

Please Discard Previous Book List

Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
A Place to Land: Lost and Found in an Unlikely Friendship	Manning	250	25	N	N	non-fiction	Full of laugh-out-loud humor and searing heartbreak, <i>A Place to Land</i> is a moving look at growth, healing, and the ways a friendship can be a means to salvation. It is a story that will speak to people of every race with a voice full of hope and renewal.
Above the Thunder	Manfredi	333	25	N	N	fiction	Anna Brinkman meets her ten-year-old granddaughter Flynn when the girl appears on her doorstep, desperate for a love more steadfast than any she has received from her parents. She meets Jack when he shows up in an AIDS support group she is running and does his best to get kicked out. What ensues in a house on the coast of Maine will be the great journey of all their lives. Filled with humor, sadness, and wisdom.
Ain't No Mountain	Foster	330	24	Y	N	fiction	Loneliness is a dark cloud over Baltimore for neighbors Mary, Puddin, and Moor. Unlucky in love and unhappy without it, they are each about to take a drastic step on the bumpy road of romance. Guided by advice from well-meaning friends, all three enter the dating scene in a different way and with often amusing results. Heartwarming and humorous, their stories bring valuable and unexpected lessons on life, love, and telling the truth.
Alchemist (The) (2008)	Coelho	167	25	Y	Y	fiction	This simple, yet eloquent parable celebrates the richness of the human spirit. A young Spanish shepherd seeking his destiny travels to Egypt where he learns many lessons, particularly from a wise old alchemist. The real alchemy here, however, is the transmuting of youthful idealism into mature wisdom. The blending of conventional ideas with an exotic setting makes old truths seem new again. This shepherd takes the advice Hamlet did not heed, learning to trust his heart and commune with it as a treasured friend. Enjoyable and easy to read, this timeless fantasy validates the aspirations and dreams of youth.
Alexander Hamilton, American	Brookhiser	217	27	Y	N	biography	Alexander Hamilton is one of the least understood, most important, most impassioned and inspiring of the founding fathers." A dramatic, compact biography that fairly gallops through Hamilton's life arguing that he deserved greater credit for brainpower, idealism and vision."
A Long Way Gone (2008)	Beah	240	25	Y	Y	biography	This absorbing account by a young man who, as a boy of 12, gets swept up in Sierra Leone's civil war goes beyond even the best journalistic efforts in revealing the life and mind of a child abducted into the horrors of warfare. Beah's harrowing journey transforms him overnight from a child enthralled by American hip-hop music and dance to an internal refugee bereft of family, wandering from village to village in a country grown deeply divided by the indiscriminate atrocities of unruly, sociopathic rebel and army forces. Beah then finds himself in the army—in a drug-filled life of casual mass slaughter that lasts until he is 15, when he's brought to a rehabilitation center sponsored by UNICEF and partnering NGOs. The process marks out Beah as a gifted spokesman for the center's work after his "repatriation" to civilian life in the capital, where he lives with his family and a distant uncle. When the war finally engulfs the capital, it sends 17-year-old Beah fleeing again, this time to the U.S., where he now lives. Told in clear, accessible language by a young writer with a gifted literary voice.

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American Pastoral (1998 Pulitzer Prize) (2008)	Roth	421	25	N	N	fiction	As the book opens, Roth's alter ego, Nathan Zuckerman, recalls an innocent time when golden boy Seymour "the Swede" Levov was the pride of his Jewish neighborhood. Then, in precise, painful, perfectly rendered detail, he shows how the Swede's life did not turn out as gloriously as expected?how it was, in fact, devastated by a child's violent act. When Merry Levov blew up her quaint little town's post office to protest the Viet Nam war, she didn't just kill passing physician Fred Conlon, she shattered the ties that bound her to her worshipful father. Merry disappears, then eventually reappears as a stick-thin Jain living in sacred poverty in Newark, having killed three more people for the cause. Roth doesn't tell the whole story blow by blow but gives us the essentials in luminous, overlapping bits. In the end, the book positively resonates with the anguish of a father who has utterly lost his daughter. Highly recommended.
An American Story	Dickerson	285	23	N	Y	autobiog	A courageous and insightful memoir, <i>An American Story</i> documents the events that have shaped journalist Debra Dickerson's conscience. The daughter of former sharecroppers, Dickerson never imagined she would emerge from her squalid St. Louis neighborhood to become an acclaimed journalist with a Harvard Law degree. Dickerson's lack of confidence kept her from accepting the many colleges offers she received. Instead she enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, quickly rising through the ranks. In spite of her success, she recognized within herself deep-seated conflict at being a working class black woman living in a white man's world. Her path to self-acceptance is at the heart of this refreshing narrative.
Angel of Harlem: The Life of Dr. May Chinn	Haulsey	352	25	N	Y	bio-fiction	A gifted, young woman in the 1920s, May Edward Chinn dreams only of music. For years she accompanies famed singer Paul Robeson, however, a racist professor ends her hopes of becoming a concert pianist. But from one dashed dream blooms another: May would become a doctor instead—the first black female physician in all of New York. Giddy with the wonder of the Harlem Renaissance and fueled by firebrand friends like Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, May doggedly pursues her ambitions while striving to overcome the pains of her past.
Annie Freeman's Fabulous Traveling Funeral	Radish	331	24	N	Y	fiction	The adventure begins with a UPS package, of red sneakers filled with ashes and a note that will forever change their lives, five women will carry Annie's ashes to the special places in her life. At every stop there's a surprise encounter and a small miracle waiting, as they whoop it up across the country, attracting interest wherever they go, they share their deepest secrets. As they grieve over what they've lost, they discover how much is still possible if only they can unravel the secret Annie left them.....
Art of Racing in the Rain (The) (2009)	Stein	336	25	Y	Y	fiction	If you've ever wondered what your dog is thinking, Stein's third novel offers an answer. Enzo is a lab terrier mix plucked from a farm outside Seattle to ride shotgun with race car driver Denny Swift as he pursues success on the track and off. Denny meets and marries Eve, has a daughter, Zoë, and risks his savings and his life to make it on the professional racing circuit. Enzo, frustrated by his inability to speak and his lack of opposable thumbs, watches Denny's old racing videos, coins koanlike aphorisms that apply to both driving and life, and hopes for the day when his life as a dog will be over and he can be reborn a man. When Denny hits an extended rough patch, Enzo remains his most steadfast if silent supporter.

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Ask Again Later (2008)	Davis	244	25	N	N	fiction	Emily hides behind her wit, shirks commitment, and has daddy issues, her father left when she was five, but he has suddenly reentered her life. His reappearance coincides with a crisis in Emily's life: her mother has just been diagnosed with breast cancer, and suddenly Emily isn't sure if she wants to be a lawyer, and abruptly quits her job. This conveniently separates her from her lover, Sam, whom she's unwilling to admit she's in love with. She takes a job as a receptionist at her father's law firm and moves in with her mother, getting to know her parents in a way she hadn't before, and in the process learning more about herself. A book that is both very funny and deeply moving. As per Book List
The Assistant	Malamud	246	20	N	Y	fiction	Bernard Malamud's second novel, originally published in 1957, is the story of Morris Bober, a grocer in postwar Brooklyn, who "wants better" for himself and his family. First two robbers appear and hold him up; then things take a turn for the better when broken-nosed Frank Alpine becomes his assistant. But there are complications: Frank, whose reaction to Jews is ambivalent, falls in love with Helen Bober; at the same time he begins to steal from the store. Like Malamud's best stories, this novel unerringly evokes an immigrant world of cramped circumstances and great expectations. Malamud defined the immigrant experience in a way that has proven vital for several generations of writers.
Astrid & Veronika (2008)	Olsson	288	25	N	N	fiction	With extraordinary emotional power, Linda Olsson's stunningly well-crafted debut novel recounts the unusual and unexpected friendship that develops between two women. Veronika, a young writer from New Zealand, rents a house in a small Swedish village as she tries to come to terms with a recent tragedy while also finishing a novel. Her arrival is silently observed by Astrid, an older, reclusive neighbor who slowly becomes a presence in Veronika's life, offering comfort in the form of companionship and lovingly prepared home-cooked meals. Set against a haunting Swedish landscape, Astrid & Veronika is a lyrical and meditative novel of love and loss, and a story that will remain with readers long after the characters' secrets are revealed.
Banker to the Poor	Yunus	262	10	N	N	nonfiction	It began with a simple \$27 loan. After witnessing the cycle of poverty that kept many poor women enslaved to high-interest loan sharks in Bangladesh, Dr. Muhammad Yunus lent money to 42 women so they could purchase bamboo to make and sell stools. In a short time, the women were able to repay the loans while continuing to support themselves and their families. With that initial eye-opening success, the seeds of the Grameen Bank, and the concept of microcredit, were planted.  The idea behind the Grameen Bank is ingeniously simple: extend credit to poor people and they will help themselves. This concept strikes at the root of poverty by specifically targeting the poorest of the poor, providing small loans (usually less than \$300) to those unable to obtain credit from traditional banks. At Grameen, loans are administered to groups of five people, with only two receiving their money up front. As soon as these two make a few regular payments, loans are gradually extended to the rest of the group. In this way, the program builds a sense of community as well as individual self-reliance. Most of the Grameen Bank's loans are to women, and since its inception, there has been an astonishing loan repayment

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Beachcombing for a Shipwrecked God	Coombs	245	25	N	N	fiction	9 weeks after losing her husband, Charlotte escapes to a wooden motor yacht in New Hampshire, where her shipmates are an aging blue-haired widow, an emotional 17 year old, and the ugliest dog in literature. This book tells of the genuine bond that develops among the 3 women, as their distinct personalities and paths cross and converge against the backdrop of emotional secrets, abuse and the wages of old age.
Bee Season (2008)	Goldberg	274	8	Y	Y	fiction	Eliza Naumann, a seemingly unremarkable nine-year-old, expects never to fit into her gifted family: her autodidact father, Saul, absorbed in his study of Jewish mysticism; her brother, Aaron, the vessel of his father's spiritual ambitions; and her brilliant but distant lawyer-mom, Miriam. But when Eliza sweeps her school and district spelling bees in quick succession, Saul takes it as a sign that she is destined for greatness. In this altered reality, Saul inducts her into his hallowed study and lavishes upon her the attention previously reserved for Aaron, who in his displacement embarks upon a lone quest for spiritual fulfillment. When Miriam's secret life triggers a familial explosion, it is Eliza who must order the chaos.
Bel Canto	Patchett	318	25	Y	Y	fiction	Somewhere in South America a lavish birthday party is being held in the home of the country's vice-president, in honor of powerful businessman, Mr. Hosokawa. Opera singer, Roxanne Coss has mesmerized the international guests with her singing, until a band of terrorists takes the party hostage. What begins as a panicked, life-threatening scenario slowly evolves into something quite different.
Between Georgia	Jackson	320	25	Y	Y	fiction	Nonny's birth is the catalyst that heightens a long-standing family feud between the Crabtrees, a clan of slovenly, unwashed reprobates, and the Fretts, a semi-prosperous, if offbeat, family whose unique doll museum attracts tourists to the small town of Between, Georgia, population 90. Biologically Nonny is a Crabtree, but she is adopted at birth and raised by the Fretts. Joshilyn Jackson is a storyteller whose clarity and elegant poetry are worthy of the tradition of our great Southern writers.
Bird in Hand 2009	Kline	274	25	N	N	fiction	In her fourth novel (after The Way Life Should Be), Kline traces the construction and collapse of two long-term relationships. On her way home to New Jersey after an awkward party for her lifelong friend Claire's highly autobiographical first novel, Alison gets into a car accident that kills a boy in the other car. Even though the accident wasn't her fault, Allison, a mother of two young children, is wracked with grief and guilt. Her husband, Charlie, also struggles with the impulse to blame his wife, especially as he longs for any excuse to escalate his nascent affair with Claire and end his marriage. Episodes detailing the inevitable collapse of Alison and Charlie's marriage, as well as Claire's marriage to her well-meaning husband, Ben, are interspersed with vignettes revealing the four friends' 10-plus-year history together. Shifting perspectives and thoughtful interior monologues reveal just how isolated, and in some cases misguided, the characters are. Kline's unflinching gaze and lovely prose sets Kline's novel apart from the herd of infidelity/marital ennui novels. It's well-done, thoughtful and thought provoking.

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Birth of Venus	Dunant	391	26	Y	Y	fiction	Dunant's lush and intellectually gripping novel is set in fourteenth-century Florence at the height of the Renaissance. 15 year-old Alessandra Cecchi does not fit the mold of the compliant Florentine woman. She avidly consumes books written in Greek and Latin as she keeps abreast of the art movement, hoping to some day create her own masterwork. The city is teeming with artisans working for the Catholic Church and the ruling Medici family, and sightings of Botticelli in the piazza or the infamous Michelangelo are commonplace incidents in a city that thrives on beauty. The years of Florentine decadence come to a close when the French Army invades Italy and Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola begins a puritanical crusade. To protect her from the city's tumultuous atmosphere, the Cecchis arrange a marriage for Alessandra, but the man they have chosen has closely guarded secrets and her heart belongs to someone else.
<b>Black Tower (The)</b> (2009)	<b>Bayard</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>fiction</b>	Bayard draws his inspiration from history, and in this tight historical thriller, he revisits the tumultuous period following France's Reign of Terror and Restoration. Vidocq, the first director of France's Sûreté Nationale, is such a compelling real-life figure that not only does he make for a first-rate character study in <i>The Black Tower</i> —but he also served as the inspiration for Victor Hugo's Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert in <i>Les Misérables</i> . If Vidocq—by turns scary and larger-than-life—steals the show, other characters, including the sympathetic Carpentier, are no less compelling. The suspenseful plot, a jigsaw of history and identity; ornate, period-driven prose; and a sharp eye for setting and cultural mores elevate <i>The Black Tower</i> into a memorable novel.
Blessings	Quindlen	226	29	N	N	fiction	This novel begins when a teenage couple drives up, late at night, headlights out, to Blessings, the estate owned by Lydia Blessing. They leave a box and drive away, and in this instant, the world of Blessings is changed forever. <i>Blessings</i> tells the story of Skip Cuddy, caretaker of the estate, who finds a baby asleep in that box and decides he wants to keep her, and of matriarch Lydia Blessing, who, for her own reasons, decides to help him. The secrets of the past, how they affect the decisions and lives of people in the present, come together in this wonderful novel of love, redemption, and personal change.
Blue Diary	Hoffman	283	25	Y	Y	fiction	In this spell binding novel, Alice Hoffman charts the map of the human heart when a dark secret is revealed in a small, closely-knit town in Massachusetts, and the boundaries of family ties and devotion are tested.
Bluest Eye (The)	Morrison	206	25	Y	Y	fiction	Originally published in 1970, " <i>The Bluest Eye</i> " is Toni Morrison's first novel. In an afterword written more than two decades later, the author expressed her dissatisfaction with the book's language and structure: "It required a sophistication unavailable to me." Perhaps we can chalk up this verdict to modesty, or to the Nobel laureate's impossibly high standards of quality control. In any case, her debut is nothing if not sophisticated, in terms of both narrative ingenuity and rhetorical sweep. It also shows the young author drawing a bead on the subjects that would dominate much of her career: racial hatred, historical memory, and the dazzling or degrading power of language itself.

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Book of Air and Shadows (The) ( 2008)	Gruber	466	25	Y	N	fiction	In this ingenious literary thriller, the lives of two men are changed forever by William Shakespeare and the letters of Richard Bracegirdle, a 16th-century English spy and soldier. Jake Mishkin, a Manhattan intellectual property attorney and a bit of a rake, goes on the run from Russian gangsters. Albert Crosetti, an aspiring filmmaker working for an antiquarian bookstore, finds that life is more exciting than movies—perhaps too exciting. Together, Mishkin and Crosetti travel to England in search of a previously unknown Shakespeare manuscript mentioned by Bracegirdle. Though the pace sometimes slows to allow Mishkin, Crosetti and Bracegirdle to divulge interesting aspects of their personal lives, these digressions only make the story more engaging. The suspense created around the double-crosses and triple-crosses works because of the close connection readers forge with Crosetti in particular. The mysterious murder of a Shakespearean scholar, shootouts in the streets of Queens and an unlikely romance all combine to make for a gripping, satisfying read
Book Thief (The)	Zusak	550	26	Y	Y	fiction	Zusak has created a work that deserves the attention of sophisticated teen and adult readers. Death himself narrates the World War II-era story of Liesel Meminger from the time she is taken, at age nine, to live in Molching, Germany, with a foster family in a working-class neighborhood of tough kids, acid-tongued mothers, and loving fathers who earn their living by the work of their hands. The child arrives having just stolen her first book—although she has not yet learned how to read—and her foster father uses it, The Gravediggers Handbook, to lull her to sleep when she's roused by regular nightmares. Across the ensuing years of the late 1930s and into the 1940s, Liesel collects more stolen books as well as a peculiar set of friends: the boy Rudy, the Jewish refugee Max, the mayor's reclusive wife (who has a whole library from which she allows Liesel to steal), and especially her foster parents. Zusak not only creates a mesmerizing and original story but also writes with poetic syntax, causing readers to deliberate over phrases and lines, even as the action impels them forward. Death is not a sentimental storyteller, but he does attend to an array of satisfying details, giving Liesel's story
Bookseller of Kabul (The) ( 2008)	Christophersen	298	25	N	Y	non-fiction	For more than 20 years, Sultan Khan has defied the authorities, whether communist or Taliban, to supply books to the people of Kabul. He has been arrested, interrogated, and imprisoned, and has watched illiterate Taliban soldiers burn piles of his books in the street. Yet he has persisted in his passion for books, shedding light in one of the world's darkest places. This is the intimate portrait of a man of principle and of his family - two wives, five children, and many relatives sharing a small four-room apartment in this war-ravaged city. As they endure the extraordinary trials and tensions of Afghanistan's upheavals, they also still try to live ordinary lives, with work, relaxation, shopping, cooking, marriages, rivalries, and shared joys. Most of all, this is an intimate portrait of family life under Islam. Seierstad lived with Khan's family for months, experiencing first-hand Afghani life as few outsiders have seen it. Stepping back from the page, she allows the Khans to speak for themselves, giving us a genuinely gripping and moving portrait of a family, and of a country of great cultural riches and extreme contradictions.

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Bread Givers (2008)	Yeziarska	297	25	N	N	fiction	Sarah, the narrator of <i>Bread Givers</i> , describes with urgency and in detail the lives she, her sisters, and her mother live to support their revered, torah-reading father: their crowded shared rooms so he can study undisturbed; the numerous jobs all but he work to maintain the family and support his books, charities, and manner of dress; his constant and often impossible demands. Sarah struggles to remain loyal: "I began to feel I was different than my sisters... If they ever had times they hated Father, they were too frightened of themselves to confess... But could I help it what was inside me? I had to feel what I felt even it killed me."
Brick Lane	Ali	415	25	Y	Y	fiction	After an arranged marriage to Chanu, a man twenty years older, Nazneen is taken to London, leaving her home and heart in the Bangladeshi village where she was born. Her new world is full of mysteries. How can she cross the road without being hit by a car (an operation akin to dodging raindrops in the monsoon)? What is the secret of her bullying neighbor Mrs. Islam? What is a Hell's Angel? And how must she comfort the naive and disillusioned Chanu? Monica Ali's splendid novel is about journeys both external and internal, where the marvellous and the terrifying spiral together.
Broken for You	Kallos	368	26	Y	Y	fiction	National best seller and Today show Book Club selection, <i>Broken for You</i> is the story of two women in self-imposed exile whose lives are transformed when their paths intersect. Stephanie Kallos's debut novel is a work of infinite charm, wit and heart. When we meet septuagenarian Margaret Hughes, she is living alone in a mansion in Seattle with only a massive collection of valuable antiques for company. Enter Wanda Schultz, a young woman with a broken heart who has come west to search for her wayward boyfriend. Both women are guarding dark secrets and have spent years building up protective armor against the outside world. As their tentative friendship evolves, the armor begins to fall away and Margaret opens her house to the younger woman. This launches a series of unanticipated events, leading Margaret to discover a way to redeem her cursed past, and Wanda to learn the true purpose of her cross-country journey. Both funny and heartbreaking, <i>Broken for You</i> is a testament to the saving graces of surrogate families and shows how far the tiniest repair jobs can go in righting the world's wrongs.
Caucasia	Senna	413	25	N	N	fiction	This unusual first novel by a biracial writer combines a poignant coming-of-age story with a serious exploration of the racial issues that still divide this country. In 1970s Boston, sisters Birdie and Cole are forced apart when their activist white mother must flee the police. The dark-skinned Cole goes with her black father to Brazil, while Birdie, who passes for white, settles with her mother in New Hampshire. How Birdie copes with her frustrations and longing for her sister, and how the two are finally reunited, is the gist of this startlingly mature work, which is at once thought-provoking and tender.
Center of Everything (The)	Moriarty	335	25	Y	Y	fiction	Set in Kerrvill, Kansas, Evelyn Bucknow, an endearing young girl wincing her way through adolescence. Evelyn immerses the reader in the dramas of an entire community stuck at once in the middle of nowhere, but also at the center of everything.

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Coffee Trader (The)	Liss	384	29	N	Y	mystery	Price-fixing and stock market manipulation may sound like the makings of a modern Wall Street thriller. But in the case of David Liss's second novel, the setting is the Amsterdam stock exchange in 1659, where Miguel Lienzo, a Jew recently resettled from Portugal, struggles to save his name and fortune in the face of unscrupulous commodity traders, family rivalries, tension between Jews and Christians, and infighting within the community of Portuguese Jews escaping the Inquisition. The story is fascinating for its account of seventeenth-century Dutch society and coffee's introduction to Europe, whether you take your coffee black or with cream & sugar, this intriguing and absorbing historical thriller has it all, romance, mystery, suspense, betrayal, redemption and a feeling of how people lived in other times and places.
Color of Water, The	McBride	291	20	Y	Y	nonfiction	The daughter of a failed itinerate Orthodox rabbi in rural Virginia, James McBride's mother had run away to Harlem, married a black man, had 12 children, and founded an all-black Baptist church in her living room. Around her narrative, McBride has written a portrait of growing up with a white mother, a meditation on race identity, and a beautifully crafted hymn from a son to his mother.
Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time	Haddon	240	25	N	Y	fiction	Christopher Boone, the autistic 15-year-old narrator of this revelatory novel, relaxes by groaning and doing math problems in his head, eats red-but not yellow or brown-foods and screams when he is touched. Strange as he may seem, other people are far more of a conundrum to him, for he lacks the intuitive "theory of mind" by which most of us sense what's going on in other people's heads. When his neighbor's poodle is killed and Christopher is falsely accused of the crime, he decides that he will take a page from Sherlock Holmes (one of his favorite characters) and track down the killer. Haddon's novel is original, clever, and genuinely moving: this one is a must-read
Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that changed America	Larson	464	25	Y	Y	bio	Author Erik Larson imbues the incredible events surrounding the 1893 Chicago World's Fair with such drama that readers may find themselves checking the book's categorization to be sure that <i>The Devil in the White City</i> is not, in fact, a highly imaginative novel. Larson tells the stories of two men: Daniel H. Burnham, the architect responsible for the fair's construction, and H.H. Holmes, a serial killer masquerading as a charming doctor. Burnham's challenge was immense. In a short period of time, he was forced to overcome the death of his partner and numerous other obstacles to construct the famous "White City" around which the fair was built.
Dew Breaker (The) (finalist-Book Critic Award)	Danticat	242	25	N	Y	fiction	We meet him late in life: a quiet man, a good father and husband, a fixture in his Brooklyn neighborhood, a landlord and barber with a terrifying scar across his face. As the book unfolds, moving seamlessly between Haiti in the 1960s and New York City today, we enter the lives of those around him, and learn that he has also kept a vital, dangerous secret. Edwidge Danticat's brilliant exploration of the "dew breaker"--or torturer--an unforgettable story of love, remorse, and hope; of personal and political rebellions; and of the compromises we make to move beyond the most intimate brushes with history. It firmly establishes her as one of America's most essential writers.



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Diana Lively is Falling Down	Curran	427	25	N	N	fiction	Trained as an architect in England, Diana Lively accompanies her second husband, Ted, on a trip to Arizona to assist in an American billionaire's project to construct a King Arthur Theme Park in the middle of the local desert. Diana doesn't want to go, she is certain that Phoenix is a place where scorpions run wild in the streets, black-widow spiders dangle from every ceiling, and rattlesnakes wait around every corner. She is devoted to the marriage, however, so she packs up the children and heads for what she believes is the primitive Arizona wilderness.
Digging to America	Tyler	277	20	Y	Y	fiction	Two families awaiting the arrival of their adopted infant daughters from Korea meet at the airport. The families lives become intertwined after the Donaldsons, a young American couple invite the Yazdan's, Maryam, her son and his Iranian American wife to an arrival party, which becomes an annual event. Maryam, who came to this country thirty-five years earlier, feels her values threatened when she is courted by a newly widowed Donaldson. A penetrating light on the American way as seen from two perspectives, those who are born here and those who are still struggling to fit in.
Ditchdigger's Daughters ~ 1 Book NJ Choice	Thornton	261	30	Y	Y	biography	<b>2006 One Book NJ choice.</b> A black family's astonishing success story. Donald Thornton, a ditchdigger in Ft. Monmouth tells his 6 daughters that "no man's gonna come and offer to take care of you, that's why you gotta be able to look after yourselves. And for that you gotta be smart." He set his heart on the notion that all his girls would grow up to be doctors. He formed his talented daughters into the Thornton Sisters band that played the Apollo Theater, at the same time ensuring that each one completed her education.
Dive From Clausen's Pier, The	Packer	413	28	Y	Y	fiction	Packer's first novel is a sensitive exploration of the line between selfishness and self-preservation. Carrie Bell is 23 and has lived in Madison, Wisconsin, all her life. She is engaged to her high-school sweetheart, Mike, and all seems well--to everyone but Carrie, who is falling out of love with Mike, with Madison, with everything. On Memorial Day she numbly watches Mike dive off of Clausen's Pier and break his neck in the too-shallow water, leaving him a quadriplegic. She is stricken with grief, guilt, indecision, and fear--she wants to be supportive and faithful, but she cannot make herself love him again. After a painful summer of hospital vigils, she flees to New York City and tries on a new life, a new relationship. She cannot escape what she's left behind, though, and must eventually face those who feel she has betrayed them. There are no easy answers for Carrie, but her struggle to do what's right and her revelations about the life she wants for herself will keep readers turning page after eloquently written page.
Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight	Fuller	301	25	N	Y	non-fiction	A classic is born in this tender, intensely moving and even delightful journey through a white African girl's childhood. With a unique and subtle sensitivity to racial issues, Fuller describes her parents' racism and the wartime relationships between blacks and whites through a child's watchful eyes. Curfews and war, mosquitoes, land mines, ambushes and "an abundance of leopards" are the stuff of this childhood. Forecast: Like Anne Frank's diary, this work captures the tone of a very young person caught up in her own small world as she witnesses a far larger historical event. It will appeal to those looking for a good story as well as anyone seeking firsthand reportage of white southern Africa.

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
<b>Dreams From My Father (2009)</b>	<b>Obama</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>non-fiction</b>	In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barack Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance.
Drowning Tree (The)	Goodman	339	25	Y	Y	fiction	Goodman delivers a captivating literary mystery of secrets old and new. After 15 years, Juno McKay returns to Penrose College, her alma mater, to hear her friend Christine give a lecture on a beautiful stained-glass window designed by the college's founder and featuring, it was assumed, his wife, Eugenie Penrose. But Christine's research has led her to other conclusions, and her lecture raises eyebrows. This is an artful thriller, with rich, vivid descriptions of works of art, Hudson River Valley scenery and the knotty inner terrain of its characters' hearts will envelope readers.
Early Bird	Rothman	237	25	N	N	non-fiction	<i>Early Bird</i> is an irreverent, hilarious, and ultimately warmhearted account of Rodney's journey deep into the heart of retirement. Rodney struggles for acceptance from the senior citizens he shares a swimming pool with, and battles with cranky octogenarians who want him off their turf. The day-to-day dealings begin to wear on him. Before long he observes, "I don't think Tuesdays with Morrie would have been quite so uplifting if that guy had to spend more than one day a week with Morrie."
Easter Island	Vanderbes	301	25	N	N	fiction	Through the interwoven stories of two women 60 years apart, this novel comes close to finding answers to the following age-old mysteries: the World War I defeat of Admiral Von Spee, the existence of the giant statues on Easter Island, the origins of the first flower, and why smart women let men take advantage of them. In 1913, Elsa accompanies her husband and sister to Easter Island for an anthropological study. Once there, she discovers the reasons behind the destruction of the giant Moai statues. World War I intervenes before the origins can be revealed to the rest of the world. Sixty years later, botanist Greer Farraday, suffering from the knowledge that her husband plagiarized her work as well as from his death, picks up where Elsa left off. The two compelling characters' stories of betrayal are equally engrossing. This historical novel deftly combines romance, warfare, and science for the rationalist and romantic alike.
Eat, love, pray: A woman's search for everything across Italy, India & Indonesia	Gilbert	331	25	Y	Y	memoir	Elizabeth Gilbert was a 30-year-old successful journalist with a perfect life (husband, fancy New York City apartment, fabulous weekend home) when she realized she was miserable. After surviving an acrimonious divorce, Gilbert sold her remaining possessions to spend a year abroad--four months each in three countries with nothing in common except starting with the letter "I." Quirky humor as she eats (in Italy), prays (in India), and finds love (in Indonesia). This is a delightful memoir that explores exotic countries as well as the author's heart and soul.
Empire Falls (2002 Pulitzer Prize Winner)	Russo	483	25	Y	Y	fiction	Pulitzer Prize Winner, National Best Seller. The author delves into the decline of blue collar heart of small town America. The story overflows with hilarity, heartache and grace.

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Everything Nice (2008)	Shanman	320	25	Y	N	fiction	introduces an unforgettable and irresistibly real heroine: Michaela "Mike" Edwards, a woman who is forced to reinvent herself— and discovers that the biggest risk is not taking one at all... Fiercely independent and seriously lacking in social graces, Mike Edwards doesn't do sugar and spice. Instead she writes great copy and stays above the fray—until mishandled office politics get her unexpectedly fired. Suddenly the young ad hotshot finds herself doing the unimaginable: moving back in with her widowed father, hiding from her lecherous mentor, rethinking her entire career—and trying to unravel complex feelings for her best guy pal, an Aussie journalist named Gunther. For Mike, a few wrenching twists of fate are leading to a job she never expected: teaching "life skills" to seventh-grade girls. But sometimes the best makeovers are the ones you never see coming. Because with a classroom full of kids who need her, a best friend who's fast becoming something more, and a family she's only just discovering, Mike has a few surprises in store...and she's about to discover that going places in life doesn't have to mean going it on your own.
Eyre Affair (The)	Fforde	384	25	Y	Y	mystery	A delightful first book in a proposed series set in an alternative and offbeat Britain of 1985 and featuring Literary Detective Thursday Next. England is still fighting the Crimean War with Imperialist Russia, and the prevailing culture is based on literature. When the original manuscript of Charles Dickens's Martin Chuzzlewit is stolen, it is a high crime indeed, and Next is called in to help catch the culprit. To make matters worse, her "mad as pants" but brilliant uncle has created a machine that could cause all kinds of literary mayhem. This title has a cast of complete nutters. Acheron Hades, the world's third most wanted villain, has just the right mix of evil and charm to make readers look forward to meeting the first and second most wanted. Be warned that minor passersby may come round again in this "mad tea party" of a story. The novel has the surrealism and satire of Douglas Adams, the nonsense and wordplay of Lewis Carroll, and the descriptive detail of Connie Willis. What sets Fforde's work apart, however, is its winsome heroine. This is a highly entertaining mystery with social satire, time travel, fantasy, science fiction, and romance thrown in to the well-written mix.
Faith Club: A Muslim, a Christian, a Jew-- Three women search for understanding	Idliby	308	25	Y	N	nonfiction	In the wake of 9/11, Idliby, an American Muslim of Palestinian descent, sought out fellow mothers of the Jewish and Christian faiths to write a children's book on the commonalities among their respective traditions. In their first meeting, however, the women realized they would have to address their differences first. Oliver, an Episcopalian who was raised Catholic, irked Warner, a Jewish woman and children's author, with her description of the Crucifixion story, which sounded too much like "Jews killed Jesus" for Warner's taste. Idliby's efforts to join in on the usual "Judeo-Christian" debate tap into a sense of alienation she already feels in the larger Muslim community, where she is unable to find a progressive mosque that reflects her non-veil-wearing, spiritual Islam. The ladies come to call their group a "faith club" and, over time, midwife each other into stronger belief in their own respective religions. More Fight Club than book club, the coauthors pull no punches; their outstanding honesty makes for a page-turning read, rare for a religion nonfiction book. From Idliby's graphic defense of the Palestinian cause, Oliver's vacillations between faith and doubt, and Warner's struggles to acknowledge God's existence, almost every taboo topic is explored on this engaging spiritual

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Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Falls (The)	Oates	481	25	Y	Y	fiction	It is 1950 and, after a disastrous honeymoon night, Ariah Erskine's husband throws himself into the waters of Niagara Falls. Ariah, "the Widow Bride of the Falls," begins a relentless 7 day vigil in the mist, waiting for his body to be found. At her side is confirmed bachelor and pillar of the community, Dirk Burnaby, who is drawn to her. What follows is a passionate love affair, marriage and family -- a seemingly perfect existence. But tragedy soon takes over their lives, poisoning their halcyon years with distrust, greed and murder.
Family Tree (The)	Cadwalladr	378	25	y	y	fiction	In <i>The Family Tree</i> Rebecca Monroe's pregnancy forces her to reassess her own own offbeat, sometimes dysfunctional family history, including a loving mother obsessed with holiday trifle, an aging hippie aunt, an overly imaginative sister, and a grandmother hiding a lifelong secret.
Fires in the Dark	Doughty	480	25	N	N	fiction	In 1927, when prosperity still reigns in Central Europe, Yenko is born to two Coppersmith Gypsies. His parents, Josef and Anna, are nomads who raise their son during the relative calm of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Soon, though, dangerous times threaten to unsettle their family, as their heritage makes them vulnerable targets for ethnic cleansing. As Germany invades Czechoslovakia and the conflicts of World War II begin to unfold, Yenko and his parents become fugitives, forced on a journey that promises only great uncertainty and offers survival as a remote possibility. In the course of their flight, the burden of an ancient tradition rests entirely on Yenko's shoulders. In capturing the desperation and perseverance of one family during an extraordinary time in history, Doughty pays homage to a little-known culture.
Five people you meet in heaven (The)	Albom	196	15	Y	Y	fiction	Part melodrama and part parable, Mitch Albom's <i>The Five People You Meet in Heaven</i> weaves together three stories, all told about the same man: 83-year-old Eddie, the head maintenance person at an amusement park. Readers are told that Eddie, is only minutes away from death as he goes about his typical business at the park. Albom then traces Eddie's world through his final moments. In alternating sections, Albom flashes back to Eddie's birthdays, telling his life story as a kind of progress report over candles and cake each year. And in the third and last thread of the novel, Albom follows Eddie into heaven where the maintenance man
For one more day	Albom	197	20	Y	Y	fiction	If you had one chance to go back and fix what you did wrong in life, would you take it? And if you did, would you be big enough to stand it?
The Friday Night Knitting Club (2008)	Jacobs	360	25	N	Y	fiction	Georgia Walker's entire life is wrapped up in running her knitting store, Walker and Daughter, and caring for her 12-year-old daughter, Dakota. With the help of Anita, a lively widow in her seventies, Georgia starts the Friday Night Knitting Club, which draws loyal customers and a few oddballs. Darwin Chiu, a feminist grad student, believes knitting is downright old-fashioned, but she's drawn to the club as her young marriage threatens to unravel. Lucie, 42, a television producer, is about to become a mother for the first time--without a man in her life. Brash book editor KC finds her career has stalled unexpectedly, while brilliant Peri works at Walker and Daughter by day and designs handbags at night. Georgia gets her own taste of upheaval when Dakota's father reappears, hoping for a second chance. The yarn picks up steam as it draws to a conclusion, and an unexpected tragedy makes it impossible to put down. Jacobs' winning first novel is bound to have appeal among book clubs. Booklist



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The Glass Castle: A Memoir	Walls	288	25	N	Y	biography	Freelance writer Walls doesn't pull her punches. She opens her memoir: looking out the window of her taxi, wondering if she's "overdressed for the evening" and spotting her mother on the sidewalk, "rooting through a Dumpster." Walls's parents—just two of the unforgettable characters in this excellent, unusual book—were a matched pair of eccentrics, and raising four children didn't conventionalize either of them. Her father was a self-taught man, a would-be inventor who could stay longer at a poker table than at most jobs and had "a little bit of a drinking situation," as her mother put it. With a fantastic storytelling knack, Walls has a story to tell, and tell's it brilliantly without an ounce of self-pity.
Good Grief	Winston	342	25	Y	Y	fiction	A brilliantly funny and heartwarming debut about a young woman who stumbles, then fights to build a new life after the death of her husband. Lolly Winston has written an astonishing first novel. In <i>Good Grief</i> she takes a sad situation and artfully finds the humor and pathos to make readers smile and break their hearts at the same time.--
Grayson	Cox	153	25	Y	N	nonfiction	This captivating bestseller tells the true story of a miraculous encounter between a teenaged girl and a baby whale off the coast of California. It was the dark of early morning; Lynne was swimming her last half mile back to the pier after a long workout when she became aware that something was swimming with her. The ocean was charged with energy as if a squall was moving in; whatever it was felt large enough to be a white shark coursing beneath her body. In fact, it was a baby gray whale following alongside her. Lynne quickly realized that if she swam back to the pier, the young calf would follow her onto shore and die from collapsed lungs. On the other hand, if Lynne didn't find the mother whale, the baby would suffer from dehydration and starve to death. Something so enormous—the mother whale would be at least fifty feet long—suddenly seemed very small in the vast Pacific Ocean. How could Lynne possibly find her? This is the story—part mystery, part magical tale—of what happened.
Greatest Generation	Brokaw	412	24	Y	Y	nonfiction	After almost 15 years and hundreds of letters, Brokaw wrote <i>The Greatest Generation</i> , a representative cross-section of the stories he came across. However, this collection is more than a mere chronicle of a tumultuous time, its history is made personal by a cast of everyday people transformed by extraordinary circumstances: the first woman to break the homemaker mold, minorities suffering countless indignities to boldly fight for their country, small-town kids who became corporate magnates. From the reminiscences of George Bush to Julia Child to the astonishing heroism and moving love stories of everyday people, <i>The Greatest Generation</i> salutes those whose sacrifices changed the course of American history.
Guernsey Literary and Potato Pie Society 2009	Shaffer	304	25	Y	Y	fiction	"Traditional without seeming stale, and romantic without being naïve" (San Francisco Chronicle), this epistolary novel, based on Mary Ann Shaffer's painstaking, lifelong research, is a homage to booklovers and a nostalgic portrayal of an era. As her quirky, loveable characters cite the works of Shakespeare, Austen, and the Brontës, Shaffer subtly weaves those writers' themes into her own narrative. However, it is the tragic stories of life under Nazi occupation that animate the novel and give it its urgency; furthermore, the novel explores the darker side of human nature without becoming maudlin. The Rocky Mountain News criticized the novel's lighthearted tone and characterizations, but most critics agreed that, with its humor and optimism, Guernsey "affirms the power of books to nourish people during hard times"

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Hannah's Dream (2008)	Hammond	336	25	N	N	fiction	For forty-one years, Samson Brown has been caring for Hannah, the lone elephant at the down-at-the-heels Max L. Biedelman Zoo. Having vowed not to retire until an equally loving and devoted caretaker is found to replace him, Sam rejoices when smart, compassionate Neva Wilson is hired as the new elephant keeper. But Neva quickly discovers what Sam already knows: that despite their loving care, Hannah is isolated from other elephants and her feet are nearly ruined from standing on hard concrete all day. Using her contacts in the zookeeping world, Neva and Sam hatch a plan to send Hannah to an elephant sanctuary—just as the zoo's angry, unhappy director launches an aggressive revitalization campaign that spotlights Hannah as the star attraction, inextricably tying Hannah's future to the fate of the Max L. Biedelman Zoo. A charming, poignant, and captivating novel certain to enthrall readers of <i>Water for Elephants</i> , Diane Hammond's <i>Hannah's Dream</i> is a beautifully told tale rich in heart, humor, and intelligence.
Heir to the Glimmering World	Ozick	320	25	N	N	fiction	Set in the New York of the 1930s, this is a spellbinding, richly plotted novel brimming with intriguing characters. Orphaned at eighteen, with few possessions, Rose Meadows finds steady employment with the Mitwisser clan, who recently arrived from Berlin. Against the vivid backdrop of a world in tumult, Rose learns the refugee family's secrets as she watches their fortunes rise and fall in Ozick's wholly engrossing novel.
Highest Tide (The)	Lynch	246	25	N	N	fiction	One moonlit night, thirteen-year-old Miles O'Malley sneaks out of his house and goes exploring on the tidal flats of Puget Sound. When he discovers a rare giant squid, he instantly becomes a local phenomenon shadowed by people curious as to whether this speed-reading, Rachel Carson obsessed teenager is just an observant boy or an unlikely prophet. But Miles is really just a kid on the verge of growing up, infatuated with the girl next door, worried that his bickering parents will divorce, and fearful that everything, even the bay he loves, is shifting away from him. As the sea continues to offer up discoveries from its mysterious depths, he struggles to deal with the difficulties that attend the equally mysterious process of growing up.
History of Love	Krauss	252	25	N	N	fiction	girl seeking a cure for her widowed mother's loneliness. Leo Gursky is just about surviving, tapping his radiator each evening to let his upstairs neighbor know he's still alive. But life wasn't always like this: sixty years ago, in the Polish village where he was born, Leo fell in love and wrote a book, and though he doesn't know it, that book survived, inspiring fabulous
Home (2009)	Robinson	336	25	Y	Y	fiction	Robinson's beautiful new novel, a companion piece to her Pulitzer Prize-winning <i>Gilead</i> , is an elegant variation on the parable of the prodigal son's return. The son is Jack Boughton, one of the eight children of Robert Boughton, the former Gilead, Iowa, pastor, who now, in 1957, is a widowed and dying man. Jack returns home shortly after his sister, 38-year-old Glory, moves in to nurse their father, and it is through Glory's eyes that we see Jack's drama unfold. When Glory last laid eyes on Jack, she was 16, and he was leaving Gilead with a reputation as a thief and a scoundrel, having just gotten an underage girl pregnant. By his account, he'd since lived as a vagrant, drunk and jailbird until he fell in with a woman named Della in St. Louis. By degrees, Jack and Glory bond while taking care of their father, but when Jack's letters to Della are returned unopened, Glory has to deal with Jack's relapse into bad habits and the effect it has on their father. In giving an ancient drama of grace and perdition such a strong domestic setup, Robinson stakes a fierce claim to a divine recognition behind the rituals of home. (Sept.)

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Hours <i>(1999 Pulitzer Prize Winner)</i>	Cunningham	229	25	Y	Y	fiction	Clarissa Vaughn, a book editor in present-day Greenwich Village, is organizing a party for her oldest friend, Richard, an AIDS-stricken poet who has just won a major literary prize. Laura Brown, a young wife and mother in 1949 Los Angeles, cares for her toddler and tries to resist increasing waves of panic and feeling of alienation from her humdrum yet demanding life. And Virginia Woolf herself, the third woman, works on her new novel, Mrs. Dalloway, and attempts to come to terms with her longings for escape and even death. As the novel jump-cuts through the century, the lives and stories of the three women converge on the night of Clarissa's party for Richard.
House of Mirth	Warton	338	20	N	N	fiction	From the esteemed author of <i>The Age of Innocence</i> - a black comedy about vast wealth and a woman who can define herself only through the perceptions of others. Lily Bart's quest to find a husband who can satisfy her cravings for endless admiration and all the trappings of the rich comes to a scandalous end when she is accused of being a wealthy man's mistress.
Housekeeping	Robinson	219	25	N	Y	fiction	A modern classic, <i>Housekeeping</i> is the story of Ruth and her younger sister, Lucille, who grow up haphazardly, first under the care of their competent grandmother, then of two comically bumbling great-aunts, and finally of Sylvie, their eccentric and remote aunt. The family house is in the small Far West town of Fingerbone set on a glacial lake, the same lake where their grandfather died in a spectacular train wreck, and their mother drove off a cliff to her death. It is a town "chastened by an outsized landscape and extravagant weather, and chastened again by an awareness that the whole of human history had occurred elsewhere." Ruth and Lucille's struggle toward adulthood beautifully illuminates the price of loss and survival, and the dangerous and deep undertow of transience.
How to Talk to a Widower <i>(2008)</i>	Tropper	352	25	N	Y	fiction	Doug Parker is a widower at age twenty-nine, and in his quiet suburban town, that makes him something of a celebrity—the object of sympathy, curiosity, and, in some cases, unbridled desire. But Doug has other things on his mind. First there's his sixteen year-old stepson, Russ: a once-sweet kid who now is getting into increasingly serious trouble on a daily basis. Then there are Doug's sisters: his bossy twin, Clair, who's just left her husband and moved in with Doug, determined to rouse him from his Grieving stupor. And Debbie, who's engaged to Doug's ex-best friend and manically determined to pull off the perfect wedding at any cost. Soon Doug's entire nuclear family is in his face. And when he starts dipping his toes into the shark-infested waters of the second-time around dating scene, it isn't long before his new life is spinning hopelessly out of control, cutting a harrowing and often hilarious swath of sexual missteps and escalating chaos across the suburban landscape.
Human Stain	Roth	361	20	Y	Y	fiction	It is 1998, the year America is whipped into a frenzy of prurience by the impeachment of a president, and in a small New England town, an aging classics professor, Coleman Silk, is forced to retire when his colleagues decree that he is a racist. The charge is a lie, but the real truth about Silk would astonish his most virulent accuser. Coleman Silk has a secret, one which has been kept for fifty years from his wife, his four children, his colleagues, and his friends, including the writer, Nathan Zuckerman. It is Zuckerman who stumbles upon Silk's secret and sets out to reconstruct the unknown biography of this eminent, upright man, esteemed educator for nearly all his life.



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Adult Book Discussion List

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Hummingbird's Daughter	Urrea	495	25	N	N	fiction	Miracles and passion abound in this mesmerizing novel hailed everywhere as a masterwork. The story of a remarkable young woman's sudden sainthood in the revolutionary-era Mexico of the late 19th century. Author Luis Alberto Urrea, is the recipient of a Lannan Literary Award, an American Book Award, a Western States Book Award, and has been inducted into the Latino Literary Hall of Fame.
I Feel Bad About My Neck	Ephron	137	24	Y	Y	non-fiction	Nora Ephron chronicles her life, but mostly she speaks frankly and uproariously about life as a woman of a certain age. A candid, hilarious look at women who are getting older and dealing with the tribulations of maintenance, menopause, empty nests and life itself.
Imperial Woman	Buck	376	25	N	N	fiction	Because she lived for so many years among the common people, Pearl Buck had a unique insight into the impact of war, revolution and the emergence of China into the twentieth century. In <i>Imperial Woman</i> , she endeavors to give a true accounting of Tzu Hsi, the last Empress of China. Tzu Hsi was born into the lowest rank of the Imperial dynasty, but through her skill at manipulation, rose to power during the turbulent period of transition from an ancient to modern China. Vilified by her peers and revered by the peasants, she was a woman of many talents and contradictions. This is a vibrant historical perspective of a bewitching woman, the ruling classes and the secret world of the Forbidden City.
In Sunlight, in a Beautiful Garden	Cambor	272	25	Y	Y	fiction	Originally, the South Fork dam held water for the use of the railroad, but eventually a land speculator turned the surrounding area and the lake into a retreat for the wealthy, including Andrew Mellon, Henry Clay Frick, and Andrew Carnegie. The people who lived below the dam, in Johnstown, PA, often worked at the retreat and sometimes mingled with the elite of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club. For the most part, though, Johnstown and the Club were separate worlds-until they were united by the catastrophic flood of 1889 that took more than 2000 lives. For Frank Fallon and others who live and work in Johnstown, death and destruction overpower all else. For the club members, making amends proves of little help in alleviating their permanent sense of guilt. In her descriptions of Mellon, Frick, and Carnegie, the author contrasts the lives of the elite with those of the Fallon family and others in Johnstown's workforce to present a perspective on the flood's destruction from many economic levels. In the end, the tragedy overwhelms all of the survivors and makes for an unforgettable story.
Inheritance of Loss (2006 Booker Prize Winner)	Desai	357	25	Y	N	fiction	Set in India in a small Himalayan community along the border with Nepal, its center is the once grand, now decaying home of a melancholy retired judge. Sai, the judge's teenage granddaughter, has just moved in, and she finds herself enmeshed in a shadowy fairy tale-like life in a majestic landscape where nature is so rambunctious it threatens to overwhelm every human quest for order. Add violent political unrest fomented by poor young men enraged by the persistence of colonial-rooted prejudice, and this is a paradise under siege. Desai is superbly insightful in her rendering of compelling characters and in her wisdom regarding the perverse dynamics of society.

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Isaac's Storm	Larson	336	25	Y	Y	nonfiction	Larson has brought together powerful elements to create one of the most memorable of the "natural disaster" docudramas that have come out recently. Meteorologists within the U.S. Weather Bureau at the turn of the 20th century had become so confident of their own forecasting abilities that they dismissed with irritation troubling weather reports out of Cuba. In a burgeoning port city like Galveston, TX, in 1900, the idea that severe damage could be done by a hurricane seemed preposterous. Larson creates a likable character in the real-life weatherman Isaac Cline, tracing his career as a meteorologist. A tropical depression takes on an ominous life of its own as it thrashes its way through the Caribbean and up through the Gulf of Mexico. The town of Galveston becomes one of the major characters in the story. Poignant details and sweeping narrative create a book that is hard to put down even though the outcome is a well-known historical fact, an entire city is devastated. This is a gripping and heartbreaking story of what happens when arrogance meets the immutable forces of nature.
Jane Austen Book Club (The)	Fowler	250	25	Y	N	fiction	In California's central valley, five women and one man join to discuss Jane Austen's novels. Over the six months they get together, marriages are tested, affairs begin, unsuitable arrangements become suitable, and love happens. With her eye for the frailties of human behavior and her ear for the absurdities of social intercourse, Karen Joy Fowler has never been wittier nor her characters more appealing. The result is a delicious dissection of modern relationships.
Jew Store (The)	Suberman	298	25	Y	N	nonfiction	The Bronsons were the first Jews to ever live in the small town of Concordia, Tennessee-a town consisting of one main street, one bank, one drugstore, one picture show, one feed and seed, one hardware store, one beauty parlor, one barber shop, one blacksmith, and many Christian churches. That didn't stop Aaron Bronson, a Russian immigrant, from moving his young family out of New York by horse and wagon and journeying to this remote corner of the South to open a small dry goods store, Bronson's Low-Priced Store.
Journey to the End of the Millennium	Yehoshua	309	20	N	N	fiction	The year is 999 and the protagonist is Ben Attar, a North African Jewish merchant who has, for many years, been in profitable partnership with his nephew Abulafia and a Muslim trader named Abu Lutfi. But when Abulafia marries a German Jew who disapproves of his uncle's two wives, the partnership is suddenly dissolved and Ben Attar finds himself out of business. Abulafia's repudiation of his uncle sets the stage for Ben Attar's journey into the heart of Europe at the turn of the millennium. Accompanied by a rabbi, both his wives, and Abu Lutfi, our hero sails to Paris, where he hopes to persuade his nephew's wife that his marriage to two women is both legally and morally permissible. Yehoshua's tale is more than just a travelog through the Europe of the 10th century; it is also a meditation on religion, law, and the differences between the European Sephardic tradition and that of the Middle Eastern Ashkenazic Jews--differences that echo the current social and ideological conflicts within Israel today.
Julie and Romeo	Ray	272	25	Y	Y	fiction	At last, someone has written a love story for and about grown-ups! 60 year old Julie Roseman has known since childhood that Rosemans are supposed to despise the Cacciamani family. She's never known exactly why...but she's followed her family's advice and avoided all Cacciamanis like the plague. Until she bumps into Romeo Cacciamani at a small-business conference-and realizes he's sort of...sweet. Now, this unexpected relationship is blooming into something big. But wait until their families find out...

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Kabul Beauty School ( 2008)	Rodrigues	278	25	Y	Y	nonfiction	Soon after the fall of the Taliban, in 2001, Deborah Rodriguez went to Afghanistan as part of a humanitarian aid group. Surrounded by people whose skills--as doctors, nurses, and therapists--seemed eminently more practical than her own, Rodriguez, a hairdresser and mother from Michigan, despaired of being of any real use. Yet she found she had a gift for befriending Afghans, and once her profession became known she was eagerly sought out by Westerners desperate for a good haircut and by Afghan women, who have a long and proud tradition of running their own beauty salons. Thus the idea for the Kabul Beauty School was born. Within that small haven, the line between teacher and student quickly blurred as these vibrant women shared with Rodriguez their stories and their hearts, ultimately giving her the strength to leave her own unhealthy marriage and allow herself to love again, Afghan style.-- From publisher description
Kite Runner	Hosseini	384	30	Y	Y	fiction	In his debut novel, Khaled Hosseini accomplishes what very few contemporary novelists are able to do. He manages to provide an educational and eye-opening account of a country's political turmoil--in this case, Afghanistan--while also developing characters whose heartbreaking struggles and emotional triumphs resonate with readers long after the last page has been turned over.
Known World (2004 Pulitzer Prize Winner)	Jones	388	25	Y	Y	fiction	Henry Townsend, born a slave, is purchased and freed by his father, yet he remains attached to his former owner, even taking lessons in slave owning when he eventually buys his own slaves. Townsend is part of a small enclave of free blacks who own slaves, thus offering another angle on the complexities of slavery and social relations in a Virginia town just before the Civil War.
Lace Reader (The) 2009	Barry	390	25	Y	Y	fiction	In Barry's captivating debut, Towner Whitney, a dazed young woman descended from a long line of mind readers and fortune tellers, has survived numerous traumas and returned to her hometown of Salem, Mass., to recover. Any tranquility in her life is short-lived when her beloved great-aunt Eva drowns under circumstances suggesting foul play. Towner's suspicions are taken with a grain of salt given her history of hallucinatory visions and self-harm. The mystery enmeshes local cop John Rafferty, who had left the pressures of big city police work for a quieter life in Salem and now finds himself falling for the enigmatic Towner as he mourns Eva and delves into the history of the eccentric Whitney clan. Barry excels at capturing the feel of smalltown life, and balances action with close looks at the characters' inner worlds. Her pacing and use of different perspectives show tremendous skill and will keep readers captivated all the way through

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Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Last Lecture (The) (2008)	Pausch	224	25	N	Y	non-fiction	A lot of professors give talks titled "The Last Lecture." Professors are asked to consider their demise and to ruminate on what matters most to them. And while they speak, audiences can't help but mull the same question: What wisdom would we impart to the world if we knew it was our last chance? If we had to vanish tomorrow, what would we want as our legacy? When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, was asked to give such a lecture, he didn't have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. But the lecture he gave--"Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams"--wasn't about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment (because "time is all you have...and you may find one day that you have less than you think"). It was a summation of everything Randy had come to believe. It was about living. In this book, Randy Pausch has combined the humor, inspiration and intelligence that made his lecture such a phenomenon and given it an indelible form. It is a book that will be shared for generations to come.
Life of Pi (2002 Booker Prize Winner)	Martel	401	25	Y	Y	fiction	The son of a zookeeper, Pi Patel has an encyclopedic knowledge of animal behavior and a fervent love of stories. When Pi is 16, his family emigrates from India to North America aboard a Japanese cargo ship, along with their zoo animals bound for new homes. The ship sinks. Pi finds himself alone in a lifeboat, his only companions a hyena, an orangutan, a wounded zebra, and Richard Parker, a 450-pound Bengal tiger. Soon the tiger has dispatched all but Pi, whose fear, knowledge, and cunning allow him to coexist with Richard Parker for 227 days while lost at sea.
Light on Snow	Shreve	305	25	N	Y	fiction	Robert Dillon and his 12-year-old daughter, Nicky, discover a newborn baby abandoned in the snowy woods. As they rush the baby to the hospital, Nicky senses that the vulnerable infant has somehow unleashed her and her father's private demons. Nicky lost her mother and baby sister in an automobile accident more than a year earlier; her father's response to his overwhelming grief was to uproot them from their life in New York and move to rural New Hampshire. He has purposefully isolated himself from the outside world, keeping contact with other people to a minimum. But now the abandoned baby has forced them to act, and the two are suddenly plunged into dealing with the world-weary detective who catches the case and, later, with the distraught mother of the baby, who ends up snowbound in their house for days. Her presence forces Nicky and her father to move beyond their personal tragedy. Shreve's expert pacing produces a fast read that will more than satisfy her many fans.
Lighthousekeeping	Winterson	229	25	N	N	fiction	<i>Lighthousekeeping</i> tells the tale of Silver ("My mother called me Silver. I was born part precious metal, part pirate."), an orphaned girl who is taken in by blind Mr. Pew, the mysterious and miraculously old keeper of a lighthouse on the Scottish coast. Pew tells Silver stories of Babel Dark, a nineteenth-century clergyman. Dark lived two lives: a public one mired in darkness and deceit and a private one bathed in the light of passionate love. For Silver, Dark's life becomes a map through her own darkness, into her own story, and, finally, into love. One of the most original and extraordinary writers of her generation, Winterson has created a modern fable about the transformative power of storytelling.

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Like water for chocolate: a novel in monthly installments, with recipes, romances and home remedies	Esquivel	245	25	N	Y	fiction	Set in turn-of-the-century Mexico, it tells the romantic tale of Tita De La Garza, the youngest of Mama Elena's three daughters, whose fate, dictated by family tradition, is to remain single so that she can take care of her mother in her old age. Tita has grown up under the tutelage of the spinster cook Nacha and has learned all the family recipes and remedies. When Pedro, Tita's admirer, asks for Tita's hand in marriage, her mother refuses permission, offering instead Tita's older sister, Rosaura. Pedro accepts, thinking it will be a way to stay close to his one true love. But Tita doesn't know his thinking and, crushed by what she sees as betrayal, she must make the wedding cake. Crying as she bakes, her tears mingle with the ingredients and unleash a wave of longing in everyone who eats a piece. It is just the beginning of the realization that Tita has special talents, both in the kitchen and beyond. Eventually, Tita must choose between marrying a loving, devoted doctor or saving herself for Pedro, her first true love. Her choice is revealed in a surprise last chapter.
Lion in the Whitehouse: Theodore Roosevelt (2008)	Donald	304	25	N	Y	biography	In this brisk biography, Donald, former editor-in-chief of Harvard University Press, ascribes Teddy Roosevelt's popularity to his combination of charisma and substance; he was an electrical, magnetic speaker, according to one contemporary newspaper account, and he hit themes that resonated with ordinary folks, such as honesty in government and opportunity for all. In the White House, Roosevelt established a model of positive, active governance and insisted that the president was more powerful than any business tycoon. Donald pays particular attention to Roosevelt's pioneering conservancy efforts, and she suggests that one of his most important acts was to appoint Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. to the Supreme Court. Donald also touches on the personal: his grief when his first wife died, and his passionate love for his second wife, with whom he set a new standard for presidential domestic life, entertaining with a gusto unmatched until the Kennedys.
Lost in the Forest	Miller	247	25	Y	Y	fiction	Sue Miller has distinguished herself as one of our most elegant and widely celebrated chroniclers of family life. But never before have Miller's powers been keener or more transfixing than they are in <i>Lost in the Forest</i> , a novel set in the vineyards of Northern California that tells the story of a young girl who, in the wake of a tragic accident, seeks solace in a damaging love affair with a much older man.
Lovely Bones, The	Sebold	328	25	Y	Y	fiction	Set in a heaven as real and possible as the earth is mysterious and shifting. <i>The Lovely Bones</i> explores the romance of family life, the shy, funny turbulence of adolescence, and the painful tracks love and loss make through our world. An intensely wise and gorgeously written page-turner. Destined to become a classic.

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Loving Frank (2008)	Horan	400	25	N	Y	fiction	It's a rare treasure to find a historically imagined novel that is at once fully versed in the facts and unafraid of weaving those truths into a story that dares to explore the unanswered questions. Frank Lloyd Wright and Mamah Cheney's love story is--as many early reviews of Loving Frank have noted--little-known and often dismissed as scandal. In Nancy Horan's skillful hands, however, what you get is two fully realized people, entirely, irrepressibly, in love. Together, Frank and Mamah are a wholly modern portrait, and while you can easily imagine them in the here and now, it's their presence in the world of early 20th century America that shades how authentic and, ultimately, tragic their story is. Mamah's bright, earnest spirit is particularly tender in the context of her time and place, which afforded her little opportunity to realize the intellectual life for which she yearned. Loving Frank is a remarkable literary achievement, tenderly acute and even-handed in even the most heartbreaking moments, and an auspicious debut from a writer to watch.
Luncheon of the Boating Party (2008)	Vreeland	448	25	N	Y	fiction	With her richly textured novels, Susan Vreeland has offered pioneering portraits of artists' lives. Now, as she did in <i>Girl in Hyacinth Blue</i> , Vreeland once again focuses on a single painting—Auguste Renoir's instantly recognizable masterpiece, which depicts a gathering of Renoir's real friends enjoying a summer Sunday on a café terrace along the Seine. Narrated by Renoir and seven of the models, the novel illuminates the gusto, hedonism, and art of the era. With a gorgeous palette of vibrant, captivating characters, Vreeland paints their lives, loves, losses, and triumphs so vividly that "the painting literally comes alive"
Madonnas of Leningrad	Dean	228	25	Y	N	fiction	Bit by bit, the ravages of age are eroding Marina's grip on the everyday. An elderly Russian woman now living in America, she cannot hold on to fresh memories—the details of her grown children's lives, the approaching wedding of her grandchild—yet her distant past is miraculously preserved in her mind's eye. Vivid images of her youth in war-torn Leningrad arise unbidden, carrying her back to the terrible fall of 1941, when she was a tour guide at the Hermitage Museum and the German army's approach signaled the beginning of what would be a long, torturous siege on the city. As the people braved starvation, bitter cold, and a relentless German onslaught, Marina joined other staff members in removing the museum's priceless masterpieces for safekeeping, leaving the frames hanging empty on the walls to symbolize the artworks' eventual return. As the Luftwaffe's bombs pounded the proud, stricken city, Marina built a personal Hermitage in her mind—a refuge that would stay buried deep within her, until she needed it once more. . . .
Mao's Last Dancer	Cunxin	445	25	N	Y	memoir	From a desperately poor village in northeast China, at age eleven, Li Cunxin was chosen by Madame Mao's cultural delegates to be taken from his rural home and brought to Beijing, where he would study ballet. In 1979, the young dancer arrived in Texas as part of a cultural exchange, only to fall in love with America—and with an American woman. Two years later, through a series of events worthy of the most exciting cloak-and-dagger fiction, he defected to the United States, where he quickly became known as one of the greatest ballet dancers in the world. This is his story, told in his own inimitable voice.

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March (2006 Pulitzer Prize Winner)	Brooks	280	25	Y	Y	fiction	From Louisa May Alcott's beloved classic Little Women, Geraldine Brooks has animated the character of the absent father, March, and crafted a story "filled with the ache of love and marriage and with the power of war upon the mind and heart of one unforgettable man" (Sue Monk Kidd). With "pitch-perfect writing" (USA Today), Brooks follows March as he leaves behind his family to aid the Union cause in the Civil War. His experiences will utterly change his marriage and challenge his most ardently held beliefs. A lushly written, wholly original tale of historical fiction steeped in the details of another time.
Master Butchers Singing Club	Erdich	416	25	N	Y	fiction	A powerfully told story of love, death, redemption, and resurrection. After German soldier Fidelis Waldvogel returns home from World War I to marry his best friend's pregnant widow, he packs up his father's butcher knives and sets sail for America. He settles in Argus, North Dakota, where he sets up a meat shop with his wife Eva, who quickly befriends the struggling yet resourceful Delphine who runs a vaudeville show.
Meena: Heroine of Afghanistan	Chavis	181	25	N	N	biography	Melody Ermachild Chavis has written a deceptively simple, clear, and absolutely stunning portrait of a selfless revolutionary and of the organization of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, which she founded. Meena, inspires, humbles, and haunts us. Ultimately, Meena compels us to act—for peace and justice, for democracy, and, above all, for the liberation of women. This book is a gift from the women of Afghanistan to the women of the world." Bettina Aptheker, chair of the women's studies department at the University of California.
Medicus (2008)	Downie	384	25	Y	Y	mystery	Divorced and down on his luck, Gaius Petreius Ruso has made the rash decision to seek his fortune in an inclement outpost of the Roman Empire, namely Britannia. In a moment of weakness, after a straight thirtysix- hour shift at the army hospital, he succumbs to compassion and rescues an injured slave girl, Tilla, from the hands of her abusive owner. Now he has a new problem: a slave who won't talk and can't cook, and drags trouble in her wake. Before he knows it, Ruso is caught in the middle of an investigation into the deaths of prostitutes working out of the local bar. Now Ruso must summon all his forensic knowledge to find a killer who may be after him next.
Memoirs of a Geisha	Golden	428	25	Y	Y	fiction	"I wasn't born and raised to be a Kyoto geisha....I'm a fisherman's daughter from a little town called Yoroido on the Sea of Japan." How nine-year-old Chiyo, sold with her sister into slavery by their father after their mother's death, becomes Sayuri, the beautiful geisha accomplished in the art of entertaining men, is the focus of this fascinating first novel.

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Memory Keeper's Daughter	Edwards	401	25	Y	Y	fiction	David Henry's life was turning out as he hoped. He was a doctor, married to a beautiful woman, Nora, with a baby on the way. But everything changed overnight because of one fateful decision. On a winter evening in 1961, a blizzard brewing, Nora goes into labor. Due to the weather, they could only make it to the clinic, not the hospital, and only Caroline, the nurse, arrived to help deliver the baby. David delivers his own child, a perfectly healthy son. But when Nora continues her labor, David realizes she is carrying twins; and the second child, a girl, is born with Down syndrome. Wanting to protect his wife from the devastating news, David gives the child to Caroline to take to an institution, asking her never to reveal the secret. Caroline takes the baby and disappears. Unfolding the plot over the course of 25 years, Edwards tells a moving story of two families bound by a secret that both eats away at relationships and eventually helps to create new ones.
Middlesex (2003 Pulitzer Prize Winner)	Eugenides	544	25	Y	Y	fiction	This is a complicated tale of a young girl who grows into a man. The story of Cal Stephanides begins generations before his birth, in a small Greek village, when his grandparents succumb to incestuous desires. Immigration to the United States keeps Desdemona and Lefty's secret intact - until their grandchild Cal reaches puberty. Told with both humor and earnestness, it grows more engaging with every page.
Mona in the Promised Land	Jen	303	20	N	N	fiction	The rich stew of ethnic differences in America's melting pot provides robust fare in Jen's wickedly and hilariously observant second novel. In chronicling the coming-of-age of a refreshingly un-neurotic Chinese-American teenager, Jen casts an ironic eye on some of the hypocrisies of contemporary society, and her amusing insights illuminate several minority cultures. Mona Chang is in eighth grade in the late 1960s when her family moves to Scarshell, an affluent, mainly Jewish suburb of New York City. Her parents, upwardly mobile Helen and Ralph Chang, met in Jen's acclaimed first novel, Typical American. Smart, wisecracking Mona soon comes to the conclusion that "if you want to know how to be a minority, there's nobody better at it than the Jews," and she approves of Judaism's intellectual latitude and social activism. "American means being whatever you want, and I happened to pick being Jewish," Mona says. Her parents are appalled; by claiming the freedom to choose, Mona is violating what Jen presents as one of the basic rules of Chinese parent-child relationships. But being a "solo Jew" is only one of Mona's problems as she navigates the difficult shoals of adolescence as an ethnic and religious maverick as bewildered as any teenager by the mysteries of love
My Sister's Keeper	Picoult	423	25	Y	Y	fiction	Conceived to provide a bone marrow match for her leukemia-stricken sister, teenage Kate begins to question her moral obligations in light of countless medical procedures and decides to fight for the right to make decisions about her own body.
Mystic River	Lehane	401	25	Y	Y	fiction	25 years ago, Dave Boyle got into a car, four days later, he was different in a way that destroyed his friendship with Sean Devine and Jimmy Marcus. Now Sean's a cop, Jimmy's a store owner with a prison record and mob connections, and Dave's trying hard to keep his demons safely submerged. When Jimmy's daughter Katie is found murdered, each of the men must confront a past that none is eager to acknowledge. Lehane tugs delicately on the strands that weave this neighborhood together, testing for their strengths and weaknesses; this novel seems as much anthropological case study as thriller.
Naked	Sedaris	291	25	N	Y	bio	Naked is easily the best of Sedaris' comical genius. It's a collection of deeply funny essays detailing the author's colorful life. To say the stories also have heart is not to dilute the sheer fun of them. Sedaris' droll wordplay and frank observation expose the raw comedy anyone can recognize in even the most monotonous situation.



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Namesake (The)	Lahiri	291	25	Y	Y	fiction	<i>The Namesake</i> takes the Ganguli family from their tradition-bound life in Calcutta through their fraught transformation into Americans. On the heels of an arranged wedding, Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli settle in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Ashoke does his best to adapt while his wife pines for home. When their son, Gogol, is born, the task of naming him betrays their hope of respecting old ways in a new world. And we watch as Gogol stumbles along the first-generation path, strewn with conflicting loyalties, comic detours, and wrenching love affairs. With empathy and penetrating insight, Lahiri explores the expectations bestowed on us by our parents and the means by which we come to define who we are.
Nazi Officer's Wife: How one Jewish woman survived the Holocaust	Hahn-Beer	336	25	N	Y	memoir	Edith Hahn was an outspoken young woman in Vienna when the Gestapo forced her into a ghetto and then into a labor camp. When she returned home months later, she knew she would become a hunted woman and went underground. With the help of a Christian friend, she emerged in Munich as Grete Denner. There she met Werner Vetter, a Nazi Party member who fell in love with her. Despite Edith's protests and even her eventual confession that she was Jewish, he married her and kept her identity a secret.
Neighbors National Book Award Finalist	Gross	214	20	N	N	non-fiction	This tiny book reveals a shocking story buried for sixty years, and it has set off a round of soul searching in Poland. But the questions it raises are of universal significance: On a summer day in 1941 in Nazi-occupied Poland, half of the town of Jedwabne brutally murdered the other half: 1,600 men, women, and children—all but seven of the town's Jews. In this shocking and compelling study, historian Jan Gross pieces together eyewitness accounts as well as physical evidence into a comprehensive reconstruction of the horrific July day remembered well by locals but hidden to history. Revealing wider truths about Jewish-Polish relations, the Holocaust, and human responses to occupation and totalitarianism, Gross's investigation sheds light on how Jedwabne's Jews came to be murdered—not by faceless Nazis, but by people who knew them well.
O My America (2008)	Kaplan	286	25	N	N	fiction	Is Merry Slavin to be envied or to be pitied for having Ezra Slavin as a father? <i>O My America!</i> , Johanna Kaplan's first novel, dedicates its entirety to the question, and ultimately refuses to come up with a definitive answer; instead, it creates indelible portraits of two characters in a story that spans the better part of the 20th century. From the very first pages of the novel, we learn along with Merry that Ezra Slavin, visiting professor of American Studies at Amherst, old and stalwart member of the left, guru to America's disaffected youth, has just died; though the novel ends just a few days later, at Slavin's funeral service, Merry's memories, thoughts, and encounters—along with those of a few others—provide us a lifetime's worth of evidence about her father.

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On Beauty 2006 Orange Prize (2008)	Smith	446	25	N	N	fiction	A hilarious comedy of manners in the tradition of Austen, Wharton, and Forster, to whom the author pays homage. She tackles class, race, and gender with acerbic wit and a wise eye for the complexities of modern life, in a 21st-century update of Howards End. Beauty opens as hapless art historian Howard Belsey, a transplanted Englishman married to an African-American woman, returns to London to prevent his son from marrying the daughter of his academic rival, Monty Kipps. Jerome has fallen in love not just with Victoria, but with the entire family, whose Trinidadian, right-wing roots are a sharp contrast to the freewheeling liberalism of his own family. In the meantime, Belseys other children, social activist Zora and Levi, who speaks only street slang and fancies himself from the hood, are each seeking the commitments and identities that will define their own lives. What results is a vivid portrait of marriage, family, the conflict between the political and the personal, and peoples eternal affinity for self-deception.
One Thousand White Women (2008)	Fergus	320	25	N	Y	fiction	An American western with a most unusual twist, this is an imaginative fictional account of the participation of May Dodd and others in the controversial "Brides for Indians" program, a clandestine U.S. government-sponsored program intended to instruct "savages" in the ways of civilization and to assimilate the Indians into white culture through the offspring of these unions. May's personal journals, loaded with humor and intelligent reflection, describe the adventures of some very colorful white brides (including one black one), their marriages to Cheyenne warriors, and the natural abundance of life on the prairie before the final press of the white man's civilization. Fergus is gifted in his ability to portray the perceptions and emotions of women. He writes with tremendous insight and sensitivity about the individual community and the political and religious issues of the time, many of which are still relevant today. This book is artistically rendered with meticulous attention to small details that bring to life the daily concerns of a group of hardy souls at a pivotal time in U.S. history.
Ordinary Wolves	Kantner	330	25	N	N	fiction	This exciting story of a white boy growing up in a sod igloo in remote northern Alaska challenges any romantic ideas about life on the last American frontier. Cutuk and his older brother and sister are being raised by their father, who has totally rejected modern American society in favor of a culture of self-reliance in the wilderness. Cutuk wants desperately to be accepted by the village Inupiaks, who ridicule and harass him as an outsider. Village life is not a pretty picture with its alcohol abuse, rape, incest, and family violence, but Cutuk cherishes the old ways and respects the elders. His siblings grow up and leave for the cities, and in his early 20s he leaves for Anchorage. He comes to realize that he doesn't fit in there either and finally returns to the village to make a place for himself. The episodic novel has a connecting thread throughout as Cutuk continues to search for an old Eskimo hunter who befriended his family and then disappeared. There is an interesting contrast between the protagonist's preference for the indigenous lifestyle and the Inupiaks' adoption of American fast food, gadgets, and fads. Kantner gives readers many exciting and realistic views of everyday life in

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Other Boleyn Girl (The)	Gregory	661	25	Y	Y	fiction	Sisterly rivalry is the basis of this fresh, wonderfully vivid retelling of the story of Anne Boleyn. Anne, her sister Mary and their brother George are all brought to the king's court at a young age, as players in their uncle's plans to advance the family's fortunes. Mary, the sweet, blond sister, wins King Henry VIII's favor when she is barely 14 and already married to one of his courtiers. Their affair lasts several years, and she gives Henry a daughter and a son. But her dark, clever, scheming sister, Anne, insinuates herself into Henry's graces, styling herself as his adviser and confidant. Soon she displaces Mary as his lover and begins her machinations to rid him of his wife, Katherine of Aragon. This is only the beginning of the intrigue that Gregory so handily chronicles, capturing beautifully the mingled hate and nearly incestuous love Anne, Mary and George ("kin and enemies all at once") feel for each other and the toll their family's ambition takes on them.
Pages For You (2008)	Brownrigg	264	20	N	N	fiction	Coming-of-age novels that focus on sexual initiation were once the exclusive territory of straight male writers, but, thankfully, women now write authentically, unashamedly, profoundly, and directly about their sensual feelings, including those for each other. Here, 17-year-old Californian Flannery is new to the East Coast and the Ivy League college she attends, and is drawn irresistibly to Anne, a teaching assistant 11 years her senior. A hauntingly beautiful love develops between the two in this tale either for young readers first discovering who they are and how they love, or for those remembering a rose-colored past. Brownrigg lingers delectably on the small, suggestive gesture, such as a throaty murmur of indecision, but her otherwise exquisite timing falters at the end, condensing the length and texture of Flannery's grief. Some may read this with alarm at the inherently unequal power structure between the two women, seeing a minor-aged innocent exploited. But among those whose same-sex yearnings first attached themselves to teachers, some may sigh, not over past desires unfulfilled, but the fond recollections of what might have been.
Patriot Hearts (2008)	Hambly	430	25	N	N	fiction	The triumphs and turmoil of early America are revealed through fictional portraits of four women--Martha Washington, Abigail Adams, Sally Hemings, and Dolley Madison--who played key roles during four presidential administrations.
Peace Like A River	Enger	311	25	Y	Y	fiction	In "lyrical, openhearted prose" (Michael Glitz, The New York Post), Enger tells the story of eleven-year-old Reuben Land, an asthmatic boy who has reason to believe in miracles. Along with his sister and father, Reuben finds himself on a cross-country search for his outlaw older brother who has been controversially charged with murder. Their journey is touched by serendipity and the kindness of strangers, and its remarkable conclusion shows how family, love, and faith can stand up to the most terrifying of enemies, the most tragic of fates.
Peony in Love (2008)	See	273	25	Y	Y	fiction	Peony is the cloistered daughter of a wealthy family is betrothed to a suitor she has never met, these lyrics from The Peony Pavilion mirror her own longings. In the garden of the Chen Family Villa, a small theatrical troupe is performing scenes from this epic opera. Peony attends the production, watching from behind a screen, but catches sight of a handsome man and begins a journey of love and sorrow.

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People of the Book (2008)	Brooks	400	25	Y	Y	fiction	When an Australian rare-book conservator named Hanna Heath finds a butterfly wing, a salt crystal, a white hair, and bloodstains in the recently rediscovered Sarajevo Haggadah, a late-medieval illuminated codex of uncertain provenance, she sets out to solve the mystery of the book's origins. To her disappointment, analysis of the specimens reveals little. "It's too bad," an organic chemist tells her. "Blood is potentially so dramatic." Geraldine Brooks, beginning where science leaves off, uses Hanna's finds as entry points to richly imagined historical landscapes peopled by the Haggadah's creators, protectors, and would-be destroyers—a female Muslim slave in Convivencia Spain, a Jewish doctor in fin-de-siècle Vienna, an alcoholic priest in seventeenth-century Venice. Their narratives alternate with Hanna's own, and the final, multilayered effect is complex and moving.
Pilot's Wife	Shreve	293	25	Y	Y	fiction	A pilot's wife is taught to be prepared for the late-night knock at the door. But when Kathryn Lyons receives word that a plane flown by her husband, Jack, has exploded near the coast of Ireland, she confronts the unfathomable, one startling revelation at a time. Soon drawn into a maelstrom of publicity fueled by rumors that Jack had a secret life, Kathryn sets out to learn who her husband really was, whatever that knowledge might cost. Her search propels this taught, impassioned novel as movingly as it explores the question, How well can we ever really know another person?
Pine Barrens	McPhee	156	25	N	N	nonfiction	Most people think of New Jersey as a suburban corridor between New York and Phila. Yet in the low center of the state is a near wilderness, larger than most national parks, which has been known as the Pine Barrens. It covers about one fourth of the state, and this book describes the people who dwell in the region, the "Pineys", and their folklore.
Playing For Pizza (2008)	Grisham	262	26	Y	N	fiction	Third-string Cleveland Browns quarterback Rick Dockery becomes the greatest goat ever by throwing three interceptions in the closing minutes of the AFC championship game. Fleeing vengeful fans, he finds refuge in the grungiest corner of professional football, the Italian National Football League as quarterback of the inept but full-of-heart Parma Panthers. What ensues is a winsome football fable, replete with team bonding and character-building as the underdog Panthers challenge the powerhouse Bergamo Lions for a shot at the Italian Superbowl. The book is also the author's love letter to Italy. Rick is first baffled and then enchanted by all things Italian—tiny cars! opera! benign corruption!—and through him Grisham (The Firm) instructs his readership in the art of gracious living, featuring sumptuous four-hour, umpteen-course meals. The result is a charming fish-out-of-water story.
Poisonwood Bible	Kingsolver	543	25	Y	Y	fiction	The year is 1959 and the place is the Belgian Congo. Nathan Price, a Baptist preacher, has come to spread the Word in a remote village reachable only by airplane. To say that he and his family are woefully unprepared would be an understatement. Moreover, they've arrived in the middle of a political upheaval as the Congolese seek to wrest independence from Belgium. In addition to the poisonous snakes, dangerous animals, and the hostility of the villagers to Nathan's fiery take-no-prisoners brand of Christianity, there are also rebels in the jungle and the threat of war in the air.

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Pope Joan	Cross	448	25	N	N	fiction	A woman pope? The author's notes document the possibility that there was one for a brief time in the ninth century. The Joan in this novel has all the qualities a woman would need to become pope: superior intelligence, imagination, daring, and the determination that her sex would not keep her illiterate and subservient, as were most women of the period. Joan is an apt pupil at the cathedral school, where she is allowed to study only because her brother cannot master Latin. A Viking raid on her wedding day gives Joan the opportunity to escape an unwanted marriage; she takes her dead brother's clothes, presents herself at a nearby monastery, and becomes Brother John Anglicus. Her skill in healing and her passion for learning attract attention, and she fears discovery. Still disguised as a monk, Joan takes the pilgrim's road to Rome, where her skills as a healer attract the attention of the Pope himself.
Preservationist (The)	Maine	230	25	Y	Y	fiction	Using just a few chapters from Genesis as his base, Maine fleshes out the story of Noah and his ark, making it both realistic--with touches of wry humor--and wondrous. Maine's Noe is an old man, implacable in believing in Yahweh's righteousness even while he is plagued by dreadful dreams. His story is told in the third person, in chapters alternating with first-person accounts by his family members--the unnamed wife and three sons and daughters-in-law: obedient Sem and wife Bera, irreverent Cham and wife Ilya, and exuberant Japheth and wife Mirn-- resulting in multiple views that add richness to the tale. These are full-dimensional characters, the men diligent and the women resourceful; particularly Ilya, but also Bera, show flashes of feminism in gathering animals (dangerous duty) and questioning what Yahweh has wrought. And there's no stinting the reality of almost 18 months on the ark: mucking out dung, confronting ferocious beasts, contending with numbing boredom and understandable spats. A literary debut that makes a familiar story enthralling.
Pride and Prejudice	Austen	317	20	Y	Y	fiction	Elizabeth Bennet is the perfect Austen heroine: intelligent, generous, sensible, incapable of jealousy or any other major sin. That makes her sound like an insufferable goody-goody, but the truth is she's a completely hip character, if provoked is not above skewering her antagonist with a piece of her exceptionally sharp - but always polite - 18th century wit. The point is, you spend the whole book absolutely fixated on the critical question : will Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy hook up?
Reader (The)	Schlink	218	25	Y	Y	fiction	When he falls ill on his way home from school, fifteen-year-old Michael Berg is rescued by Hanna, a woman twice his age. In time she becomes his lover--then she inexplicably disappears. When Michael next sees her, he is a young law student, and she is on trial for a hideous crime. As he watches her refuse to defend her innocence, Michael gradually realizes that Hanna may be guarding a secret she considers more shameful than murder.
Red Tent	Diamant	321	25	Y	Y	fiction	Her name is Dinah. In the Bible, her life is only hinted at in a brief and violent detour within the more familiar chapters about her father, Jacob, and his dozen sons in the Book of Genesis. Told in Dinah's voice, this novel reveals the traditions and turmoil of ancient womanhood - the world of the red tent. It begins with the story of her mothers, the four wives of Jacob. They love Dinah and give her gifts that are to sustain her through a hard-working youth, a calling to midwifery, and new home in a foreign land. Dinah's story reaches out from a remarkable period of early history and creates an intimate connection.

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Revolutionary Road (2009)	Yates	368	25	N	N	fiction	In the hopeful 1950s, Frank and April Wheeler appear to be a model couple: bright, beautiful, talented, with two young children and a starter home in the suburbs. Perhaps they married too young and started a family too early. Maybe Frank's job is dull. And April never saw herself as a housewife. Yet they have always lived on the assumption that greatness is only just around the corner. But now that certainty is about to crumble. With heartbreaking compassion and remorseless clarity, Richard Yates shows how Frank and April mortgage their spiritual birthright, betraying not only each other, but their best selves.
Rock Orchard (2009)	Wall	244	25	Y	Y	fiction	The Belles have been in Leaper's Fork, Tennessee, since before the Civil War, and the Belle women have been strong, independent, and lusty. But in spite of their shocking behavior, the citizens of Leaper's Fork don't hesitate to come to them with their problems or have Belles lay hands on their newborn babies, for the Belles seem to have the sight as well. Charlotte likes to smoke cigars and make money. Not a fan of children, she nevertheless begrudgingly takes in her sister's child, Angela. Charlotte's child-raising technique is "free range," which ultimately leads to a young Angela begetting her own illegitimate daughter, Dixie. No one knows who the father is, but it doesn't slow down Angela and her sultry ways. The Belles' influence is felt throughout Leaper's Fork, and just as inviting are the townspeople in Wall's wonderfully endearing story of love, life, and change, and Wall's extraordinary and original style is the icing on one very enticing cake.
Rule of Four	Caldwell	370	25	Y	Y	fiction	An ivy league murder, a mysterious coded manuscript, and the secrets of a Renaissance prince collide memorably in <i>The Rule of Four</i> —a brilliant work of fiction that weaves together suspense and scholarship, high art and unimaginable treachery. It's Easter at Princeton. Seniors are scrambling to finish their theses. And two students, Tom Sullivan and Paul Harris, are a hair's breadth from solving the mysteries of the <i>Hypnerotomachia Poliphili</i> —a renowned text attributed to an Italian nobleman, a work that has baffled scholars since its publication in 1499. For Tom, their research has been a link to his family's past—and an obstacle to the woman he loves. For Paul, it has become an obsession, the very reason for living. But as their deadline looms, research has stalled—until a long-lost diary surfaces with a vital clue. And when a fellow researcher is murdered just hours later, Tom and Paul realize that they are not the first to glimpse the <i>Hypnerotomachia</i> 's secrets.
Saints at the River	Rash	239	25	N	N	fiction	When a twelve-year-old girl drowns in the Tamassee River and her body is trapped in a deep eddy, the people of the small South Carolina town that bears the river's name are thrown into the national spotlight. The girl's parents want to attempt a rescue of the body; environmentalists are convinced the rescue operation will cause permanent damage to the river and set a dangerous precedent. Torn between the two sides is Maggie Glenn, a twenty-eight-year-old newspaper photographer who grew up in the town and has been sent to document the incident. Since leaving home almost ten years ago, Maggie has done her best to avoid her father, but now, as the town's conflict opens old wounds, she finds herself revisiting the past she's fought so hard to leave behind.
Sam's Letters to Jennifer	Patterson	263	25	N	Y	fiction	Laced with mystery, <i>Sam's Letters To Jennifer</i> combines two unforgettable love stories in a novel that's absolutely impossible to put down. Jennifer returns to the resort village where she grew up to help a beloved relative—and ends up experiencing not one but two of the most amazing love stories she's ever known.

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Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Saturday	McEwan	289	25	Y	Y	fiction	This novel follows an ordinary man through a Saturday whose high promise gradually turns nightmarish. Henry Perowne-a neurosurgeon, privileged and deeply in love with his wife and grown-up children- plans to play a game of squash, visit his mother, and cook dinner for his family. But a minor traffic accident leads to an unsettling confrontation, and Perowne must set aside his plans and summon a strength greater than he knew he had in order to preserve the life that is dear to him.
Scandalmonger	Safire	443	20	N	Y	fiction	For those who think that Washington sex scandals and muckraking journalism are recent scourges of society, <i>Scandalmonger</i> will be a revelation. Using actual letters, records and notes to re-create authentic dialogue and events, <i>Scandalmonger</i> embodies historical fictionat its best, politics at its most intriguing, and our Founding Fathers at their most notorious.
Seahorse Year (A)	D'Erasmus	360	25	N	N	fiction	Christopher, a 16-year-old San Franciscan, is missing, and his parents--Hal, an accountant, and Nan, a bookstore owner--are frantic. As is Marina, a painter and Nan's live-in lover. As this high-strung trio search their souls for clues to sweet Christopher's inexplicable disappearance, D'Erasmus reverses time to reveal that Nan and Hal, who is also gay, barely knew each other when she decided that she wanted to have a child. Neither could have predicted just how loving a father Hal would be, just as they never could have imagined that their son would end up suffering from the most diabolical of illnesses, schizophrenia. Here, is a hard-hitting tale, that maps the ripple effect of a loved child's mental illness on adults already coping with complex emotional predicaments.
The Secret Life of Bees	Kidd	302	25	Y	Y	fiction	In Sue Monk Kidd's <i>The Secret Life of Bees</i> , 14-year-old Lily Owen, neglected by her father and isolated on their South Carolina peach farm, spends hours imagining a blissful infancy when she was loved and nurtured by her mother, Deborah, whom she barely remembers. All Lily has left of Deborah is a strange image of a Black Madonna, with the words "Tiburon, South Carolina" scrawled on the back. The search for a mother, and the need to mother oneself, are crucial elements in this well-written coming-of-age story set in the early 1960s against a background of racial violence and unrest. When Lily's beloved nanny, Rosaleen, manages to insult a group of angry white men on her way to register to vote and has to skip town, Lily takes the opportunity to go with her, fleeing to the only place she can think of--Tiburon, South Carolina--determined to find out more about her dead mother.
Set This House in Order: A Romance of Souls	Ruff	479	25	N	N	fiction	Andy Gage was born in 1965, and murdered not long after by his stepfather...It was no ordinary murder. Though the torture and abuse that killed him were real, Andy's death wasn't. Only his soul actually died, and it broke into pieces. And the pieces became souls in their own right, co-inheritors of Andy's life.
<b>Shack ( The)</b>	<b>Young</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>fiction</b>	Mackenzie Allen Philips' youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later in the midst of his Great Sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack for a weekend. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever. In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant "The Shack" wrestles with the timeless question, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" The answers Mack gets will astound you and perhaps transform you as much as it did him. You'll want everyone you know to read this book!

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Shadow Divers: The True Adventure of Two Americans Who Risked Everything to Solve One of Last Mysteries of World War II	Kurson	335	25	Y	Y	non-fiction	Who knew that German submarine U-869, long thought to have been sunk off Gibraltar in 1945, was actually sunk by its own torpedo less than 60 miles from Brielle, New Jersey? No one--until 1991, when two death-cheating wreck-divers began exploring the boat's wrecked hull, 230 feet underwater. Though Kurson's historical narrative is compelling on its own, it is nearly overshadowed by his adventure story--two brave and driven men chased by deep-water divers' narcosis, decompression sickness, sharks, and an entire wrecked sub full of snags to ensnare divers until their tanks run out. All of these elements--military history, mystery, action tale, ethnography--combine to make this book very hard to put down.
Shadow of the Wind	Zafon	446	25	Y	Y	fiction	Barcelona, 1945—A great world city lies shrouded in secrets after the war, and a boy mourning the loss of his mother finds solace in his love for an extraordinary book called The Shadow of the Wind, by an author named Julian Carax. When the boy searches for Carax's other books, it begins to dawn on him, to his horror, that someone has been systematically destroying every copy of every book the man has ever written. Soon the boy realizes that The Shadow of the Wind is as dangerous to own as it is impossible to forget, for the mystery of its author's identity holds the key to an epic story of murder, madness, and doomed love that someone will go to any lengths to keep secret.
Shanghai Refuge: A memoir of the WWII Jewish ghetto	Heppner	191	25	N	N	biography	We tend to think that the Jewish ghettos of World War II were in Europe, but Heppner's eloquent memoir of this little-known event in Holocaust history is set in Shanghai, China. The author was the youngest child of a matzah factory owner in Breslau, Germany. In 1939, with the rise of anti-Semitism, Heppner and his mother sailed to Shanghai. In 1943, Japanese soldiers confined the 18,000 Jewish refugees in Shanghai to an area less than one square mile.
Silent Ocean Away (A) : Colette's Dominion 2008	Gantt	416	25	N	N	fiction	Charmaine Ryan knows only poverty and pain growing up. In the wake of a horrifying tragedy, she seeks a new life, and fate leads her into the private world of the wealthy Duvoisin clan. At first, it seems as if nothing terrible could touch this seemingly charmed family. But an ill wind blows through the halls and chambers of the Duvoisins' sprawling island retreat, carrying betrayal, deceit, and ominous peril. Quickly, Charmaine is caught up in the secrets and mystique swirling around the enigmatic family. At the center are shipping tycoon Frederic Duvoisin and his youthful wife, Colette. And there is Paul Duvoisin, a dashing seducer and Frederic's bastard son, who stirs a dangerous fascination in the two women; the scheming Agatha Ward, who will not rest until she's taken Colette's place in Frederic's heart as well as in his bed; and exiled son, John, who reenters the family fold, stoking the turmoil as he unveils truths best kept hidden. Ultimately, Charmaine chooses to stand with Colette against formidable enemies, but has she made the right decision? A sweeping, remarkable blend of adventure, romance, intrigue and suspense.
Small Island	Levy	439	25	N	N	fiction	Hortense Joseph arrives in London from Jamaica in 1948 with her life in her suitcase, her heart broken, her resolve intact. Her husband, Gilbert Joseph, returns from the war expecting to be received as a hero, but finds his status as a black man in Britain to be second class. His white landlady, Queenie, raised as a farmer's daughter, befriends Gilbert, and later Hortense, with innocence and courage, until the unexpected arrival of her husband, Bernard, who returns from combat with issues of his own to resolve.



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## Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Snow Flower and the Secret Fan	See	253	25	N	N	fiction	A story of friendship set in nineteenth-century China follows an elderly woman and her companion as they communicate their hopes, dreams, joys, and tragedies through a unique secret language.
Snow in August	Hamill	384	20	Y	Y	fiction	The 1940's Brooklyn, friendship between an 11-year-old Irish Catholic boy and an elderly Jewish rabbi might seem as unlikely as, well, snow in August. But the relationship between young Michael Devlin and Rabbi Juduh Hirsch is only one of the many miracles large and small contained in Pete Hamill's novel.
Some Danger Involved	Thomas	288	25	N	N	mystery	An atmospheric debut novel set on the gritty streets of Victorian London, <i>Some Danger Involved</i> introduces detective Cyrus Barker and his assistant, Thomas Llewelyn, as they work to solve the gruesome murder of a young scholar in London's Jewish ghetto. When the eccentric and enigmatic Barker takes the case, he must hire an assistant, and out of all who answer an ad for a position with "some danger involved," he chooses downtrodden Llewelyn, a gutsy young man with a murky past. As they inch ever closer to the shocking truth behind the murder, Llewelyn is drawn deeper and deeper into Barker's peculiar world of vigilante detective work, as well as the heart of London's teeming underworld. Brimming with wit and unforgettable characters and steeped in authentic period detail, <i>Some Danger Involved</i> is a captivating page-turner that introduces an equally captivating duo.
Song Yet Sung (2008)	McBride	384	25	Y	Y	fiction	Escaped slaves, free blacks, slave-catchers and plantation owners weave a tangled web of intrigue and adventure in bestselling memoirist (The Color of Water) McBride's intricately constructed and impressive second novel, set in pre-Civil War Maryland. Liz Spocott, a beautiful young runaway slave, suffers a nasty head wound just before being nabbed by a posse of slave catchers. She falls into a coma, and, when she awakes, she can see the future—from the near-future to Martin Luther King to hip-hop—in her dreams. Liz's visions help her and her fellow slaves escape, but soon there are new dangers on her trail: Patty Cannon and her brutal gang of slave catchers, and a competing slave catcher, nicknamed The Gimp, who has a surprising streak of morality. Liz has some friends, including an older woman who teaches her The Code that guides runaways; a handsome young slave; and a wild inhabitant of the woods and swamps. Kidnappings, gunfights and chases ensue as Liz drifts in and out of her visions, which serve as a thoughtful meditation on the nature of freedom and offer sharp social commentary on contemporary America.
Sons of Fortune	Archer	503	20	Y	Y	fiction	Twin brothers are separated at birth by a baby switch in a Hartford, Connecticut, hospital in the 1940s. One goes home to a modest life while the other lives as the son of a multimillionaire, but both go on to successful careers—one as a war hero and banker, the other as a lawyer. Their lives are often intertwined, but they don't meet until the death of a mutual foe brings them together in a battle for the gubernatorial nomination.
The Stone Diaries	Shields	360	25	N	N	fiction	This fictionalized autobiography of Daisy Goodwill Flett, captured in Daisy's vivacious yet reflective voice, has been winning over readers since its publication in 1995, when it won the Pulitzer Prize. After a youth marked by sudden death and loss, Daisy escapes into conventionality as a middle-class wife and mother. Years later she becomes a successful garden columnist and experiences the kind of awakening that thousands of her contemporaries in mid-century yearned for but missed in alcoholism, marital infidelity and bridge clubs. The events of Daisy's life, however, are less compelling than her rich, vividly described inner life—from her memories of her adoptive mother to her awareness of impending death.

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Story of Edgar Sawtelle Oprah's BC (2009)	Wroblewski	562	25	Y	N	fiction	backwoods of Wisconsin, the Sawtelle family—Gar, Trudy and their young son, Edgar—carry on the family business of breeding and training dogs. Edgar, born mute, has developed a special relationship and a unique means of communicating with Almondine, one of the Sawtelle dogs, a fictional breed distinguished by personality, temperament and the dogs' ability to intuit commands and to make decisions. Raising them is an arduous life, but a satisfying one for the family until Gar's brother, Claude, a mystifying mixture of charm and menace, arrives. When Gar unexpectedly dies, mute Edgar cannot summon help via the telephone. His guilt and grief give way to the realization that his father was murdered; here, the resemblance to Hamlet resonates. After another gut-wrenching tragedy, Edgar goes on the run, accompanied by three loyal dogs. His quest for safety and succor provides a classic coming-of-age story with an ironic twist. Sustained by a momentum that has the crushing inevitability of fate, the propulsive narrative will have readers sucked in all the way through the breathtaking final scenes. (June)
Stuffed: Adventures of a Restaurant Family	Volk	256	25	Y	Y	biography	You are who you came from," asserts short-story writer and novelist Volk near the end of her sparkling memoir of a century in the life of a most unusual New York family. Volk's relatives tore down and built up New York, brought pastrami to the New World, and first stirred scallions into cream cheese. They also ran a variety of restaurants over the years, culminating in the main family "store" Morgen's restaurant, considered for many years to be the heart of the busy, colorful garment district. For those who grew up in the Volk family, there was no shortage of fabulous food and fascinating relatives. Volk devotes individual chapters to the stories of particular family members. More than a lovely memoir of a vibrant and close-knit family, this book is also a love letter to a New York that disappeared with Schraft's and the Automat, B. Altman and Bonwit's.
Summer Guest (The)	Cronin	369	25	Y	Y	fiction	Set primarily in a rustic fishing camp on the northern tip of Maine, this expansive family saga explores countless intriguing topics, including love, war, disease, loss, betrayal, and redemption. The book revolves around the story of Harry Wainwright, a wealthy entrepreneur who falls in love with the camp as a young man and returns decades later for one last day of fishing before he succumbs to terminal cancer. With Harry as a centerpiece, Cronin artfully weaves the tales of Joe and Lucy Crosby, the camp's owners; their daughter Kate; and Jordan, the camp's guide; into a complex web of family drama. Using history as both a backdrop and a main character, Cronin guides readers from World War II to Vietnam, with the story reaching its climax on a late summer day in 1994.
The Summer I Dared	Delinsky	355	20	Y	Y	fiction	A tale of three people quite literally thrown together following a boating accident off the Maine coast that spares them while taking the lives of nine others. At 40, Julia is an obedient wife, dutiful daughter, and devoted mother, and has planned a visit to her Aunt Zoe to reflect on her obligation to herself versus her ties to her family. Rescued by fellow passenger Noah Prine, Julia feels connected to him by virtue of their shared tragedy while also being drawn to Kim Colella, the other survivor, whose whereabouts at the time of the crash provide a shadowy subplot. As a gentle romance blossoms between Julia and Noah, each evaluates who they were before the accident and who they hope to become in its aftermath. Once again, Delinsky excels at combining a compelling mystery with an insightful portrayal of captivating people facing challenges both ordinary and dramatic.

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Swim To Me (2008)	Carter	325	25	N	N	fiction	Welcome to Weeki Wachee Springs, located on the beautiful Gulf Coast of Florida. Hailed as the City of Live Mermaids, the fabled Springs has been attracting tourists since 1947, but as of late, business is drying up. As if paying the bills, making constant repairs, and playing den mother and swim coach to a bunch of wayward teenage girls wearing fish tails isn't enough, Miss Thelma Foote now has to find a way to compete with the newly opened Walt Disney Resort and keep Weeki Wachee and its school of mermaids afloat. It's a fresh start for Delores Walker when she steps off the bus in Tampa to become a minimum-wage mermaid. The family fights, the father who walked out on her, and the dingy Bronx apartment are a thousand miles behind her. With her arrival at Weeki Wachee, luck seems to change for everyone. In the tradition of Rebecca Wells, Betsy Carter writes of family and sisterhood, of chasing dreams, and of finding your way as she conjures up a time in America when anything was possible—even mermaids from the Bronx.
Tender Bar: a memoir	Moehringer	368	25	N	Y	biography	A moving, vividly told memoir full of heart, drama, and exquisite comic timing, about a boy striving to become a man, and his romance with a bar. J .R. Moehringer grew up listening for a voice: It was the sound of his missing father, a disc jockey who disappeared before J.R. spoke his first words. As a boy, J.R. would press his ear to a clock radio, straining to hear in that resonant voice the secrets of masculinity, and the keys to his own identity. J.R.s mother was his world, his anchor, but he needed something else, something more, something he couldnt name. So he turned to the bar on the corner, a grand old New York saloon that was a sanctuary for all types of mencops and poets, actors and lawyers, gamblers and stumblebums, the flamboyant characters provided a kind of fatherhood by committee. Through it all, the bar offered shelter from failure, from rejection, and eventually from reality - until at last the bar turned J.R. away. Riveting, moving, and achingly funny, The Tender Bar is at once an evocative portrait of one boys struggle to become a man, and a touching depiction of how some men remain lost boys.
Testimony of an Irish Slave Girl	McCafferty	206	18	N	N	fiction	While readers share an awareness of the brutality of slavery, few realize that the slave trade of the seventeenth century included Irish men, women, and children who were transport to the cane fields of Barbados. Eventually, uprisings reached across cultures to unite blacks, Irish, and other races in a bid for freedom that was tragically quashed. Based on these historical events, author Kate McCafferty's debut novel reveals this often forgotten bit of history, exploring a world of indentured servitude perpetrated by the British who kidnapped and enslaved Irish Catholics.
Tevey, The Dairyman ( 2008)	Aleichem	309	25	N	N	fiction	Of all the characters in modern Jewish fiction, the most beloved is Tevye, the compassionate, irrepressible, Bible-quoting dairyman from Anatevka, who has been immortalized in the writings of Sholem Aleichem and in acclaimed and award-winning theatrical and film adaptations. And no Yiddish writer was more beloved than Tevye's creator, Sholem Rabinovich (1859–1916), the “Jewish Mark Twain,” who wrote under the pen name of Sholem Aleichem. Beautifully translated by Hillel Halkin, here is Sholem Aleichem's heartwarming and poignant account of Tevye and his daughters, together with the “Railroad Stories,” twenty-one tales that examine human nature and modernity as they are perceived by men and women riding the trains from shtetl to shtetl.

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Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Their eyes were watching God	Hurston	193	20	N	Y	fiction	<b>One Book NJ 2007</b> One of the most important works of twentieth-century American literature, Zora Neale Hurston's beloved 1937 classic, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> , is an enduring Southern love story sparkling with wit, beauty, and heartfelt wisdom. Told in the captivating voice of a woman who refuses to live in sorrow, bitterness, fear, or foolish romantic dreams, it is the story of fair-skinned, fiercely independent Janie Crawford, and her evolving selfhood through three marriages and a life marked by poverty, trials, and purpose. A true literary wonder, Hurston's masterwork remains as relevant and affecting today as when it was first published -- perhaps the most widely read and highly regarded novel in the entire canon of African American literature.
Thirteenth Tale	Setterfield	406	25	Y	Y	fiction	A compelling emotional mystery about family secrets and the magic of books and storytelling. Margaret Lea, a bookseller's daughter, is summoned to the home of Vida Winter, England's most popular novelist, and commanded to write her biography. Miss Winter has been falsifying her life story and her identity for more than 60 years. Facing imminent death and feeling an unexplainable connection to Margaret, Miss Winter begins to spin a haunting, suspenseful tale of an old English estate, a devastating fire, twin girls, a governess, and a ghost. As Margaret carefully records Vida's tale, she ponders her own family secrets. Her research takes her to the English moors to view a mansion's ruins and discover an unexpected ending to Vida's story...
Thousand Splendid Suns (A)	Hosseini	367	25	Y	Y	fiction	Afghan-American novelist Hosseini follows up his bestselling <i>The Kite Runner</i> with another searing epic of Afghanistan in turmoil. The story covers three decades of anti-Soviet jihad, civil war and Taliban tyranny through the lives of two women. Mariam is the scorned illegitimate daughter of a wealthy businessman, forced at age 15 into marrying the 40-year-old Rasheed, who grows increasingly brutal as she fails to produce a child. Eighteen later, Rasheed takes another wife, 14-year-old Laila, a smart and spirited girl whose only other options, after her parents are killed by rocket fire, are prostitution or starvation. Against a backdrop of unending war, Mariam and Laila become allies in an asymmetrical battle with Rasheed, whose violent misogyny—"There was no cursing, no screaming, no pleading, no surprised yelps, only the systematic business of beating and being beaten"—is endorsed by custom and law. Hosseini gives a forceful but nuanced portrait of a patriarchal despotism where women are agonizingly dependent on fathers, husbands and especially sons, the bearing of male children being their sole path to social status. His tale is a powerful, harrowing depiction of Afghanistan, but also a lyrical evocation of the lives and enduring hopes of its
Three Cups of Tea	Mortenson	338	28	Y	Y	non-fiction	On a 1993 expedition to climb K2 in honor of his sister Christa, who had died of epilepsy at 23, Mortenson stumbled upon a remote mountain village in Pakistan. Out of gratitude for the villagers' assistance when he was lost and near death, he vowed to build a school for the children who were scratching lessons in the dirt. Raised by his missionary parents in Tanzania, Mortenson was used to dealing with exotic cultures and developing nations. Still, he faced daunting challenges of raising funds, death threats from enraged mullahs, separation from his family, and a kidnapping to eventually build 55 schools in Taliban territory. Award-winning journalist Relin recounts the slow and arduous task Mortenson set for himself, a one-man mission aimed particularly at bringing education to young girls in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Readers interested in a fresh perspective on the cultures and development efforts of Central Asia will love this incredible story of a humanitarian endeavor.

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Adult Book Discussion List

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Three Junes	Glass	353	25	Y	N	fiction	This strong and memorable debut novel draws the reader deeply into the lives of several central characters during three separate Junes spanning ten years. At the story's onset, Scotsman Paul McLeod, the father of three grown sons, is newly widowed and on a group tour of the Greek islands as he reminisces about how he met and married his deceased wife and created their family.
Time Traveler's Wife	Niffenegger	560	25	Y	N	fiction	A dazzling novel in the most untraditional fashion, this is the remarkable story of Henry DeTamble, a dashing, adventuresome librarian who travels involuntarily through time, and Clare Abshire, an artist whose life takes a natural sequential course. Henry and Clare's passionate love affair endures across a sea of time and captures the two lovers in an impossibly romantic trap
To Kill a Mockingbird	Lee	323	25	Y	Y	fiction	This Pulitzer prize winner was voted the best novel of the 20th century. Set in the small Southern town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the Depression, To Kill a Mockingbird follows three years in the life of 8-year-old Scout Finch, her brother, Jem, and their father, Atticus--three years punctuated by the arrest and eventual trial of a young black man accused of raping a white woman. Though her story explores big themes, Harper Lee chooses to tell it through the eyes of a child. The result is a tough and tender novel of race, class, justice, and the pain of growing up.
Tree Grows in Brooklyn (A)	Smith	493	25	Y	Y	fiction	Francie Nolan, avid reader, penny-candy connoisseur, and observer of human nature, has much to ponder in colorful, turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. She grows up with a sweet, tragic father, a severely realistic mother, and an aunt who gives her love too freely--to men, and to a brother who will always be the favored child. Francie learns early the meaning of hunger and the value of a penny. She is her father's child--romantic and hungry for beauty. But she is her mother's child, too--deeply practical and in constant need of truth. Like the Tree of Heaven that grows out of cement or through cellar gratings, resourceful Francie struggles against all odds to survive and thrive. Betty Smith's poignant, honest novel created a big stir when it was first published over 50 years ago. Her frank writing about life's squalor was alarming to some, but the book's humor and pathos ensured its place in the realm of classics--and in the hearts of readers, young and old.
Tuesdays with Morrie	Albom	192	25	Y	Y	non-fiction	In a moving celebration of life, Mitch Albom chronicles his time spent with a beloved college professor, Morrie Schwartz. Morrie's refreshing outlook on life and his own imminent death is expressed beautifully and simply and serves as a powerful reminder of what is really important in life.
Turbulent Souls	Dubner	336	25	N	N	non-fiction	In his memoir, Dubner describes his conversion from Catholicism to Judaism, a complex conversion intensified by the author's unusual religious history: before Dubner was born, his parents had made an equal and opposite conversion from Judaism to Catholicism. Turbulent Souls is full of witty anecdotes about Dubner's childhood in rural New York state and his efforts in adulthood to reconstruct both his and his parents' pasts. The best reason to read this book isn't Dubner's well-balanced thirst for explanation and reverence for mystery; it is a model of the equilibrium every one of us has to attain if we want to make peace with our families, our home towns, and ourselves.

Titles as of 08/2009	author	pages	copies	large	audio	type	synopsis
Undaunted Courage: Opening of the West.	Ambrose	511	20	N	Y	non-fiction	In 1803 President Thomas Jefferson selected his personal secretary, Captain Meriwether Lewis to lead a voyage up the Missouri River to the Rockies, over the mountains and down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean and back. Lewis, and his partner, Captain William Clark, endured incredible hardships and both men kept journals about a vast new territory newly acquired by the United States. Ambrose has pieced together previously unknown information to provide a colorful and realistic backdrop for the expedition.
Under the Banner of Heaven	Krakauer	334	25	Y	Y	non-fiction	Jon Krakauer's literary reputation rests on insightful chronicles of lives conducted at the outer limits. In <i>Under the Banner of Heaven</i> , he shifts his focus from extremes of physical adventure to extremes of religious belief within our own borders. At the core of his book is an appalling double murder committed by two Mormon Fundamentalist brothers, Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a revelation from God commanding them to kill their blameless victims. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this "divinely inspired" crime, Krakauer constructs a multilayered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, savage violence, polygamy, and unyielding faith. Along the way, he uncovers a shadowy offshoot of America's fastest-growing religion, and raises provocative questions about the nature of religious belief.
Under the Tuscan Sun:at Home in Italy	Mayes	280	25	Y	Y	nonfiction	In this memoir of her buying, renovating, and living in an abandoned villa in Tuscany, Frances Mayes reveals the sensual pleasure she found living in rural Italy, and the generous spirit she brought with her. She revels in the sunlight and the color, the long view of her valley, the warm homey architecture, the languor of the slow paced days, the vigor of working in her garden, and the intimacy of her dealings with the locals. Cooking, gardening, tiling, and painting are never chores, but skills to be learned, arts to be practiced, and above all to be enjoyed.
Wait Till Next Year - A Memoir	Goodwin	257	25	Y	Y	nonfiction	Set in the suburbs of New York in the 1950's, the author tells of growing up in love with her family and baseball. She re-creates the postwar era, when the corner store was a place to share stories and neighborhoods were equally divided between Dodger, Giant, and Yankee fans. Goodwin describes her parents who taught her the joys of books and baseball.
Water for Elephants	Gruen	335	25	Y	Y	fiction	With its spotlight on elephants, Gruen's romantic page-turner hinges on the human-animal bonds. The novel, told in flashback by nonagenarian Jacob Jankowski, recounts the wild and wonderful period he spent with the Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth, a traveling circus he joined during the Great Depression. When 23-year-old Jankowski learns that his parents have been killed in a car crash, leaving him penniless, he drops out of Cornell veterinary school and parlays his expertise with animals into a job with the circus, where he cares for a menagerie of exotic creatures. He also falls in love with Marlena, one of the show's star performers—a romance complicated by Marlena's husband, the unbalanced, sadistic circus boss who beats both his wife and the animals Jankowski cares for. Gruen skillfully humanizes the myriad of characters that make up life in the circus.

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Whistling Season (The)	Doig	345	25	Y	Y	fiction	Can't cook but doesn't bite." begins the newspaper ad offering the services of an "A-1 housekeeper, with sound morals, & an exceptional disposition" that draws the hungry attention of widower Oliver Milliron in the fall of 1909. And so begins the unforgettable season that deposits the noncooking, nonbiting, ever-whistling Rose Llewellyn and her font-of-knowledge brother, Morris Morgan, in Marias Coulee along with a stampede of homesteaders drawn by the promise of the gargantuan irrigation project intended to make the Montana prairie bloom. When the schoolmarm runs off with an itinerant preacher, Morris is pressed into service, setting the stage for the "several kinds of education"-none of them of the textbook variety-Morris and Rose will bring to Oliver, his three sons, and the rambunctious students in the region's one-room schoolhouse.
Wicked: the life and times of the Wicked Witch	Maguire	406	25	N	N	fiction	When Dorothy triumphed over the Wicked Witch of the West in L. Frank Baum's classic tale, we heard only her side of the story. But what about her arch-nemesis, the mysterious witch? Where did she come from? How did she become so wicked? And what is the true nature of evil? Gregory Maguire creates a fantasy world so rich and vivid that we will never look at Oz the same way again. <i>Wicked</i> is about a land where animals talk and strive to be treated like first-class citizens, Munchkinlanders seek the comfort of middle-class stability and the Tin Man becomes a victim of domestic violence. And then there is the little green-skinned girl named Elphaba, who will grow up to be the infamous Wicked Witch of the West, a smart, prickly and misunderstood creature who challenges all our preconceived notions about the nature of good and evil.
World of Normal Boys (The) (2008)	Soehnlein	282	20	N	N	fiction	Robin McKenzie is just starting high school and ready for change, ready to appear more "cool," make new friendships, and fit in more. But after his younger brother, Jackson, injures himself in an accidental and dangerous fall, Robin's life will never be the same. As his parents' fighting escalates under the strain and his family begins to fall apart, Robin adapts to the strangeness of high school. Central in his anxieties is his sexual attraction to other boys. His parents are no help, and to add to his confusion, Robin's friends are just as lost as he is: one minute he and Todd (the cute boy next door) are fooling around, and the next Todd refers to homosexuals as queers and fags. Feeling scared and isolated, Robin starts experimenting with drugs, cuts class, and thinks of boys instead of schoolwork. Full of tension and suspense, Soehnlein's well-paced debut novel is a fresh look at one boy's sexual awakening in the 1970s.
World Without Us (The) (2008)	Weisman	416	25	N	Y	nonfiction	If human beings disappeared instantaneously from the Earth, what would happen? How would the planet reclaim its surface? What creatures would emerge from the dark and swarm? How would our treasured structures--our tunnels, our bridges, our homes, our monuments--survive the unmitigated impact of a planet without our intervention? In his revelatory, bestselling account, Alan Weisman draws on every field of science to present an environmental assessment like no other, the most affecting portrait yet of humankind's place on this planet.

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<p><b>Writing on My Forehead (The) (2009)</b></p>	<p>Haji</p>		<p>25</p>	<p>y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>non-fiction</p>	<p>Haji traces in her impressive debut the fortunes of a family divided by secrets and lies as much as by the 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent. Saira Qader, an American teenager of Indo-Pakistani descent, lives a sheltered life in California with her older sister, Ameenah, and their overprotective and fiercely traditional parents. Saira's view of her family changes dramatically when she attends a wedding in Karachi and learns that her mother had lied to her about Saira's grandfather: he is not dead but living in London with a second family. As she learns more about her grandfather's work with Gandhi and the independence movement, Saira dreams of going to college instead of marrying early like her sister, and later carves out a life as a war journalist. But an unforeseen tragedy makes her choose between her peripatetic existence and the more traditional (and perhaps more desirable) setup awaiting her at home. Haji achieves an effortless commingling of family and social history in this intricate story that connects a young woman and her family over continents and through generations.</p>
<p>Year of Magical Thinking (The) (2008)</p>	<p>Didion</p>	<p>227</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>nonfiction</p>	<p>lacerating yet peculiarly stirring book "about death, about illness, about probability and luck, about good fortune and bad, about marriage and children and memory, about grief, about the ways in which people do and do not deal with the fact that life ends, about the shallowness of sanity, about life itself." In December 2003 two terrible things happened: her only child, Quintana, married months earlier, was hospitalized in a coma, and five days later her husband, John Gregory Dunne, died "in the living room of our apartment in New York [after] a sudden massive coronary event" just as he and Didion were about to have dinner. For more than a year, Didion's life was completely taken over by these events: The Year of Magical Thinking is the story of that year.</p>