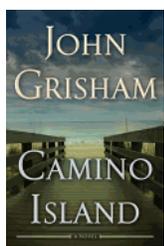




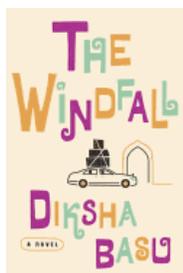
Wilmette League of Women Voters

Summer 2017

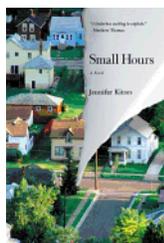
Hardcover Fiction



Camino Island by John Grisham (\$28.95) Thieves steal priceless Fitzgerald manuscripts from a secure vault at Princeton University. Bruce Cable owns a popular bookstore in the sleepy resort town on Camino Island in Florida, but makes his real money as a dealer in rare books. Mercer Mann is a young novelist with writer's block when she is asked to infiltrate Cable's circle of literary friends, to learn his secrets. But eventually Mercer learns far too much, and there's trouble in paradise as only John Grisham can deliver it.



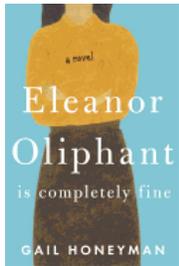
The Windfall by Diksha Basu (\$26) For the past thirty years, Mr. and Mrs. Jha's lives have been defined by cramped spaces, cut corners and gossipy neighbors. They thought they'd settled comfortably into their golden years, but then Mr. Jha comes into an enormous and unexpected sum of money, and moves his wife from their housing complex in East Delhi to the super-rich side of town, where he becomes eager to fit in as a man of status



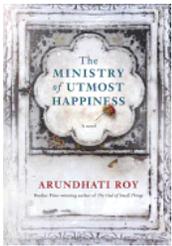
Small Hours by Jennifer Kitses (\$26) In the vein of Richard Russo and Tom Perrotta, a gripping, suspenseful, and gorgeous debut novel -- told hour-by-hour over the course of a single day -- in which a husband and wife try to outrun long-buried secrets, sending their lives spiraling into chaos.



The Marsh King's Daughter by Karen Dionne (\$26) In this tale of psychological suspense, a woman must risk everything to hunt down the dangerous man who shaped her past and threatens to steal her future.



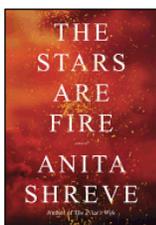
Eleanor Oliphant by Gail Honeyman (\$26) Eleanor Oliphant struggles with social skills and tends to say exactly what she's thinking. That, combined with her unusual appearance (tendency to wear the same clothes year in, year out), means that Eleanor has become a creature of habit and a bit of a loner ... But everything changes when Eleanor meets Raymond, the IT guy from her office.



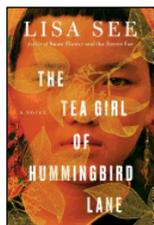
The Ministry of Utmost Happiness by Arundhati Roy (\$28.95) *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* takes us on an intimate journey of many years across the Indian subcontinent--from the cramped neighborhoods of Old Delhi and the roads of the new city to the mountains and valleys of Kashmir and beyond, where war is peace and peace is war.



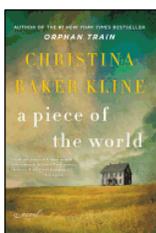
The Arrangement by Sarah Dunn (\$26) A progressive New York couple with an autistic son move to a bucolic Hudson Valley exurb and immerse themselves in the local community only to have their bond tested by an invitation to become an open-marriage couple.



The Stars are Fire by Anita Shreve (\$25.95) In October, 1947, fires began near Bar Harbor and raced along the coast of Maine, ravaging two hundred thousand acres--the largest fire in Maine's history. Grace Holland is left alone to protect her two toddlers when her husband Gene joins the volunteers fighting the fire. As Grace awaits news of her husband's fate, she is thrust into a new world in which she must make a life on her own. In the midst of devastating loss, Grace discovers glorious new freedoms and her spirit soars.

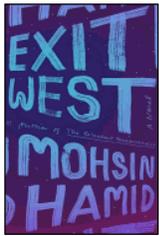


Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane by Lisa See (\$27) Bestselling author Lisa See explores the lives of a Chinese mother and her daughter who has been adopted by an American couple. A powerful story about a family, separated by circumstances, culture, and distance, *Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* paints an unforgettable portrait of a little known region and its people.

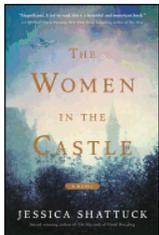


A Piece of the World by Christina Baker Kline (\$27.99) To Christina Olson, the entire world was her family's remote farm in the small coastal town of Cushing, Maine. Born in the home her family had lived in for generations, and increasingly incapacitated by illness, Christina seemed destined for a small life. Instead, for more than twenty years, she was inspiration for the artist Andrew Wyeth. *A Piece*

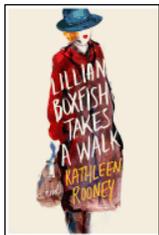
of the World is a story about the burdens and blessings of family history, and how artist and muse can come together to forge a new and timeless legacy.



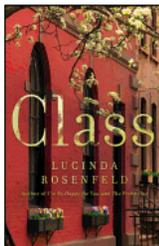
Exit West by Mohsin Hamid (\$26) From the internationally bestselling author of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, a love story that unfolds in a world being irrevocably transformed by migration. Two young people meet and embark on a furtive love affair, thrust into premature intimacy by the unrest roiling their city. *Exit West* is an epic compressed into a slender page-turner--both completely of our time and for all time, Mohsin Hamid's most ambitious and electrifying novel yet.



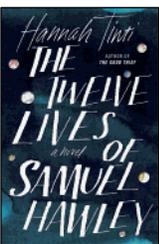
The Women in the Castle by Jessica Shattuck (\$26.99) Set at the end of World War II, in a crumbling Bavarian castle that once played host to all of German high society, *The Women in the Castle* is a powerful and propulsive story of three widows, haunted by the past, whose lives become intertwined. Eventually, all three women must come to terms with the choices that have defined their lives before, during, and after the war--each with their own unique share of challenges.



Lillian Boxfish Takes a Walk by Kathleen Rooney (\$25.99) It is New Year's Eve 1984, and Lillian Boxfish, retired copywriter for R.H. Macy is strolling the streets of Manhattan. The reader will find Lillian to be a charming companion on this walk, which incorporates not only her interesting story but also much New York history. This book is based on the life of Margaret Fishback, published poet and copywriter for Macy's in the 1930's.

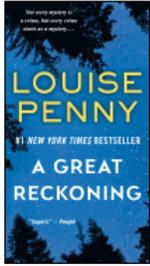


Class by Lucinda Rosenfeld (\$26) Karen Kipple, a Brooklynite with a third-grade daughter, Ruby, is doing her best to be a liberal, open-minded mother by sending her daughter to the racially diverse neighborhood school. She works for a non-profit that tries to get healthy meals to the underprivileged, while her husband, Matt, tries to create and maintain safe living spaces for those on the economic fringe. When there is an "incident" at Ruby's school, Karen's ideals, marriage, and friendships are tested to the limit. A fun, insightful, and good read for anyone who thinks they know the "best" way to raise a child.



The Twelve Lives of Samuel Hawley by Hannah Tinti (\$27) Loo is twelve when she moves back to the New England fishing village of her early youth. Her father Hawley finds work on the boats, while she undergoes the usual heartaches of a new kid in school. But lurking over Loo are mysteries, both of the mother who passed away and the grandmother she's forbidden to speak to. And hurtling towards both father and daughter are the ghosts of Hawley's past.

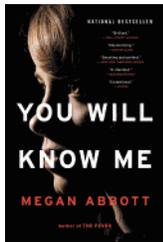
Paperback Fiction



A Great Reckoning by Louise Penny (\$16.99) The uninitiated reader should know that Penny's stories are not your typical suspense novels, nor are they "cozy" mysteries. They are profound stories with rich characters experiencing hardships, loss, betrayal, and often grief. But, always—always—they are filled with friendship and hope. Penny's latest, which ends in springtime at a baptism, is her finest, offering ever-evolving characters who continue to grow and come to a new acceptance—not just of life and the living, but what might have been.



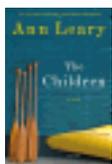
Before the Fall by Noah Hawley (\$15) On a foggy summer night, eleven people depart Martha's Vineyard on a private jet headed for New York. Sixteen minutes later, the unthinkable happens: the plane plunges into the ocean. The only survivors are a painter and a four-year-old boy, who is now the last remaining member of an immensely wealthy and powerful media mogul's family. Was it by chance that so many influential people perished? Or was something more sinister at work?



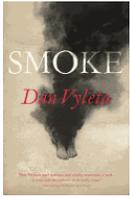
You Will Know Me by Megan Abbott (\$15.99) How far will you go to achieve a dream? That's the question a celebrated coach poses to Katie and Eric Knox after he sees their daughter Devon, a gymnastics prodigy and Olympic hopeful, compete. For the Knoxes there are no limits--until a violent death rocks their close-knit gymnastics community and everything they have worked so hard for is suddenly at risk.



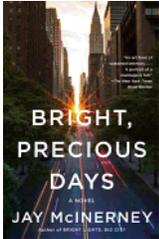
The Girls in the Garden by Lisa Jewell (\$16) On a midsummer night, as a festive neighborhood party is taking place, preteen Pip discovers her thirteen-year-old sister Grace lying unconscious and bloody in a hidden corner of a lush rose garden. What really happened to her? And who is responsible?



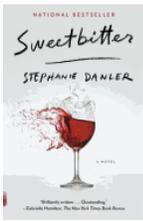
The Children by Ann Leary (\$16) Charlotte Maynard rarely leaves her mother's home, the once-grand Lakeside Cottage that belonged to her late stepfather, Whit Whitman, and generations of Whitmans before him. When Spin, the youngest, brings his fiance home for the summer, the entire family is intrigued. But as the wedding draws near and flaws surface in the family's polite veneer, an array of simmering resentments is exposed and the blended family are forced to grapple with the assets and liabilities--both material and psychological--left behind by their wonderfully flawed patriarch.



Smoke by Dan Vyleta (\$16.95) In an alternate Victorian England, those who are wicked are marked by the smoke that pours out of their bodies. The aristocracy is clean, proof of their virtue and right to rule, while the lower classes are drenched in sin and soot.



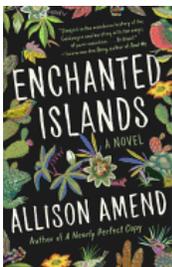
Bright, Precious Days by Jay McInerney (\$16.95) This unforgettable New York story of glamour, sex, ambition, and heartbreak begins in the heady days before the financial crash. Russell and Corrine Calloway seem to be living the dream. But beneath the glossy surfaces, things are simmering. The third book in McInerney's celebrated Calloway trilogy, *Bright, Precious Days* is an aching, extraordinary portrait of a marriage during a period of dizzying change.



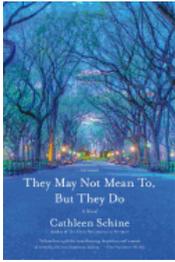
Sweetbitter by Stephanie Danler (\$16) Newly-arrived in New York City, twenty-two-year-old Tess lands a job working front of house at a celebrated downtown restaurant. What follows is her education: in champagne and cocaine, love and lust, dive bars and fine dining rooms, as she learns to navigate the chaotic, enchanting, punishing life she has chosen. The story of a young woman's coming-of-age, set against the glitzy, grimy backdrop of New York's most elite restaurants



The Couple Next Door by Shari Lapena (\$16) A domestic suspense debut about a young couple and their apparently friendly neighbors--a twisty, rollercoaster ride of lies, betrayal, and the secrets between husbands and wives. Anne and Marco Conti seem to have it all--a loving relationship, a wonderful home, and their beautiful baby, Cora. But one night when they are at a dinner party, a terrible crime is committed. Suspicion immediately focuses on the parents. But the truth is a more complicated story. What follows is the nerve-racking unraveling of a family--a chilling tale of deception, and unfaithfulness that will keep you breathless until the final shocking twist.

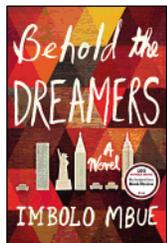


Enchanted Island by Allison Amend (\$16), Born to immigrant parents in Minnesota just before the turn of the century, Frances works for the Office of Naval Intelligence and has just been given a top-secret assignment: marry handsome spy Ainslie Conway and move to the Galapagos Islands to investigate the Germans living there in the build-up to World War II. Amid active volcanoes, forbidding wildlife and flora, and unfriendly neighbors, Ainslie and Frances carve out a life for themselves. But the secrets they harbor--from their friends, from their enemies, and even from each other--may be their undoing.

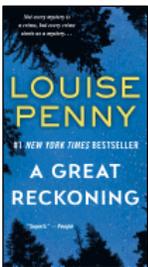


They May Not Mean to But They Do by Cathleen Schine (\$16) From one of America's greatest comic novelists, a hilarious new novel about aging, family, loneliness, and love. The Bergman clan has always stuck together. But families don't just grow, they grow old, and the clan's matriarch, Joy, is not slipping into old age with the quiet grace her children, Molly and Daniel, would have wished. When Joy's beloved husband dies, Molly and Daniel have no shortage of solutions for their mother's loneliness and despair, but there is one challenge they did not count on: the reappearance of an ardent suitor from Joy's college days.

And they didn't count on Joy herself, a mother suddenly as rebellious as their own kids.

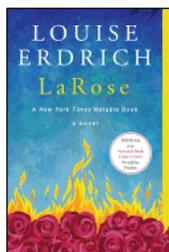


Behold the Dreamers by Imbolo Mbue (\$28) Jende Jonga arrives in New York from Cameroon with his wife and 6-year-old son to pursue the American Dream. Clark Edwards, an executive at Lehman Brothers, has achieved this dream. When Jonga is hired as Edwards' personal chauffeur, their families become interdependent. With the collapse of Lehman Brothers, their marriages and lifestyles begin to unravel. From the cockroach-infested Harlem apartment to the mansion in the Hamptons, Mbue's descriptions make you feel as if you have been there. Deftly exploring the complications of immigration, marriage and race, this novel is great!



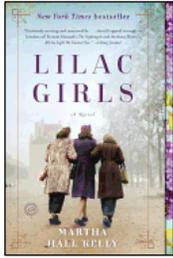
A Great Reckoning by Louise Penny (\$28.99) This story begins in a snowstorm as the friends sort through old papers stuffed behind bistro walls a century ago and unearthed during a recent renovation. The papers lead the group to discover much more about themselves and their village's rich history. The uninitiated reader should know that Penny's stories are not your typical suspense novels, nor are they "cozy" mysteries. They are profound stories with rich characters experiencing hardships, loss, betrayal, and often grief. But, always—always—they are filled with friendship and hope. Penny's latest, which ends in springtime at a baptism, is her

finest, offering ever-evolving characters who continue to grow and come to a new acceptance—not just of life and the living, but what might have been.

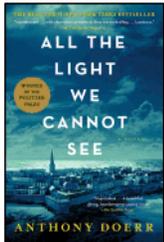


LaRose by Louise Erdrich (\$15.99) Erdrich revisits familiar territory in this novel, which takes place in and around a North Dakota Ojibwe reservation in 1999. A farmer accidentally kills his 5-year-old neighbor in a tragic hunting accident and offers his own 5-year-old son LaRose to that family as compensation. What transpires afterwards is a generational tale of native American tradition and mysticism overlaid with the efforts of assimilation by the teenaged children of both families. Ultimately, it becomes a story of atonement

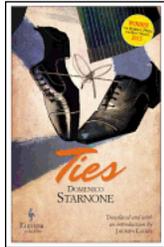
and hope, which turns the ties that destroy into the ties that bind. Beautiful writing, great dialogue, and multi-layered characters make this a must-read.



Lilac Girls by Martha Hall Kelly (\$17) New York socialite Caroline Ferriday has her hands full with her post at the French consulate, but Caroline's world is forever changed when Hitler's army invades Poland and then sets its sights on France. An ocean away from Caroline, Kasia Kuzmerick, a Polish teenager, senses her carefree youth disappearing as she is drawn deeper into her role as courier for the underground resistance movement. For the ambitious young German doctor, Herta Oberheuser, an ad for a government medical position seems her ticket out of a desolate life. The lives of these three women are set on a collision course when the unthinkable happens and Kasia is sent to Ravensbruck, the notorious Nazi concentration camp for women.



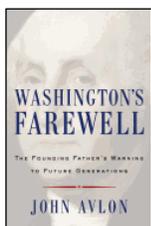
All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr (\$17) A beautifully written novel about a blind French girl and a young German soldier whose paths collide in occupied France as they try to survive the devastation of WWII. This novel appeals to a broad range of ages, including young adults.



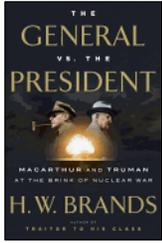
Ties by Domenico Starnone (\$16) In Italy, Neapolitans Vanda and Aldo return from a week-long holiday to discover their home has been torn apart and vandalized. The invasion forces the couple to sort through their many journals, diaries, and photographs and take careful inventory of their relationship and examine the strength of its foundation. Written by Italian writer Domenico Starnone, who some believe has used the pseudonym Elena Ferrante, and translated by Jhumpa Lahiri, this spare but spectacularly written novel about marriage and choices is already one of my

Nonfiction Book List

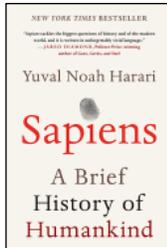
Hard Cover



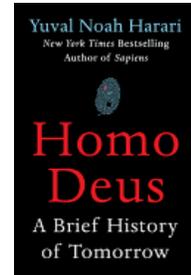
Washington's Farewell: The Founding Father's Warning to Future Generations by John Avalon (\$27.00) Sadly, Washington's Farewell Address is rarely read today. And while it was addressed to his contemporaries, it was clearly aimed at future generations. In it, Washington warns of dangers that he felt threatened the nation: sectionalism: "the baneful effects of the spirit of party;" "the alternate domination of one faction over another;" any hindrance to broad public education; and the need to avoid foreign entanglements. Avalon's book provides the context for Washington's address. .



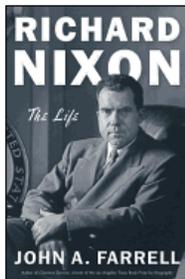
The General vs. The President: Macarthur and Truman at the Brink of Nuclear War by H.W. Brands (\$30) Our Constitution is very clear: the ultimate authority over the military is vested in the President as Commander-in-Chief. This creates an innate tension between the military and civilian authorities. But rarely has that resulted in a direct challenge to presidential authority. The showdown between Macarthur and Truman was a confrontation that challenged the role of commander-in chief. As the conflict escalated, Truman ultimately had to fire his general and assert the authority of the executive branch.



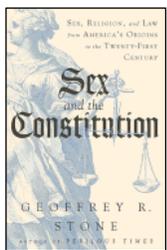
Two books by Yuval Noah Harari look at the rise and dominance of Homo Sapiens and a look at possible futures. **Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind** (\$35) begins with the competition between at least six other human species about 100,000 years ago. Why and how Homo Sapiens won out and went on to dominate the planet is the focus of Harari's book. In his second book, **Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow**



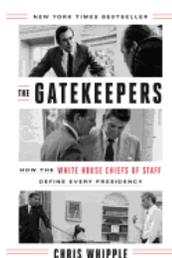
(\$35), Harari asks where humankind goes from here. With war, famine, and epidemics broadly under control, what will be the things that Humans strive for? As machines take over many of our tasks, what is left for humans? At what point do humans become politically and/or economically irrelevant? Harari's answers to these questions are challenging and disturbing but cogently argued.



Richard Nixon: The Life by John A. Farrell (\$35.00) He is the phoenix of American Politics, rising from his own ashes time and again. Nixon was a brilliant political animal and a master of international geo-politics, driven by an overpowering ambition. He was also insecure, pettily vindictive, and suspicious. These flaws eventually overpower his strengths, unraveling his successes and leaving him defeated. Nixon is a man of many contradictions who trails behind him innumerable "what ifs." This is a fascinating biography that is balanced and fair.

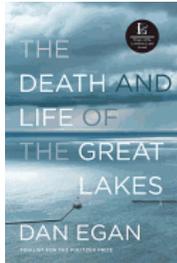


Sex and the Constitution: Sex, Religion, and Law from America's Origins to the Twenty-First Century by Geoffrey R. Stone (\$35.00) Why and how the courts came to be involved in those most personal and private aspects of our lives is a complex story of imposed morality, intolerance, and fear. It is an interesting look at how the Constitution, which said nothing about what our sexual practices should or should not be, has been interpreted to both uphold and strike down legal constraints on our sexual freedom.

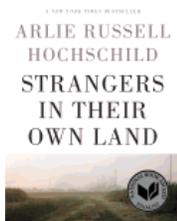


The Gatekeepers: How The White House Chiefs of Staff Define Every Presidency by Chris Whipple (\$28.00). Richard Nixon described H.R. Haldeman, the first modern Chief of Staff, as the "pluperfect son of a bitch" and the "Lord High Executioner. They are unelected and unconfirmed and can only be

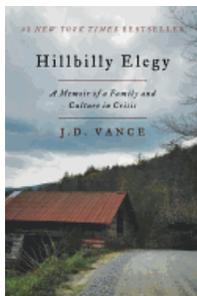
fired by the President. In theory, they manage access, workflow, and White House staff, freeing the President to focus on high priority issues. But their influence and power can vary greatly depending on the willingness of the President to be managed.



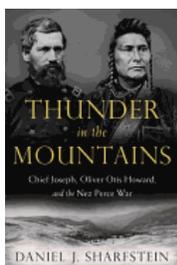
The Death and Life of the Great Lakes by Dan Egan (Hardcover, \$27.95) They are immense, covering 94,000 square miles and containing almost ¼ of the earth's fresh water. But their size belies their fragility and sensitivity. The Great Lakes ecosystem is a delicately balanced one and it is under threat. Millions of Americans depend on the Lakes for their water, recreation, and livelihood. Invasive species, pollution, global warming, and the looming threat of diversion imperil the integrity of the lakes. Will Coleridge's warning come to haunt us?



Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right: A Journey to the Heart of Our Political Divide by Arlie Russell Hochschild (\$27.95) Who are they? The election of Donald Trump surprised all the experts because they failed to understand the depth and breadth of political disaffection among a largely ignored segment of the American population. They are angry that the American Dream seems to have slipped from their grasp not because they haven't worked hard but because others have leap frogged ahead of them. They mistrust government because it has largely failed them. They confound conventional wisdom by voting against what appears to be their own self-interest. Who are they? They are us. They believe that radical change is necessary to reclaim the America they believe in. But as Tony Judd observed you only pull down the dykes that protect you if you know there will be no more floods.

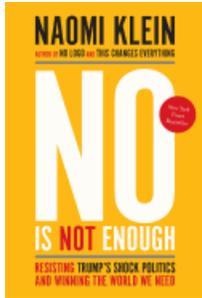


Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis by J.D. Vance (\$27.99) Vance's book caused a sensation when it was released... hailed as an important contribution to our understanding of the white underclass and the conservative base, it was read as a window into the ethos of Trump supporters. It really isn't that. It is the story of one man's struggle to escape the forces of family and tradition and find success. That was no easy task. Two major influences play a key role in that struggle: his indomitable, foul-mouthed, pistol-packing grandmother; and his stint in the Marine Corps. This is an important book but a self-serving one as well.



Thunder in the Mountains: Chief Joseph, Oliver Otis Howard, and the Nez Perce War by Daniel J. Sharfstein (\$29.95) Oliver Otis Howard, civil war hero, head of the Freedman's Bureau, Indian fighter. Chief Joseph, head of a band of Nez Perce, advocate for equal rights and dignity for Native Americans, warrior. The clash between the United States and the Nez Perce was not inevitable. Indeed, the dispute over land rights looked, for a time to favor the Nez Perce. Changing policy initiatives and the response by a small group of Nez Perce led to

war and its tragic outcome After the war, Chief Joseph continued to advocate for a return to their ancestral lands. Through his articulate assertion of rights, he has become an almost mythical figure. Howard has largely faded from view.



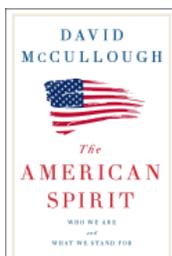
No Is Not Enough: Resisting Trump's shock Politics and Winning the World We Need by Naomi Klein (\$16.95) Many view the rise of Donald Trump as an aberration. Not so, argues author Naomi Klein. She argues that Trump is part of a trend that has been building over the last 50 years or more. Growing economic inequality, racism, militarism, corporate dominance in politics, and the unresponsiveness of government have led to a sense

disenfranchisement and cynicism that Trump and the radical right have tapped into. The powerful forces that seek to manipulate the system to their own benefit cannot be effectively opposed by simply saying no. What is required, Klein argues, is a potent and innovative blueprint for action that responds to public needs without demagoguery or slavish concessions to special interests.



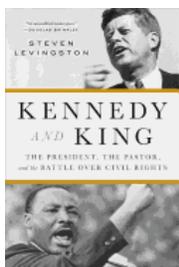
Shattered: Inside Hilary Clinton's Doomed Campaign by Jonathan Allen and Amie Parnes (\$28.00) How did the inevitability of a Clinton election fail? Allen and Parnes lay the blame squarely on the candidate herself. Millions of lines have been written about Clinton's failure to recognize the depth of dissatisfaction through a broad swath of the electorate. She failed to craft a message that resonated. She tried to define a program while her opponent simply hammered on a

slogan. But for all the words and analysis, I believe the Clinton loss can be summed up in a single word: Hubris.

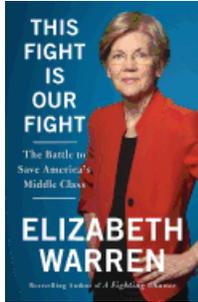


The American Spirit: Who We Are and What we Stand For by David McCullough (\$25.00). Making history compelling for the broad general public, writing with style and grace, and narrating complex events and their impact on the course of history without dumbing down...a difficult challenge for any historian. For McCullough, it has always seemed effortless. *The American Spirit* is a collection of speeches given over the course of his long career. Each speech is carefully crafted to link the past with the present and define a continuum of

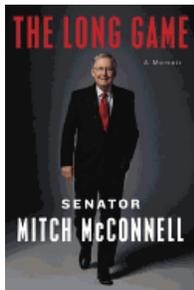
beliefs and values that define us as Americans. These are important lessons and important touchstones as we struggle to overcome the divisiveness of contemporary politics.



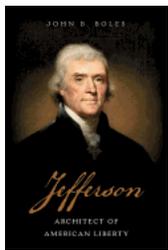
Kennedy and King: The President, the Pastor, and the Battle Over Civil Rights by Steven Levingston (\$28.00) Time tends to warp our perceptions. We tend to think of Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy as allies in the fight for Civil Rights. But, as Levingston shows, that was not the case. King believed that Kennedy understood the problems but lacked "the moral passion" necessary to defy the South and its powerful legislative block.



This Fight is Our Fight: The Battle to Save America's Middle Class by Elizabeth Warren (\$28.00) From the 1980 to the present, beginning with “trickle down economics,” public policies have favored the very wealthy and eroded the middle class. While much of Warren’s finger pointing is at the Republican party, she does not spare the Democrats for failing to keep promises made to the middle class.



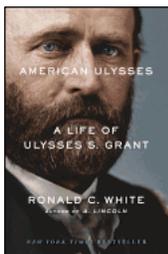
The Long Game: A Memoir by Senator Mitch McConnell (\$28.00) Senator McConnell is much in the news. Depending on where you stand politically, he is either the firm defender of conservative values or the arch obstructionist. He would agree with both descriptions. The book is instructive as a primer on the art of power in the post-compromise era. Interestingly, McConnell argues that, in politics, compromise is the key. Which leads me to my general problem with memoirs of this sort. I come away from the book with three views of the man: who he is; who he thinks he is; and who he wishes he was.



Jefferson: Architect of American Democracy by John B. Boles (\$35.00)

Another biography of Jefferson? Well sort of. Boles is well aware of the contradictions that tear at Jefferson’s reputation and impugn his writings. How can a man celebrate the equality of men and be a slave holder? Boles’ contribution is to finally pull together in a single accessible volume, a history of Jefferson that places him squarely within his own time. This is difficult. Much of what we know of Jefferson makes him feel like a contemporary. But he is not. And understanding the times and the traditions in which he lived, do much to resolve the contradictions. Jefferson is one of the important Founders and we need to understand him and his time if we are to properly appreciate the legacy he left us.

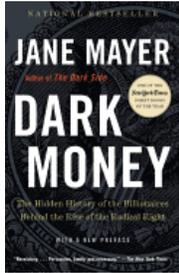
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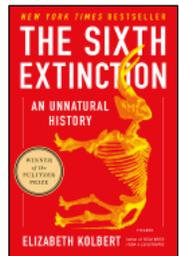
American Ulysses: A Life of Ulysses S. Grant by Ronald White (\$15) Grant’s reputation has fallen on hard times. What we remember are the stories of his failed business ventures, his drinking, and his callous disregard for the lives of his soldiers. As it turns out, we don’t know Grant very well. White does, and his book sets out to set the record straight. Yes, Grant was a failure at business and at farming. No, he wasn’t a drunk: he rarely drank at all. Nor was he a “butcher” who uncaringly sacrificed man after man in his assaults. The scandals that

marked his administration further sullied his reputation though that has proved to be more guilt by association. Grant comes to life in the pages of White’s book as a quiet man who preferred to

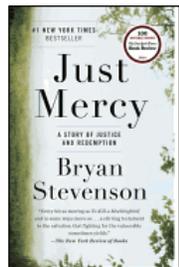
listen rather than talk. He was by no means an intellectual yet we see his intellectual growth over time as his attitudes towards slavery, African-Americans, and war shifted and matured.



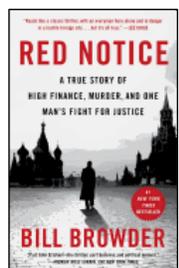
Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right by Jane Mayer (\$17) The decision in *Citizens United* unleashed a political spending spree unlike anything seen before. Funds from a variety of “front “ organizations poured into state, local and national elections. Much of the most aggressive and widespread funding has come from a small cadre of extremely wealthy conservative families determined to assure the adoption of their conservative view of America. While the fight for the big prizes (President, Governors, and the Congress) have received the most publicity, the real danger lurks in smaller races. It is the state legislatures that set the boundaries for Congressional districts based on the census. Assure safe districts and you assure reelection for the next 10 years. Russian meddling in the integrity of our election process pales in contrast to the dangers within.



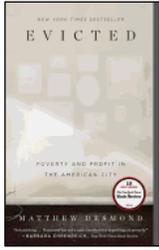
The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History by Elizabeth Kolbert (\$17) Kolbert posits that there have been five major extinction events in Earth’s history. More importantly, she argues that many signs suggest that a sixth extinction may be underway...with significant impacts on humans. The loss of various known species...amphibians, corals and others...is alarming. Coupled with global warming and the rise in ocean temperatures, the delicate ecological balance on which life depends is under threat. Much like Rachel Carson in *Silent Spring*, Kolbert suggests that there is still an opportunity for human intervention to stabilize and perhaps reverse the environmental damage. A difficult but important book.



Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson (\$16) It is a basic, dearly held ideal: “equal justice before the law.” Yet too often, the standards of justice differ when applied to poor minority defendants. Public defenders, understaffed and underpaid, provide minimal legal assistance, often forced to get the best deal rather than real justice. It is a national not a sectional problem. Bryan Stevenson founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice “dedicated to defending the poor, the wrongly condemned, and those trapped in the furthest reaches of our criminal justice system.” Stevenson’s story, and the stories of his clients, shows that the system can be made to work, but at great personal cost.



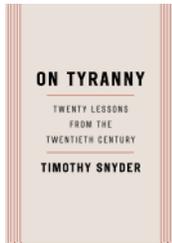
Red Notice: a True Story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man’s Fight for Justice by Bill Browder (\$16) With the breakup of the Soviet Union, Bill Browder made a fortune through his investments. But, as he learned, doing business in Russia involves a host of ancillary payments to complete a deal. Browder challenged the corruption and barely got out alive. His lawyer, however, met a different fate. Browder made it his mission to expose the Putin regime...a mission that has made him a target of Putin and his minions. Browder’s story is indistinguishable from a modern day thriller from Ludlum or others...except its all true.



Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Mathew Desmond (\$17)

Imagine living in a marginal rental space...a space that uses the better part of your monthly income to meet the rent. Then imagine that the rent goes up or that you lose your job and you cannot pay the rent. Consider the impact on your family seeing all your possessions out on the curb. Without a home, families fragment, children's education suffers, and vulnerability to crime and predation increases.

As Desmond points out, the families already at risk are significantly more likely to face eviction and its attendant evils. The story he tells is tragic but not without hope.



On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons From the Twentieth Century by Timothy Snyder (\$7.99)

Regardless of your politics, and if you read nothing else, read this book. History does not repeat itself but it does instruct and warn. From the tumult of the twentieth century, Snyder has extracted twenty lessons...lessons that we must heed. Our system is both robust and fragile and what we take for granted is not necessarily guaranteed. At a time when our focus is on external threats, it is easy to ignore the very real, serious internal threats. As his opening quote reminds us "In politics, being deceived is no excuse."

Like McCullough, Snyder understands the importance of history not as a predictor but as an instructor.



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