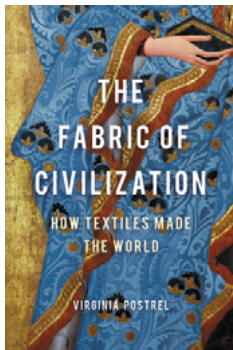


Daniel Casse

### **Philip Roth: The Biography**

Blake Bailey

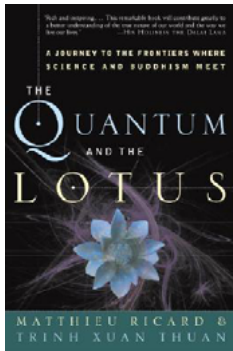
This year I give not a recommendation, but a warning. Bailey's authorized biography of Philip Roth was swiftly yanked from publication early this year after a number of women accused the author of predatory sexual behavior. But the biography had received a rave review in the Times, and since I have read more than half of Roth's novels, I thought I would dive in. The book changed my mind – not about the novels, but about the author himself. Wading through this irritatingly sympathetic biography, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Roth was a contemptible human being. His life is self-absorbed, misanthropic, and petty. He rarely writes about other authors and has few interesting opinions. When he wasn't pursuing a string of failed relationships, he spent time teaching college courses dedicated to his own work. Deflating.



### **The Fabric of Civilization**

Virginia Postrel

What an original idea for a book! Postrel argues that human civilization can be understood by studying textiles. From Greek looms to indigo dyes to the chemical formula in polyester, Postrel shows us how fabric has played a special role in every society, at every time. History, culture, religion, fashion, technology, and commerce in a single book. (No, I'm not going to say "weaves together.")



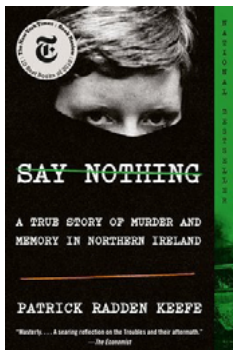
Yasmin Dias Guichot

**The Quantum and the Lotus: A Journey to the Frontiers Where Science and Buddhism Meet**

Matthieu Ricard and Trinh Xuan Thuan

Unlike other faiths, Buddhism has a close affinity with the findings of science. This is not to suggest that Buddha knew about Relativity or Quantum Mechanics, but that his teachings were inspired by intuition about how the universe works. This is an excellent book, if a little hard going at times, but well worth the effort to follow its course as the physicist and the monk discuss their different approaches to arrive at the same conclusions -- ultimately offering a vital new understanding of the many ways in which science and Buddhism confirm and complement each other and of the ways in which, as Matthieu Ricard writes, “knowledge of our spirits and knowledge of the world are mutually enlightening and empowering”.

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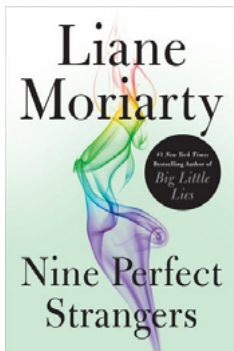


Cassie Dormond

**Say Nothing**

Patrick Radden Keefe

I was late to the Patrick Radden Keefe party, and want to save anyone else from making my mistake! This book is about a particular missing person case in Northern Ireland, but it is also about politics (the personal and global – is there any other kind?), memory, and meaning. I can't recommend it highly enough.



Alessandra D'Ugo

### **Nine Perfect Strangers**

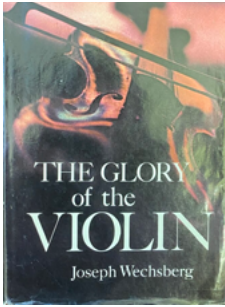
Liane Moriarty

Could ten days at a health resort really change you forever? In Liane Moriarty's latest page-turner, nine perfect strangers are about to find out...

Nine people gather at a remote health resort. Some are here to lose weight, some are here to get a reboot on life, some are here for reasons they can't even admit to themselves. Amidst all of the luxury and pampering, the mindfulness and meditation, they know these ten days might involve some real work. But none of them could imagine just how challenging the next ten days are going to be.

Frances Welty, the formerly best-selling romantic novelist, arrives at Tranquillum House nursing a bad back, a broken heart, and an exquisitely painful paper cut. She's immediately intrigued by her fellow guests. Most of them don't look to be in need of a health resort at all. But the person that intrigues her most is the strange and charismatic owner/director of Tranquillum House. Could this person really have the answers Frances didn't even know she was seeking? Should Frances put aside her doubts and immerse herself in everything Tranquillum House has to offer - or should she run while she still can?

It's not long before every guest at Tranquillum House is asking exactly the same question.

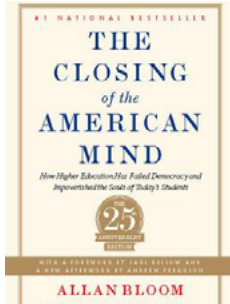


Mike Hodin

**The Glory of the Violin**

Joseph Wechsberg

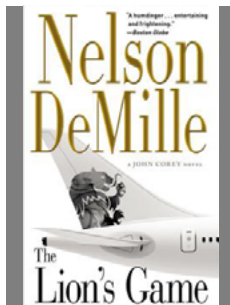
History, culture and enterprise of the greatest innovation of the 18th century capped by the great Stradivari.



**The Closing of the American Mind**

Allan Bloom

About the first period of the 20th century when the University began to close down thought, conversation and learning if it did not fit a specific political construct.



**The Lion's Game**

Nelson DeMille

A 2010 novel about terrorism in America.



Mark Hoffmann

**I Hate the Internet**

Jarett Kobek

An edifying articulation for anyone who also hates the Internet.



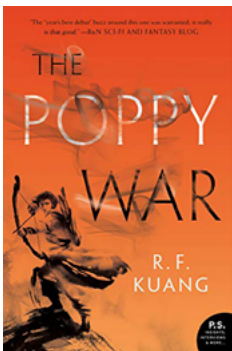
## Drew Holzapfel

### **Pizza Camp: Recipes from Pizzeria Beddia**

Joe Beddia

When Sam Savin tells me to read something, I read it. This was the situation with this book. To take a step back, as quarantine started and my family quickly got tired of me in the house, they bought me a wood-fired pizza oven. It worked – sending me outside for hours on end. A year and a half later, I must have cranked out 10,000 pizzas. At one point, my youngest daughter was basically the neighborhood pizza Door Dash kid – delivering all weekend...usually delivering unrequested pizzas. Over time, I have tried countless dough recipes and Pizza Camp has the best one. And the author makes an important point very subtly – measure every ingredient with a kitchen scale. Precision matters. While this is likely obvious, but when precision meets your tastebuds, the importance takes root. The author of Pizza Camp is actually a local Philly chef who has a pizza joint that, at times, is rated one of the best in the country. Coming back to Sam, he lives next to the restaurant. Hope you all come to Philly for some pizza.

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## Amanda Hu

### **The Poppy War**

R.F. Kuang

I've always loved how fantasy can invite us to explore complex ideas with greater empathy in a safer, more digestible context. And with that, my pitch for this book:

Very dark, adult Harry Potter meets Mulan, set in a world inspired by China at the turn of the 20th century. Read for the Chinese lore; military strategy of the Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, and Jomini variety; a world so vivid it's literally 1/3 real; stellar characters bearing the weight of geopolitical responsibility; and constant turmoil over right and wrong and what these concepts mean in war.

And guess who the main character is modeled upon.

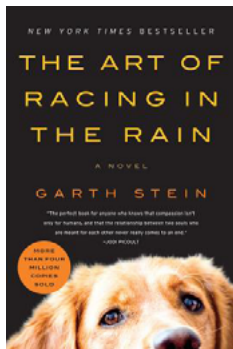


Kelly Jackson

**Undocumented Americans**

Karla Cornejo Villavicencio

Undocumented Americans is a beautiful story written by one of the first undocumented students to graduate from Harvard. She shares her own experience as well as personal accounts of other undocumented immigrants who have built their lives in the United States. It's a compelling and eye opening must read.



Megan Jackson

**The Art of Racing in the Rain**

Garth Stein

I live each day so that I may be worthy of being reborn as a Goldendoodle.

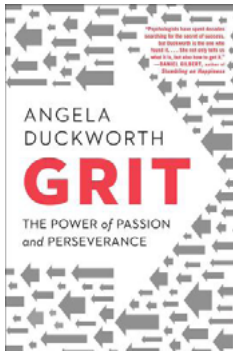


Debra Kepley

**The Library Book**

Susan Orlean

I highly enjoyed this book that on the face looks like it is about a library fire. I discovered it was so much more. The book is a little meandering but is a fabulous source of library history both specifically at the LA library but also around the world and through history. As a lover of both libraries and books I found the content highly fascinating.



Kattie Krewer

**Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance**

Angela Duckworth

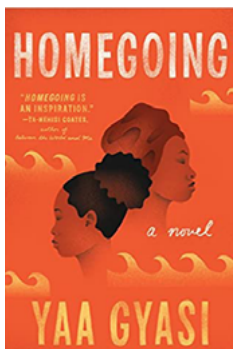
For anyone who is adding “try something new” to their 2022 resolution list, or anyone who has a natural fear of failure, this one is for you. Take a look at how UPenn psychologist, Angela Duckworth, discovered that talent and natural ability really aren’t the key indicators for success- it’s all about your “grit”. In true Philadelphia style, she explores how you can get grittier and achieve your goals, whatever they might be.



**A Moveable Feast**

Ernest Hemingway

Transport to 1920s Paris. May or may not induce a serious case of wanderlust.



Alissa Kurzman

**Homegoing**

Yaa Gyasi

One of Oprah’s Best Books of the Year and a PEN/ Hemingway award winner, Homegoing follows the parallel paths of these sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi’s extraordinary novel illuminates slavery’s troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

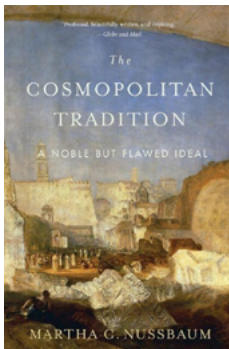


Brett Landau

### **Star Wars Visions: Ronin**

Emma Mieko Candon

In a time after the death of Darth Sidious, the galaxy is ruled by feudal lords and the Jedi serve their prince masters. The Sith have been destroyed by one of their own and are thought to be lost and wondering the galaxy without their lord to serve. One Ronin has his own ambitions, to destroy what he once built. With no allegiances, he is on a path to defeat the witch who torments his mind from a distance and brings the dead back to life. Follow the Ronin on his journey of self-discovery in a novel that will change your mind about good and evil in the Star Wars Universe.

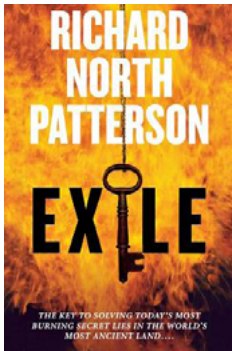


### **The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Ideal**

Martha Nussbaum

Through a perspective that argues all humans have equal worth, the Greek Cynics, Roman Stoics, and Adam Smith's cosmopolitan works search for humanity's innate dignity. Professor Nussbaum counters current interpretations of Cynic and Stoic cosmopolitanism by stating that in order to achieve one's intrinsic dignity, one's basic material necessities must be addressed. She also points out that the political cosmopolitan perspective frequently lacks justifications for aiding other tribes, territories, or nationalities. The tenants of the cosmopolitan tradition no longer stand true against the quickly evolving concerns of climate change, species and habitat loss, and global pandemics in the modern world.





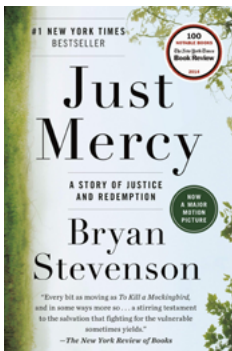
Emily Lizotte

**Exile**

Richard North Patterson

This is one of those books that one you start; you can't put it down until you've finished it! The fictional story highlights the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, bringing the reader into the pain and struggles of both sides. Laced with romance, politics and deception, Exile takes the reader on an international ride. Hope you enjoy the read!

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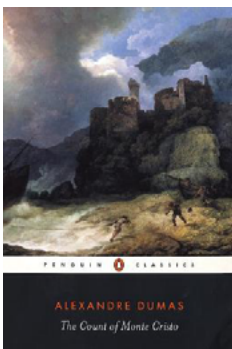
Suneet Maan

**Just Mercy**

Bryan Stevenson

Of all the books I've read this year, Just Mercy, by Bryan Stevenson is the one I haven't been able to stop thinking about. Just Mercy is based on Stevenson's own memoir about his legal career defending those trapped in the deepest reaches of our criminal justice system. This book will equally dismantle and restore your faith in humanity. A truly unforgettable read.

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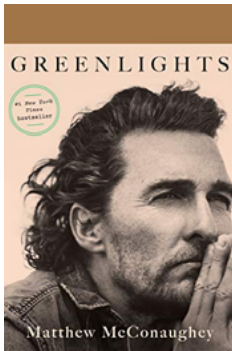


Connor McLaughlin

**The Count of Monte Cristo**

Alexandre Dumas

A classic tale of false imprisonment, revenge, redemption and justice. I re-read The Count of Monte Cristo this year and it was even better than I remember. I highly recommend this long but enchanting story.



## Cortland Mercer

### **Greenlights**

Matthew McConaughey

Not sure if it's a memoir or a manifesto, if it's laughable or hilarious, but you should read it. It'd be a lot cooler if you did.

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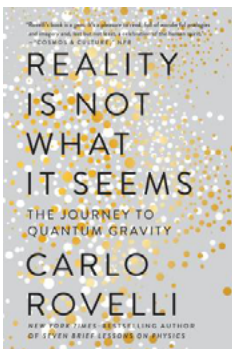
## Evelyn Morrison

### **Wide Sargasso Sea**

Jean Rhys

A post-colonial and feminist revision to the story of Bertha, the “madwoman in the attic” from Brontë’s Jane Eyre. Wide Sargasso Sea speaks to changing power, race, identity, confinement, and liberation. Beautifully written; one of my favorite books.

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## Mario Ottiglio

### **Reality Is Not What It Seems**

Carlo Rovelli

Far from being a physics geek, I have truly enjoyed this book. I have been always junk at maths, but Rovelli is able to bring physics alive, like you actually understand. He is rightly making the point that “only by keeping in mind that our beliefs may turn out to be wrong is it possible to free ourselves from wrong ideas” – which in times like we’re living is quite of a nice quote. My fav quote from the book though is this one: “Our culture is foolish to keep science and poetry separated”. Enjoy!



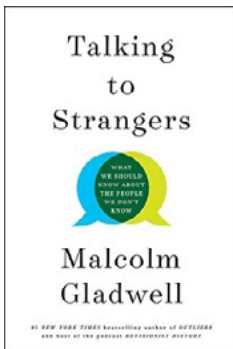
Charles Pennell

**The Morning Star**

Karl Ove

Karl Ove tackles the apocalypse. What's not to like?

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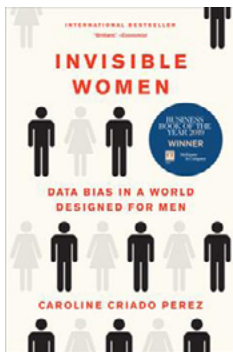


Katy Schneider Riddick

**Talking to Strangers**

Malcolm Gladwell

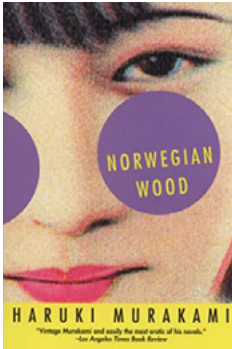
As he usually does, Gladwell takes already-fascinating social psychology findings and applies them in real world examples that challenge our basic assumptions about how people should behave. It's also illuminating if you have some healthy skepticism about police practices.



**Invisible Women:**  
**Data Bias in a World Designed for Men**

Caroline Criado Perez

Learn about how the world has been built on a “default male” and the challenges that approach poses for women, or get the lite version – and so much more – by signing up to the author’s weekly newsletter.



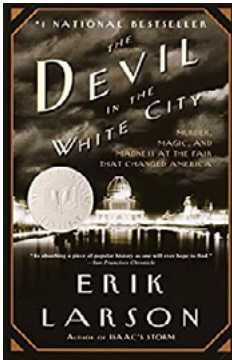
Sophie Robert

**Norwegian Wood**

Haruki Murakami

I read this book earlier in early 2021, when I still thought that it would be possible to travel to Japan later during the year – one of my dream countries to visit. The cover you see is the one of the French version as the book and its author, Haruki Murakami, are among our favorite foreign authors in France. The book tells the story of Watanabe, a college student in Tokyo in the 70', haunted by the suicide of his best high school friend Kizuki and who is later divided between the fragile Naoko, Kizuki's "widowed" girlfriend, and Midori, a extraverted, lively student. It's nostalgic, melancholic, sensitive and questions what it means to be alive.

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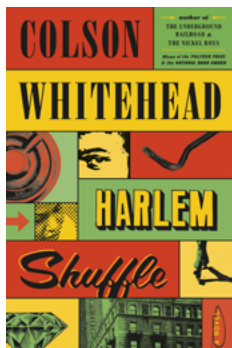
Sagar Sane

**The Devil in the White City**

Erik Larson

Read this book before the DiCaprio-Scorsese movie/ TV series gets released.

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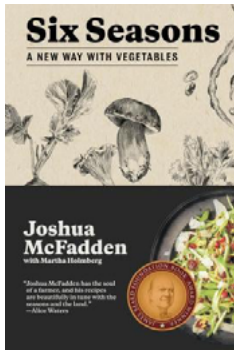


Sam Savin

**Harlem Shuffle**

Colson Whitehead

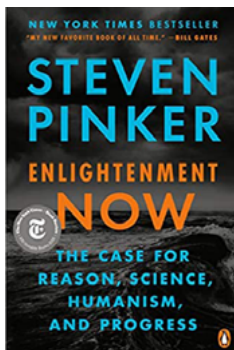
Because I'd like people to think of me as smart and cultured, I chose a book by Colson Whitehead. But because I'm not that smart – and definitely not cultured – I chose Harlem Shuffle. The multi-hyphenate's latest work is a gripping crime caper that kisses the ring of the greatest hard-boiled tales.



## Six Seasons

Joshua McFadden

I have a lot of cookbooks that I don't use. This isn't one of them. I really can't sing this book's praises loudly enough, so to keep it simple: if you have any interest in cooking accessible, delicious, and seasonal recipes, this is required reading.

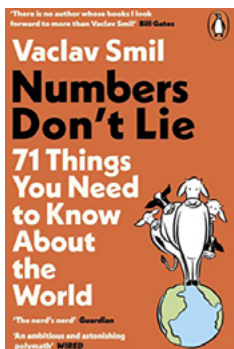


Kevin Stach

## Enlightenment Now

Steven Pinker

Need an antidote to the prevailing doom and gloom that dominates today's news and much of our political discourse? Try Steven Pinker's Enlightenment Now, which demonstrates why the prospects for humanity have never been brighter (and which happens to be Bill Gates' "new favorite book of all time.")



## Numbers Don't Lie

Vaclav Smil

Want to understand the science behind the world we're living in today? Try Numbers Don't Lie by Vaclav Smil (who happens to be Bill Gates' "favorite author.")



Emma Stutts

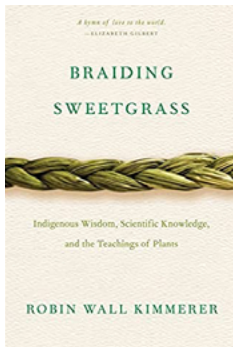
**These Violent Delights**

Chloe Gong

This retelling of Romeo and Juliet takes you on a journey to 1920s Shanghai – on the surface, a dazzling city; underneath, an ugly mixture of foreign encroachment, disparate sources of leadership, and the bloody beginnings of a Communist-Nationalist power struggle.

While including some very fictitious elements like monsters and embellished gangs, this book also includes wonderful commentary on the very real instability, upheaval, and imperialism permeating Shanghai at the time.

As a self-proclaimed China nerd and historical fiction fan, I was the prime audience for this book. I know at least one other HLG employee will appreciate this book for the same reasons (looking at you Amanda Hu), and I hope many more will.

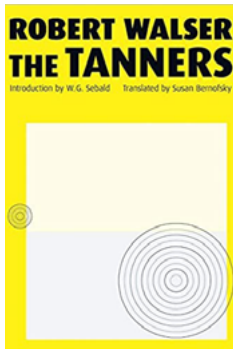


Krishna Trivedi

**Braiding Sweetgrass**

Robin Wall Kimmerer

Offering her experiences as an indigenous woman and as a scientist, Robin Wall Kimmerer writes a series of beautiful essays about what we might be able to learn from the world around us and from North American Indigenous tradition. Earlier this year when the pandemic brought uncertainty and unexpected change, this book brought me comfort and changed my perspective on my relationship to nature more broadly. I hope you all enjoy!



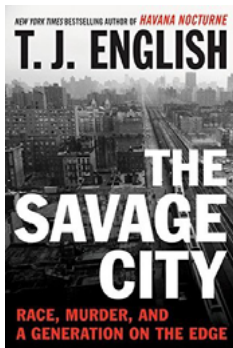
Robert Whalen

### **The Tanners**

Robert Walser

Written by one of the great and underappreciated authors of the 20th century (who spent the last years of his life in a Swiss sanatorium), *The Tanners* is a visceral family tragedy from the eyes of a somewhat misguided youth. Witty, sullen, and chuck full of acutely accurate observations on the banalities of life, this short work provides a real glimpse into the anxieties felt in the wake of fin de siècle European grandeur.

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Susan Wile Schwarz

### **The Savage City: Race, Murder, and a Generation on the Edge**

T. J. English

This offers a riveting glimpse into the NYC in whose long shadow I was raised, but never actually knew firsthand. By the time I moved to Manhattan, towards the end of the 1990s, Starbucks was beginning to pop up around town and the borough was in the early stages of its radical transformation into the glossy and expensive playground most of us knew pre-Covid. I read this book a decade ago, directly on the heels of Isabel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Suns*. Together, the pair packed quite a punch, connecting the dots for me in the most devastating and personal way between the underlying optimism and hope of the Great Migration; the seemingly inscrutable city of my childhood, the Crown Heights riot, and Abner Louima; and the NYC I came to call my own as an adult. And it still feels just as relevant as ever today in shedding a little more light on where we are and how we got here.