
The Reading List

2011

The RUSA CODES Reading List Council

Reading List Council 2010–11

members: Jacqueline Sasaki, Ann Arbor District Library, chair; Alicia Ahlvers, Kansas City Public Library; Jennifer Baker, Seattle Public Library; Cheryl Bryan, Massachusetts Library System, Waltham; Craig Clark, formerly with Cuyahoga County Public Library; Kathleen Collins, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle; Megan McArdle, Berkeley Public Library; Joyce Saricks, Downers Grove, Illinois; Sharron Smith, Kitchener Public Library, vice-chair; Kimberly Wells, Denton Public Library; Neal Wyatt, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond; and Alan Ziebarth, Chicago, Illinois.

The Reading List annually recognizes the best books in eight genres: adrenaline (which includes suspense, thriller, and adventure), fantasy, historical fiction, horror, mystery, romance, science fiction, and women's fiction. This year's list includes novels that will please die-hard fans as well as introduce new readers to the pleasure of genre fiction. The winning titles were selected by the Reading List Council.

ADRENALINE

Olen Steinhauer. *The Nearest Exit*. Minotaur, 2010. \$25.99 (ISBN 978-031-262287-9).

Burned-out spy Milo Weaver confronts layers of deceit as his career collides with his desire to reclaim his family and his humanity. The labyrinthine intrigues enhance a building atmosphere of paranoia in this dark and emotionally-charged classic espionage thriller.

Readers may also enjoy Graham Greene's *The Quiet American*, John Le Carre's *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*, and Alan Furst's *Night Soldiers*.

FANTASY

Guy Gavriel Kay. *Under Heaven*. ROC, 2010. \$26.95 (ISBN 978-0451463302).

Haunted by the ghosts of fallen warriors, Shen Tai is forced into the political machinations of the Emperor's court when he receives a rare and valuable gift. Lyrical language and complex characterization draw readers into this elaborately unfolding epic set in a fantasy world that richly reimages eighth century Tang Dynasty China.

Readers may also enjoy Jo Graham's *Black Ships*, Conn Iggulden's *Genghis: Birth of an Empire*, and Vonda N. McIntyre's *The Moon and the Sun*.

HISTORICAL FICTION

Julie Orringer. *The Invisible Bridge*. Knopf, 2010. \$26.95 (ISBN 978-1-4000-4116-9).

In this sweeping yet intimate portrait of a Hungarian Jewish family in Europe, two lovers become enmeshed in the turmoil of the Holocaust. With gorgeous prose and an exquisite evocation of Paris and Budapest, Orringer writes movingly of their strength and the bittersweet power of hope and love.

Readers may also enjoy Louis De Bernieres's *Corelli's Mandolin*, Janice Y. K. Lee's *The Piano Teacher*, and Mary Doria Russell's *A Thread of Grace*.

HORROR

Stephen M. Irwin. *The Dead Path*. Doubleday, 2010. \$25.95 (ISBN 978-0-385-53343-0).

Guilt ridden Nicholas Close retreats to his family home in Australia after the tragic death of his wife, only to encounter an ancient malevolence lurking in the nearby woods. Childhood nightmares and fairytale motifs combine in this emotionally powerful tale of implacable evil. Arachnophobes beware!

Readers may also enjoy Stephen King's *It*, Raymond Feist's *Faerie Tale: A Novel of Terror and Fantasy*, and Brian Keene's *Dark Hollow*.

MYSTERY

Louise Penny. *Bury Your Dead*. Minotaur, 2010. \$24.99 (ISBN 978-0-312-37704-5).

Troubled by past mistakes, Chief Inspector Gamache, in his sixth outing, retreats to snowy and insular Quebec City, where he becomes embroiled in intertwining investigations of both old and new. Penny expertly delivers a layered story that is haunting, moody, and exquisitely drawn.

Readers may also enjoy Charles Todd's *A Test of Wills*, Erin Hart's *Haunted Ground*, and Julia Spencer-Fleming's *In the Bleak Midwinter*.

ROMANCE

Mary Balogh. *A Matter of Class*. Vanguard Press, 2009. \$15.95 (ISBN 978-1-59315-554-4).

A lady is ruined. A merchant's son is trapped. Class differences loom large in this charming and playful take on the

arranged marriage. Balogh's regency gem, where nothing is quite as it seems, is filled with affection and wit.

Readers may also enjoy Georgette Heyer's *Faro's Daughter*, Rose Lerner's *In for a Penny*, and Julia Quinn's *The Viscount Who Loved Me*.

SCIENCE FICTION

Ian McDonald. *The Dervish House*. Pyr, 2010. \$26 (ISBN 978-1616142049).

A terrorist bomb sets off a chain of events that, over the next five days, entangles the lives of six characters. McDonald brilliantly imagines a world in which the ultramodern exists side-by-side with the ancient, and he blends science and mysticism to embody the contradiction that is Istanbul in 2027.

Readers may also enjoy William Gibson's *Pattern Recognition*, George Alec Effinger's *When Gravity Fails*, and Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*.

WOMEN'S FICTION

Jo Ann Mapson. *Solomon's Oak*. Bloomsbury, 2010. \$25 (ISBN 978-1-60819-330-1).

Recently widowed Glory Solomon collects stray animals and damaged souls. Facing bankruptcy, she creates a new life catering themed weddings. This deeply felt yet unsentimental novel explores grief, healing, and second chances.

Readers may also enjoy Juliette Fay's *Shelter Me*, Marsha Moyer's *The Second Coming of Lucy Hatch*, and Katrina Kittle's *The Blessings of the Animals*.