The author recollects his father's famous campaign to protect the Ogoni people against a brutal dictatorship and exploitation by Shell Oil. His struggle soon became a symbol for the struggle against environmental injustice. Wiwa was formerly a journalist for <i>The Guardian</i> . He is now a Canadian citizen who travels the world lobbying for environmental causes on behalf of his father.	2001

Travel / Place:

<p>The Curve of Time (M. Wylie Blanchet)</p>	<p>A biography and an astonishing adventure story of a woman who, left a widow in 1927, packed her five children onto a 25-foot boat and cruised the coastal waters of British Columbia, summer after summer.</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>Return To Paradise (Breyten Breytenbach)</p>	<p>The painter, writer, and political activist returns to his native South Africa, where he was once imprisoned for working for the African National Congress, and reflects on the decline of apartheid and his own attachment to the Boer state.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>In A Sunburned Country (Bill Bryson)</p>	<p>Bill Bryson's exploits in Australia, where A-bombs go off unnoticed, prime ministers disappear into the surf, and cheery citizens coexist with the world's deadliest creatures: toxic caterpillars, aggressive seashells, crocodiles, sharks, snakes, and the deadliest of them all, the dreaded box jellyfish. And that's just the beginning, as Bryson treks through sunbaked deserts and up endless coastlines, crisscrossing the "under-discovered" Down Under in search of all things interesting.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Outside of Ordinary: Women's Travel Stories (Lynn Cecil and Catherine Bancroft, editors)</p>	<p>The title says it all!</p>	<p>2007</p>
<p>Desert Places (Robyn Davidson)</p>	<p>Women's Studies Editor's Recommended Book, 08/01/97: Robyn Davidson, who chronicled her lonesome trek by camel across Australia in Tracks, now turns to India, a land so populous that a moment alone is truly that--a moment. Cadging a magazine assignment to follow Rabari nomads who migrate with huge flocks of bug-infested livestock, Davidson lives among them for months, sharing choking dust, noxious heat, rancid milk, odd diseases, snappish camels, and practically no language. Then, too, Davidson finds many Rabari no longer migrate yearly and some are completely settled, causing one plan after another to fall through for the increasingly exasperated, anxious author. Desert Places is laced with rich descriptions and gallows humor. No travel guide this, it swings between cursing and venerating India in all its squalor and glory.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>Long Ago in France: The Years in Dijon (or something else by...) (M. F. K Fisher)</p>	<p>When Fisher arrived in Dijon, the ancient capital of Burgundy, in 1929, she and her new husband were both American postgraduate students, in love with each other, with France and with the people among whom the couple lived. During the Fishers' three-year stay in Dijon, the author absorbed the essence of the French character and the joys of Dijonnais cookery; her exquisite perceptions and eloquent evocations of those years appeal with more than nostalgia. Fisher's memories arouse envy of the wonderful feasts that even the poor students could afford, appreciation for her tough-tender Burgundian neighbors and aching empathy with the innocent young lovers.</p>	<p>2007</p>

<p>The Ends of the Earth: From Togo to Turkmenistan, from Iran to Cambodia, a Journey to the Frontiers of Anarchy (Robert D. Kaplan)</p>	<p>“Having drawn a startlingly prescient portrait of the Bosnian catastrophe in his bestseller, Balkan Ghosts, Robert Kaplan now travels more widely and ambitiously. In this gritty tour de force of travel writing and political reportage, he covers an arc from West Africa to Southeast Asia, across a world in which nation-states are giving way to warring nationalities and where metastasizing populations compete for dwindling resources.”</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>Imperium (Richard Kapuscinski)</p>	<p>A Polish journalist (The Soccer War, etc.) who has written extensively on the Third World turns a discriminating eye on the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, showing once again that Russia is “a country utterly without precedent.” The book is based partly on his boyhood experiences of the Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939, partly on his travels (particularly in the period of decline and disintegration, 1989-91), and partly on his reflections. He brings a sharp perspective even to well-traveled routes. [The disintegration of the USSR] has left a heritage of poverty, deep memories of terror, staggering demoralization, and ecological disaster. The author's prognosis is not reassuring: He quotes Nicholas driving his troika over the fields in Tolstoy's <i>War and Peace</i>, “Heaven only knows where we are going, and heaven knows what is happening to us.”</p>	<p>2000</p>
<p>Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster (Jon Krakauer)</p>	<p>A riveting first-hand account of a catastrophic expedition up Mount Everest. In March 1996, <i>Outside</i> magazine sent veteran journalist and seasoned climber Jon Krakauer on an expedition led by celebrated Everest guide Rob Hall. Despite the expertise of Hall and the other leaders, by the end of summit day eight people were dead. Krakauer's book is at once the story of the ill-fated adventure and an analysis of the factors leading up to its tragic end. Written within months of the events it chronicles, Into Thin Air clearly evokes the majestic Everest landscape. As the journey up the mountain progresses, Krakauer puts it in context by recalling the triumphs and perils of other Everest trips throughout history. The author's own anguish over what happened on the mountain is palpable as he leads readers to ponder timeless questions.</p>	<p>1998</p>
<p>Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found (Suketu Mehta)</p>	<p>A kaleidoscopic portrait of "the biggest, fastest, richest city in India" with captivating moments of danger and dismay. Returning to Bombay (now known as Mumbai) from New York after a 21-year absence, Mehta is depressed by his beloved city's transformation, now swelled to 18 million and choked by pollution.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>Tilting: House Launching, Slide Hauling, Potato Trenching and</p>	<p>Tilting is a celebration of all the virtues [of ingenuity, craftsmanship, thrift and endurance] and an eclectic documentation of the buildings, landscape, and lifestyle of this remote community on a small island far off the Canadian coast. Through photographs, firsthand historical anecdotes, and delicate pencil drawings, author</p>	<p>2004</p>

<p>Other Tales from a Newfoundland Fishing Village (Robert Mellin)</p>	<p>Robert Mellin presents a personal account of Tilting's houses, outbuildings, furniture, tools, fences, and docks, and, in the process, the way of life of Tilting. Mellin describes how houses are built for mobility and then "launched," or moved; how houses are detailed and constructed; how cabbage houses are built out of overturned boats; and the difference between picket, paling, and riddle fences-with diagrams in case you want to build your own.</p> <p>Part journal, part sketchbook, part oral history, Tilting, Newfoundland is a treasure chest of a book that offers new discoveries with each reading, and a reminder of the simpler aspects of life and building</p>	
<p>In Trouble Again: A Journey Between the Orinoco and the Amazon (Redmond O'Hanlon)</p>	<p>An account of Redmond O'Hanlon's four-month trip up the Orinoco river and across the Amazon Basin. It includes details of the natural hazards which he encountered, some of which were familiar from his time in Borneo. The diseases to be avoided included amoebic and bacillary dysenteries, cholera, rabies, hepatitis, chaga disease, river-blindness and leishmaniasis. There was also danger from jaguars, vipers and the toothpick fish. The book portrays the ornithologist's insatiable quest for novelty, and the single-minded desire to find a route through dendritic rivers.</p>	2007
<p>Salon.com's Wanderlust: Real Life Tales of Adventure and Romance</p>	<p>"Travel writers are romantics," writes contributor Wendy Belcher, and if there is a common chord to the 40 essays in this collection culled from Salon.com's "Wanderlust" section, it's that a majority of the authors find a certain ardor in exotic locations perceived with curious and eager eyes. Some find it in the literal sense--Maxine Rose Schur reminisces about being passionate and penniless in Paris, Laura Fraser finds the perfect Italian lover to help her forget the husband who's abandoned her, and Simon Winchester charms a Romanian girl with his borrowed Rolls Royce. In pursuit of luxury, Po Bronson loses his Club Med virginity to go activity-surfing at the Turkoise Club. Then there's inspiration--Isabelle Allende travels to the Amazon in the hopes of ending a three-year writing block and David Kohn, well, he gets to sample the best pork ribs at the Memphis World Barbecue Cooking Contest.</p>	1998
<p>Oaxaca Journal (Oliver Sacks)</p>	<p>Sometime during the writing of Uncle Tungsten, Neurologist Oliver Sacks took a 12 day trip to state of Oaxaca in southern Mexico ostensibly for the purpose of observing and cataloging ferns with members of the American Fern Society- to which he belongs. Oaxaca Journal is the Author's first person account of the delightful little adventure that resulted.</p>	2003
<p>Kingdom of Monkeys (Adam Lewis Schroeder)</p>	<p>Colonialism, political strife and poverty inform the novella and six stories that make up Adam Lewis Schroeder's Kingdom of Monkeys, set in such locales as Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. This young Canadian author has a keen eye and a sense of empathy that helps to bring his diverse characters to life.</p>	2003

<p>The Last Voyage of the Loch Ryan (Andrew Struthers)</p>	<p>This is an extremely entertaining and well-written book in which the author tells of his life in Tofino, BC in the 80's and 90's and parallels the changes in his life to those of the town itself. His descriptions of some of the town characters and their marathon parties make one think of Cannery Row. There are also included some fascinating stories about original settlers of the Clayoquot Sound, how they got there and what became of them.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>Recollections of a Tour Made in Scotland (Dorothy Wordsworth)</p>	<p>An account of her Tour of Scotland of 1803 in the company of her brother William and the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge.</p>	<p>1998</p>

Nonfiction:

<p>The Other Side of Eden (Hugh Brody)</p>	<p>A brilliantly evoked journey into the core of human history and the destiny of the world's hunting peoples. Hugh Brody has spent nearly three decades studying with, learning from, crusading for, and thinking about hunter-gatherers, who survive at the margins of the vast, fertile lands occupied by farming peoples and their descendants.</p>	<p>2001</p>
<p>A Short History of Nearly Everything (Bill Bryson)</p>	<p>There must be a special place in author's heaven for writers like Bill Bryson, those bold enough to tackle the seemingly insurmountable and, improbably, succeed. With the aptly named A Short History of Nearly Everything Bryson has, quite simply, documented the advent of the universe in just under 500 pages, charting the evolution of man, planet Earth, its oceans and mountains, and all the atoms holding them together. And he explores the cosmos beyond. He asks how each was created and then sets out, quasi-scientifically, to explain it. And he doesn't just regurgitate scores of books, although that's part of it. Bryson introduces pioneering researchers into the fray, giving face to some pretty impressive (in some cases outrageous) theories of why things are the way they are. It's an astonishing synthesis of information, and if contemporary paleontologists, geologists, astronomers, physicists, chemists, and various other people of science dismiss History as strictly layman, then Bryson has truly succeeded in his task. He tells us why there are diamonds in South Africa but not Iowa, why old panes of glass are thicker at the bottom than on top, and why the Earth's oceans are more mysterious to us than the Moon. Best, Bryson tells us things that should be dry as dust in language as sparkly as sunshine on chrome, often through inventive personification.</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>Addicted: Notes From The Belly Of The Beast (Lorna Crozier)</p>	<p>The brainchild of poets Lorna Crozier and Patrick Lane, <i>Addicted</i> is a very compelling anthology of personal essays devoted to a subject close--often way too close--to the hearts of the writers involved. That is their addictions, be it to booze, cigarettes, heroin, or self-destruction in general. Even though the subject matter might seem very limited, each writer has a distinct and, of course, very personal approach, and the results on the whole are raw, frank, and engaging. Most seem to attribute their addictions to a shared litany of causes--childhood trauma, emotional problems, delusions of grandeur, bad genes--but none of the contributors asks for your pity.</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>For The Time Being (Annie Dillard)</p>	<p>Over the last three decades, Annie Dillard has written about an uncommon number of things--predators and prose, astronomy and evolution, the miraculous survival of mangroves. Yet the sheer range of her interests can be deceptive. Whatever the subject, Dillard is always "practicing unlicensed metaphysics in a teacup", always asking the fundamental questions about life and death. And this epistemological interrogation continues in For the Time Being. Here Dillard alternates accounts of her own travels to China and Israel with ruminations on sand, clouds, obstetrics, and Hasidic thought. She also records the wanderings of paleontologist and spade-wielding spiritualist Teilhard de</p>	<p>2004</p>

	Chardin, whose itinerary (geographical and philosophical) has certain similarities to her own. But as she ties together these disparate threads with truly Emersonian eloquence, it becomes clear that God's presence--or absence--is at the heart of her book.	
The Last Great Sea (Terry Glavin)	The subtitle (A Voyage through the Human and Natural History of the North Pacific Ocean) says (almost) all!	2001
The Mismeasure of Man (Stephen Jay Gould)	When published in 1981, The Mismeasure of Man was immediately hailed as a masterwork, the ringing answer to those who would classify people, rank them according to their supposed genetic gifts and limits. And yet the idea of innate limits - of biology as destiny - dies hard, as witness the attention devoted to The Bell Curve , whose arguments are here so effectively anticipated and thoroughly undermined by Stephen Jay Gould. In this edition Dr. Gould has written a substantial new introduction telling how and why he wrote the book and tracing the subsequent history of the controversy on innateness right through The Bell Curve . Further, he has added five essays, in a separate section at the end, on questions of The Bell Curve in particular and on race, racism, and biological determinism in general. These additions strengthen the claim of this book to be, as Leo J. Kamin of Princeton University has said, "a major contribution toward deflating pseudobiological 'explanations' of our present social woes."	1998
Empire (Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri)	A sweeping book with a big-picture vision. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue that while classical imperialism has largely disappeared, a new empire is emerging in a diffuse blend of technology, economics, and globalization. The book brings together unlikely bedfellows: Hardt, associate professor in Duke University's literature program, and Negri, among other things a writer and inmate at Rebibbia Prison in Rome. Hardt and Negri maintain that empire--traditionally understood as military or capitalist might--has embarked upon a new stage of historical development and is now better understood as a complex web of sociopolitical forces. They argue, with a neo-Marxist bent, that "the multitude" will transcend and defeat the new empire on its own terms. The authors address everything from the works of Deleuze to Jefferson's constitutional democracy to the Chiapas revolution in a far-ranging analysis of our contemporary situation.	2003
The Eagle's Shadow (Mark Hertsgaard)	In May 2001 Hertsgaard began a six-month journey through 15 countries to interview people of all sorts, from bus drivers to former parliamentarians, about one thing: the United States. Each chapter of his book opens with an anecdote illustrating a perception he found to be widespread: the United States is a land of vast wealth but also gross self-indulgence; American leaders are influential but arrogant and naive; and American citizens have immense freedom but are nonetheless insulated and ignorant. The impressions Hertsgaard gathers, however, serve primarily as springboards from which he plunges into his own blunt, sometimes dour analysis of American attitudes, practices and institutions.	2003

<p>The Rights Revolution: CBC Massey Lecture 2000 (Michael Ignatieff)</p>	<p>Since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, rights have become the dominant language of the public good around the globe. In Canada, rights have become the trump card in every argument from family life to Parliament Hill. But the notorious fights for aboriginal rights and for the linguistic heritage of French-speaking Canadians have steered Canada into a full-blown rights revolution.</p>	<p>2001</p>
<p>Animal, Vegetable, Miracle (Barbara Kingsolver)</p>	<p>Novelist Kingsolver recounts a year spent eating home-grown food and, if not that, local. Accomplished gardeners, the Kingsolver clan grow a large garden in southern Appalachia and spend summers "putting food by," as the classic kitchen title goes. They make pickles, chutney and mozzarella; they jar tomatoes, braid garlic and stuff turkey sausage. Nine-year-old Lily runs a heritage poultry business, selling eggs and meat. What they don't raise (lamb, beef, apples) comes from local farms. Come winter, they feast on root crops and canned goods, menus slouching toward asparagus. Along the way, the Kingsolver family, having given up industrial meat years before, abandons its vegetarian ways and discovers the pleasures of conscientious carnivory.</p>	<p>2008</p>
<p>Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World (Mark Kurlansky)</p>	<p>A fabulous book about a fish that probably has mattered more in human history than any other. The cod helped inspire the discovery and exploration of North America. It had a profound impact upon the economic development of New England and eastern Canada from the earliest times. Today, however, overfishing is a constant threat. Kurlansky sprinkles his well-written and occasionally humorous history with interesting asides on the possible origin of the word codpiece and dozens of fish recipes. Sometimes a book on an offbeat or neglected subject really makes the grade. This is one of them.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Salt: A World History (Mark Kurlansky)</p>	<p>The only rock we eat, salt has shaped civilization from the very beginning, and its story is a glittering, often surprising part of the history of humankind. A substance so valuable it served as currency, salt has influenced the establishment of trade routes and cities, provoked and financed wars, and secured empires.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Grain of Truth: The Ancient Lessons of Craft (Ross Laird)</p>	<p>A poet by profession and a woodworker by avocation, Laird has, well, crafted a pretty little first book of meditations on the creative process. Split into eight sections based on Taoist imagery, the book outlines eight different woodworking projects that the author completed (e.g., he rebuilt a childhood dinghy) and delineates eight ways that inspiration strikes a person. These range from lightning bolts of energy and insight to our uncontrolled and dark imaginings. Laird intersperses his ambling explanations of his carpentry endeavors with reminiscences and family stories.</p>	<p>2003</p>
<p>Escape: Our Search for the Natural Soul of Canada (Roy MacGregor)</p>	<p>Roy MacGregor explores the powerful hold the wilderness, and the thought of our place in it, has on our imaginations. He weaves together chapters of personal history, telling of his family's deep connection to the lakes and forests of central Ontario, and chapters that detail the evolution of the idea of wilderness in Canada and the history of "Cottage Country." He shows that the Canadian wilderness meant freedom for</p>	<p>2003</p>

	<p>many early settlers escaping privation and oppression in Europe. It meant a chance to create a paradise on earth to some early Utopians, and it meant a chance to profit from the desperate or gullible, such as at Cannington Manor in Saskatchewan and Brother Twelve's City of Refuge on Vancouver Island.</p>	
<p>The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals (Michael Pollan)</p>	<p>Michael Pollan writes about how our food is grown -- what it is, in fact, that we are eating. The book is really three in one: The first section discusses industrial farming; the second, organic food, both as big business and on a relatively small farm; and the third, what it is like to hunt and gather food for oneself. And each section culminates in a meal -- a cheeseburger and fries from McDonald's; roast chicken, vegetables and a salad from Whole Foods; and grilled chicken, corn and a chocolate soufflé (made with fresh eggs) from a sustainable farm; and, finally, mushrooms and pork, foraged from the wild.</p>	2007
<p>Building a Bridge to the 18th Century : How the Past Can Improve Our Future (Neil Postman)</p>	<p>The problem with the world today, says Neil Postman, is that we've become so caught up in hurtling towards the future that we've lost our societal "narrative," a humane cultural tradition that creates "a sense of purpose and continuity"--in other words, something to believe in. "In order to have an agreeable encounter with the twenty-first century," he asserts, "we will have to take into it some good ideas. And in order to do that, we need to look back to take stock of the good ideas available to us." He finds rich source material in the Enlightenment, the salad days for philosophers such as Goethe, Voltaire, Diderot, Paine, and Jefferson, "the beginnings of much that is worthwhile about the modern world." Yet Building a Bridge to the Eighteenth Century is a call for cultural progress, not regression: "I am not suggesting that we become the eighteenth century," Postman notes, "only that we use it for what it is worth and all it is worth."</p>	2001
<p>Genome (Matt Ridley)</p>	<p>Delves deep within your body (and, to be fair, Ridley's too) looking for dirt dug up by the Human Genome Project. Each chapter pries one gene out of its chromosome and focuses on its role in our development and adult life, but also goes further, exploring the implications of genetic research and our quickly changing social attitudes toward this information. Genome shies away from the "tedious biochemical middle managers" that only a nerd could love and instead goes for the A-material: genes associated with cancer, intelligence, sex (of course), and more.</p>	2001
<p>Why We Get Sick: The New Science of Darwinian Medicine (Randolph Nesse & George Williams)</p>	<p>Is our tendency to "fix" our bodies with medicine keeping them from working exactly as they're supposed to? Two pioneers of the emerging science of Darwinian medicine argue that illness is part and parcel of the evolutionary system and as such, may be helping us to evolve towards better adaptation to our environment.</p>	1998

<p>The Golden Spruce (John Vaillant)</p>	<p>The golden spruce stood in the Queen Charlotte Islands, an unusually rich ecosystem where the normal lines between species blur, a place where “the patient observer will find that trees are fed by salmon [and] eagles can swim.”</p> <p>On the night of January 20, 1997, with the temperature near zero, Grant Hadwin swam across the Yakoun river with a chainsaw. Another astonishing physical feat followed: alone, in darkness, he tore expertly into the golden spruce – a tree more than two metres in diameter – leaving it so unstable that the first wind would push it over. A few weeks later, having inspired an outpouring of grief and public anger, Hadwin set off in a kayak across the treacherous Hecate Strait to face court charges. He has not been heard from since.</p>	<p>2006</p>
<p>The Future of Life (Edward O. Wilson)</p>	<p>A meditation on the splendor of our biosphere and the dangers we pose to it. In graceful, expressive and vigorous prose, Wilson argues that the challenge of the new century will be "to raise the poor to a decent standard of living worldwide while preserving as much of the rest of life as possible." For as America consumes and the Third World tries to keep up, we lose biological diversity at an alarming rate. But the "trajectory" of species loss depends on human choice. If current levels of consumption continue, half the planet's remaining species will be gone by mid-century. Wilson argues that the "great dilemma of environmental reasoning" stems from the conflict between environmentalism and economics, between long-term and short-term values. Conservation, he writes, is necessary for our long-term health and prosperity. Loss of biodiversity translates into economic losses to agriculture, medicine and the biotech industries. But the "bottleneck" of overpopulation and overconsumption can be safely navigated: adequate resources exist, and in the end, success or failure depends upon an ethical decision. Global conservation will succeed or fail depending on the cooperation between government, science and the private sector, and on the interplay of biology, economics and diplomacy.</p>	<p>2008</p>
<p>Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded: August 27, 1883 (Simon Winchester)</p>	<p>In Krakatoa, Winchester focuses his considerable research powers on one of the most cataclysmic events of modern history: the volcanic eruption, in 1883, of the Southeast Asian island of Krakatoa, which resulted in the deaths of 36,000 people and sent shock-waves around the world. But what at the time was a mysterious, almost supernatural phenomenon has become, under the precepts of the contemporary science of plate tectonics, explicable if no less tragic. Winchester veers between eyewitness accounts by survivors and the limited scientific measurements of the time in an attempt to describe the indescribable. At times Winchester seems to overstate his case, and the link he finds between Krakatoa and the rise of anti-Western sentiment in the Islamic world isn't especially convincing. But, by weaving together the disaster with science, communications, politics, religion, and economics, he has come up with a comprehensive and often fascinating glimpse into the way the world, and our perception of it, can change in an instant.</p>	<p>2004</p>

<p>Travels in the Genetically Modified Zone (Mark Winston)</p>	<p>Winston spent more than 2 years traveling around the USA, Canada, and Europe in an attempt to better understand the "politicized world of agricultural biotechnology." He visited scientists, government officials, corporations, environmentalists, farmers, and consumers & searched cyberspace for information and contacts. The result is a balanced report of the facts and myths about genetically modified organisms, from seed production to consumption, and the strong feelings that emerge from all players in this debate. Winston describes the sense of excitement and scientific curiosity in the research community, the fears and anger of opponents, and the desperation of farmers who are caught in the middle trying to gain the public trust and save their farms. Winston is distressed by the rigidity of opposing viewpoints & the unwillingness of the parties to talk to each other in order to reach an acceptable middle ground.</p>	<p>2004</p>
<p>A Short History of Progress (Ronald Wright)</p>	<p>Each time history repeats itself, the cost goes up. The twentieth century—a time of unprecedented progress—has produced a tremendous strain on the very elements that comprise life itself: This raises the key question of the twenty-first century: How much longer can this go on? With wit and erudition, Ronald Wright lays out a convincing case that history has always provided an answer, whether we care to notice or not. From Neanderthal man to the Sumerians to the Roman Empire, A Short History of Progress dissects the cyclical nature of humanity's development and demise, the 10,000-year old experiment that we've unleashed but have yet to control.</p> <p>It is Wright's contention that only by understanding and ultimately breaking from the patterns of progress and disaster that humanity has repeated around the world since the Stone Age can we avoid the onset of a new Dark Age. Wright illustrates how various cultures throughout history have literally manufactured their own end by producing an overabundance of innovation and stripping bare the very elements that allowed them to initially advance. Wright's book is brilliant; a fascinating rumination on the hubris at the heart of human development and the pitfalls we still may have time to avoid.</p>	<p>2005</p>

Themes:

	<p>The idea behind a “Theme” book club meeting is that, instead of selecting a pair of books that we all read, we would instead select a Theme. Everyone would then be free to choose any book (or books) that addressed that theme. The theory being that, at the next meeting everyone would have something unique to bring to the discussion.</p> <p>The following are just some of the many possible themes as a starting point, along with some brief examples of books and/or authors that might make good contributions to a reading around the theme.</p>	
The Bloomsbury group	Virginia and Leonard Woolf, Clive and Vanessa Bell, Roger Fry, Duncan Grant, John Maynard Keynes, Lytton Strachey. E.M. Forster is also often listed as a member.	2003
The Algonquin Circle	Dorothy Parker, Harold Ross, Robert Benchley, Alexander Woollcott etc; even Harpo Marx, Tallulah Bankhead and Noel Coward had tangential contact.	2003
The Beats	Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Diane di Prima, Hettie Jones, William Burroughs, Gregory Corso etc.	2003
The '60s & '70s	Ken Richard Brautigan, Joan Didion, Timothy Leary etc.	2003
Existentialism in Paris	Could be generalized to “Café Life in Paris” or some other variant. Camus, Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre etc.	2003
Spiritual Quests	Siddhartha (Hesse), or any other treatment of the life of Buddha; Letters of Abelard and Heloise ; any of the books about individuals in search of “something” in India and the East over the centuries; Biographies of the saints; etc.	2003
Music	Musical biographies or music more generally.	2003
The Hard-boiled Detective Novel	Raymond Chandler, Jim Thompson, Dashiell Hammett etc.	2003
Poetry	A chance to read poetry as a genre, but not necessarily all reading the same poet.	2003
Travel	Anything from the large library of travel narratives over the centuries, from Marco Polo to Paul Theroux. Could be localized to a particular region or time period. The tradition of the Grand Tour. Baedekers etc.	2003
The Expatriate Tradition	<p>That urge to leave one’s home country/culture and immerse oneself in something “other”. Including Paris in the 1920’s to Berlin in the 1930s to present day.</p> <p>Could be narrowed down to a specific era or locale; eg: “Expats in Paris” (Hemingway, Henry Miller, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Edmund White, Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Rilke, Oscar Wilde, Edith Wharton, Djuna Barnes, Anais Nin etc)</p>	2003
The Romantics	William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Mary Shelley etc.	2003