
Notable Books

The 2007 Selection of Titles

RUSA Notable Books Council

Notable Books, 2007, committee members:

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This list has been compiled for use by the general reader and by librarians who work with adults.

The Notable Books Council, ALA Reference and User Services Association, has selected the titles for their significant contribution to the expansion of knowledge or for the pleasure they can provide to adult readers. Titles were selected from books published from November 2005 through November 2006.

NONFICTION

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic.* Houghton, \$19.95 (0-618-47794-2).

Bechdel's memoir, done in graphic-novel form, masterfully illustrates her relationship with her closeted homosexual father.

Egan, Timothy. *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl.* Houghton, \$28 (0-618-34697-X).

Egan vividly recounts the Dust Bowl of the 1930s, a time in America when weather and human fallibility changed the arc of people's lives.

Flannery, Tim. *The Weather Makers: How Man Is Changing the Climate and What It Means for Life on Earth.* Grove/Atlantic, \$25 (0-87113-935-9).

In this stirring call to action, biologist Flannery provides an overview of the impact that global warming has on the environment and suggests possible solutions.

Greene, Melissa Fay. *There Is No Me without You: One Woman's Odyssey to Rescue Africa's Children.* Bloomsbury, \$25.95 (1-59691-116-6).

The scope of the AIDS epidemic is illustrated through the heartwarming story of Haregewoin Teferra, a humanitarian who runs an orphanage in Ethiopia.

Hessler, Peter. *Oracle Bones: A Journey between China's Past and Present.* HarperCollins, \$26.95 (0-06-082658-4).

An American journalist compellingly contrasts China's past, as revealed through ancient artifacts, with the fiercely competitive spirit of the new generation.

Horne, Jed. *Breach of Faith: Hurricane Katrina and the Near Death of a Great American City.* Random, \$25.95 (1-4000-6552-6).

FROM COMMITTEES OF RUSA

Times-Picayune reporter Horne skillfully attempts to untangle a disaster and its aftermath through victims' personal stories.

King, Ross. *The Judgment of Paris: The Revolutionary Decade That Gave the World Impressionism.* Walker, \$28 (0-8027-1466-8).

King provides a detailed and engaging look at an evolving art movement, set against a time of French political upheaval.

Kolbert, Elizabeth. *Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature, and Climate Change.* Bloomsbury, \$22.95 (1-59691-125-5).

Drawing from interviews with front-line scientists, Kolbert calmly and persuasively demonstrates the extent of global warming.

Philbrick, Nathaniel. *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War.* Viking, \$29.95 (0-670-03760-5).

Philbrick dramatically brings to life, and corrects common misconceptions about, the Pilgrim settlement of Plymouth.

Phillips, Julie. *James Tiptree, Jr.: The Double Life of Alice B. Sheldon.* St. Martin's, \$27.95 (0-312-20385-3).

Using interviews and personal correspondences, Phillips creates a riveting profile of a celebrated sci-fi writer who found more fulfillment in her alias' life than in her own.

Zoellner, Tom. *The Heartless Stone: A Journey through the World of Diamonds, Deceit, and Desire.* St. Martin's, \$24.95 (0-312-33969-0).

From war-ravaged Africa to the frigid Arctic, and to America's shopping malls, a globe-trotting journalist exposes the hardships and hype underlying the diamond industry.

FICTION

Bigsby, Christopher. *Beautiful Dreamer.* St. Martin's/Thomas Dunne, \$21.95 (0-312-35583-1).

In this taut, spare parable, a white man tries to prevent the lynching of a black man and gets caught up in a vortex of violent reprisal.

Dean, Debra. *The Madonnas of Leningrad.* Morrow, \$23.95 (0-06-082530-8).

Dean artfully parallels a woman's descent into Alzheimer's and her role in the concealment of paintings at the Hermitage during the siege of Leningrad.

Desai, Kiran. *The Inheritance of Loss.* Grove/Atlantic, \$24 (0-87113-929-4).

Frustration and loss color the lives of five Indian people. Their interwoven stories, from rural India to Manhattan, are told in lush language with ironic humor.

Doig, Ivan. *The Whistling Season.* Harcourt, \$25 (0-15-101237-7).

Rural Montana in 1909 is the central character in this humorous novel of life on the prairie. Change moves in with a widow from Minneapolis.

Grenville, Kate. *The Secret River.* Canongate, \$24 (1-84195-797-6).

Convicted of theft and transported to Australia, an Englishman creates a new life for himself and his family in this potent story of dreams transformed.

Khadra, Yasmina. *The Attack.* Tr. By John Cullen. Doubleday/Nan A. Talese, \$18.95 (0-385-51748-3).

In this provocative novel, a successful Arab-Israeli surgeon revisits his roots as he seeks understanding of his wife's death as a suicide bomber.

Lansens, Lori. *The Girls.* Little, Brown, \$23.95 (0-316-06903-5).

Twenty-nine-year-old conjoined twins who know they will soon die set out to record their story. In distinctly separate voices, they reveal lives intertwined yet independent.

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road.* Knopf, \$24 (0-307-26543-9).

In McCarthy's unrelenting tale, a father and son struggle to survive on their journey through the deadly, empty winter of a postapocalyptic America.

Meek, James. *The People's Act of Love.* Canongate, \$24 (1-84195-730-5).

In 1919, an escaped convict clashes with bizarre cultists and displaced Czech soldiers in a shocking, twist-filled tale set in a remote Siberian village.

Mitchell, David. *Black Swan Green.* Random, \$24.95 (1-4000-6379-5).

Share English teen Jason Taylor's ace adventures as he takes on unforgiving classmates, a wicked stammer, and the Falklands War, emerging as an unforgettable protagonist.

Murakami, Haruki. *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman.* Knopf, \$24.95 (1-4000-4461-8).

The 24 stories in this collection depict ordinary life at once vivid and surreal. Each story uncovers for the reader the vastness of the small moment.

Savage, Sam. *Firman: Adventures of a Metropolitan Lowlife.* Coffee House, paper, \$14.95 (1-56689-181-7).

Wry humor, melancholy, and poignant yearning suffuse this life story of an amazingly literate rat born in a Boston bookstore doomed by urban renewal.

POETRY

Flenniken, Kathleen. *Famous*. Univ. of Nebraska, paper, \$17.95 (0-8032-6924-2).


These unpretentious and comfortable poems deal with everyday events and situations in a sometimes humorous and always fresh way.

Satterlee, Thom. *Burning Wyclif*. Texas Tech Univ., \$19.95 (0-89672-576-6).

These carefully crafted poems offer a lyrical account of the private and professional life of controversial fourteenth-century English scholar John Wyclif.

Slavitt, David R. *William Henry Harrison and Other Poems*. Louisiana State, paper, \$16.95 (0-8071-3121-0).

Our nation's most irrelevant president gets the last laugh in a volume of enlivening ruminations, ranging in form from majestic epics to one-word poems.



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