

## Recommended Books 2001

### Fiction

Brooks, Geraldine. Year of Wonders. Viking, 2001.

This historical novel recounts what happened when a plague ravages the English village of Eyam and what actions the people undertook to keep the pestilence from spreading.

Carey, Peter. True History of the Kelly Gang. Knopf, 2001.

A thoroughly researched portrayal of the legendary Australian outlaw and folk hero of the late nineteenth century, Ned Kelly. Kelly tells the story in an ungrammatical and unpunctuated prose style which Carey so effectively employs in this powerful narrative. Carey received his second Booker Prize for this novel.

Dai, Sijie. Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress. Knopf, 2001.

At the height of the Chinese Cultural Revolution two young men are sent to a remote mountain village to be re-educated. Discovering a suitcase full of forbidden European novels, the two friends are captivated by the stories and use them to entertain the villagers and educate a beautiful seamstress. A delightful and enchanting novella.

Dew, Robb Forman. The Evidence Against Her. Little, Brown, 2001.

A generational saga of two families in a small Ohio town whose lives intersect in unexpected ways.

Franzen, Jonathan. The Corrections. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.

A contemporary American family whose relationships are in emotional disarray is the focus of this prize-winning work.

Gordimer, Nadine. The Pickup. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001.

A roadside meeting between a South African woman and an illegal immigrant transforms both their lives. A compelling novel that depicts how living in a different culture leads, surprisingly, to spiritual fulfillment.

Gavell, Amy Ladd. I Cannot Tell a Lie Exactly. Random, 2001.

The Rotifer, one of the stories in this wonderful collection, was included in John Updikes *The Best American Short Stories of the Century*.

Gavell died in 1957 and it is only now that all of her stories have been published.

Humphreys, Helen. Afterimage. Metropolitan Books, 2001.

The Victorian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron inspired this imaginative work that delves into the lives of Cameron, her husband and the Irish servant who profoundly affects each of them. A reproduction of one of Camerons photographs is on the cover of this intriguing story.

Keegan, Claire. Antarctica. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2001.

A very promising debut by this Irish author. The locales in this collection are diverse--ranging from Ireland to to the American South. The stories are forceful, direct, and unsentimental.

Marius, Richard. An Affair of Honor. Knopf, 2001.

A double murder in a small Tennessee town in the 1950s begins a chain of events that have far-reaching consequences. A well-plotted and gripping legal drama.

Munro, Alice. Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage. Knopf, 2001.

An outstanding collection of nine stories both simple and complex with unexpected plot twists that display the Canadian writers artistry.

OConnor, Joseph, Editor. Yeats Is Dead. Knopf, 2001.

Fifteen linked stories by Irish writers--beginning with Roddy Doyle and concluding with Frank McCourt--deal with solving the mystery of a missing James Joyce manuscript and puzzling murder.

Russo, Richard. Empire Falls. Knopf, 2001.

With his usual style and expertise, Russo explores the realities of life in a small town in Maine in this very satisfying and enjoyable novel.

Schlink, Bernard. Flights of Love. Pantheon Books, 2001.

The author of *The Reader* returns with seven psychologically centered stories about characters who face difficult moral choices in a variety of situations. Schlinks prose is unembellished and elegant.

Sebald, W. G. Austerlitz. Random. 2001.

Raised by Welsh parents during World War II, Jacques Austerlitz is told nothing about his true identity. It is only as an adult that he learns of his Jewish heritage and he sets out to reconstruct the past. An exceptional literary novel of great pathos and beauty.

Seiffert, Rachel. The Dark Room. Pantheon Books, 2001.

This first novel tells of the experiences of three ordinary Germans from the Nazi era to the present day. In the first story, a handicapped young photographer is witness to episodes of Nazi violence and yet remains a loyal follower. The next story is of children and their harrowing journey to reach their grandmothers home. The final narrative deals with an attempt by a teacher to discover the truth about his grandfathers wartime deeds.

Spence, Gerry. Half-Moon and Empty Stars. Scribner, 2001.

The celebrated trial lawyers first novel is a compelling story of the injustice directed toward Native Americans in our society. A completely engrossing novel that is a poignant love story as well as

a legal thriller. Spences well-defined characters are not easily forgotten.

Tyler, Anne. Back When We Were Grownups. Knopf, 2001.

For those accustomed to Tylers plots and characters, this leisurely family-centered novel is an entertaining and satisfying read.

Wilentz, Amy. Martyrs Crossing. Simon & Schuster, 2001.

A timely and gripping novel of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict that begins with an incident at an Israeli checkpoint. Believable characters and realistic dialogue are the strengths of this accomplished first novel.

## Nonfiction

Ansary, A. Manette. Limbo: A Memoir. Morrow, 2001.

The successful author began her career when an incapacitating illness thwarted her plans to become a concert pianist. Ansary writes with conviction and honesty.

Bragg, Rick. Avas Man. Knopf, 2001.

In *All Over But the Shoutin* Bragg writes beautifully of the hardships and struggles of his childhood in the South. His maternal grandfather Charlie is the lively subject of this richly detailed story.

Carroll, James. Constantines Sword. Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

The former Roman Catholic priest meticulously traces the history of the Church and its attitudes toward and treatment of the Jews.

Ehrenreich, Barbara. Nickel and Dimed. Metropolitan Books, 2001.

In 1998 Ehrenreich traveled across America to see for herself the struggles of the working poor trying to live on minimum wages. A valuable and illuminating work.

Habegger, Alfred. My Wars Are Laid Away in Books. Random, 2001.

A convincing and enjoyable treatment of the life and poetry of Emily Dickinson.

Hassler, Jon. Good People. Loyola Press, 2001.

Goodness is the theme of this lighthearted and delightful book by the popular novelist. Hassler explores the nature of goodness by recalling the people who have enriched his life and inspired his novels.

Lewis, R. W. B. Dante. Lipper-Viking, 2001.

A succinct perspective on Dantes life and works.

McCullough, David. John Adams. Simon & Schuster, 2001.

An extraordinary and impressive biography that fully engages the reader.

Nouwen, Henri. Finding My Way Home. Crossroad Publishers, 2001.

Eloquent and inspirational essays that deal with different aspects of spirituality.

Ryan, Terry. The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio. Simon & Schuster, 2001.

A resourceful and talented homemaker enters jingle-writing contests and is wildly successful.

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