

Summer Reading 2011

What to read while lying on the hammock? Terry, Danny, Susan and Tony have some suggestions:

1. **Empire of the Summer Moon**

This colorful history of the long-running resistance and ultimate defeat of the Commanche Indians, the most powerful Indian tribe in American history, is a magnificent read. Bold, vivid, bloody, and obviously well-researched by author S. C. Gwynne, it tells the story of a major clash of characters and cultures. The final hero is unexpected and delightful. A chapter of the Old West we would all do well to know better. (Scribner; 2010)

2. **The Devil in Sherlock Holmes by David Grann**

I picked up this book, a collection of feature writing articles, from David Grann's work in the New Yorker, because I wanted to reread his stunning article on Ricky Henderson, the famous base stealer who continues to dream of returning to the majors after an already long and illustrious career. The article on Henderson, I think, stands alone for its greatness but the other eleven works are certainly worth a summer read. Grann takes the reader into worlds that we don't even know exist. Pick up the collection now in paperback. Grann is great writer and worth following. His work, **The Lost City of Z**, won him fame, and this book is a showcase of his shorter efforts. (Vintage Books 2010)

3. **The Sisters from Hardscrabble Bay**

As you all realize by now, I adore my men. However, there is something about living in an all male household that sends me straight to stories of women! The title and book jacket from this winsome tale of two sisters across seven decades caught my eye on our library's bookshelves. It did not disappoint. But be careful if reading in bed. You'll have to continuously explain your soft chuckles as the story wends its way from humor to heartache and back. Written by Maine native Beverly Jensen and published posthumously by her husband Jay Silverman. (Viking, 2010)

4. **American Lion: Andrew Jackson**

This superb new biography won author Jon Meacham the Pulitzer Prize. Justly so. I was surprised to realize I'd never read a biography of Andrew Jackson. Now I'm sorry I waited so long. Turns out Jackson may have been the most popular president in U. S. history—more popular even than George Washington in his lifetime and certainly more popular than Lincoln in his. Jackson was so popular people were still voting for him for president 15 years after he died—just to make the point that if Jackson were still president things would turn out okay. (Random House, 2000)

5. **Still Alice**

The character of Dr. Alice Howland will be with you long after you close the book on her story. She is with me still. Written by Lisa Genova, a PhD in Neuroscience from Harvard University, this fictional account of early onset Alzheimer's opened me to a greater understanding of this disease, of its chronic griefs and its poignant surprises. So taken by

the story, I immediately read Genova's second novel, *Left Neglected* about a busy working mom whose moment of distraction while driving leaves her recovering from a severe, and mind-bending brain injury. You can't miss with either. (Simon and Schuster, Gallery Books, 2009)

6. **Lapham's Quarterly**

Lapham's Quarterly (LQ) is always a great read and provides fascinating insights into a specific topic. Last summer, for instance, **LQ** featured articles from all ages on Sports and Games. This past winter, they covered **The City** and recently the spring edition covered **Lines of Work**. Each quarterly edition examines a topic and explores what has been said throughout the ages about the topic. It is a tremendous read filled with new insights and often amazing pictures. It is sure to last you through the summer. Buy it and enjoy!

7. **Beethoven's Letters**

This is a fascinating book told by Beethoven himself. Considering the large volume of compositions written by Beethoven, it is amazing the amount of letter-writing he did. Many of his letters describe work-in-progress. Others talk about his patrons, fellow musicians, publishers, and personal friends. There are even some letters written to some of the women Beethoven admired. There are musical quotations of different compositions that were works-in-progress. Some of the pages show copies of some of Beethoven's actual scores. The translator lavishly uses footnotes to describe the historical background surrounding the period of Beethoven's life. (Dover Press)

8. **The Fiddler in the Subway**

Gene Weingarten has won two Pulitzer Prizes for Feature Writing. This book is a collection of his favorite feature articles. The stories range from the absurd to the chilling and from the hilarious to the unbelievable. This is truly a great collection to have on your travels and by the poolside. Weingarten's stories penetrate the soul and leave you looking at the world differently. (Simon & Schuster, 2010)

9. **The Message**

This is the New Testament in a current translation that puts the Gospels and Epistles in the language we actually speak today. Riveting. Revolutionary. Life-changing and life-giving. Just like the people and stories they portray. Just like the risen Lord Himself. Obviously, **The Message** will never replace more traditional versions. But give it a try. It has given me an exciting new take on events I thought I knew well. (Eugene H. Peterson, Navpress, 1994)

10. **Everything Belongs**

My relationship with spiritual authors comes in waves. Early on, I read all the Henri Nouwen I could find, then Frederick Buechner, Barbara Brown Taylor, Mary Oliver. My current wave is Richard Rohr, Franciscan priest and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, NM. A good intro to Rohr's generous heart and theology is **Everything Belongs, the Gift of Contemplative Prayer**. I picked up his most recent book, **Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life**, at a recent

conference in NYC; that will be my summer treat. (Crossroad Publishing, 2003)

11. Pulitzer Prize Writings www.pulitzer.org/bycat

One of my favorite things to do is to read the articles of the former Pulitzer Prize winners. If you don't have time to delve into a long book, pull up a Pulitzer Prize winner in Feature Writing or Local Investigative Special Reporting or Explanatory Reporting. There is nothing better and no better way to acquire knowledge about all things great and small.