

AMY'S 2ND ANNUAL SUMMER MUST-READ BOOK LIST

It's time again for me to tell you what to read this summer! This time I've included every book I've read in the past year, everything I plan to read this summer, suggestions from other readers, and some all-time favorites. Hope you enjoy it, and have a great summer! (Not that I would ever presume to tell you what to do.)



MY TOP FIVE OF THE YEAR

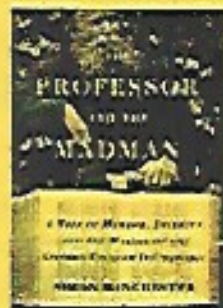
1. **The Fall of the Sparrow** - Robert Hellenga

A wonderful story about grief and food and the blues and growing up and relationships and Italian politics and academic politics and the Humanities. It will make you want to go back to college, or to Italy.



2. **The Professor and the Madman** - Simon Winchester

The fascinating story of the development of the Oxford English Dictionary and one of its most unusual contributors.



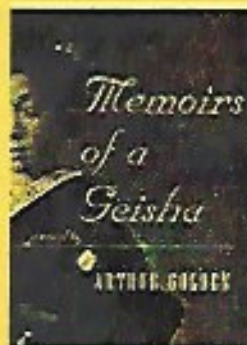
3. **A Widow for One Year** - John Irving

After a couple of unreadable books, John Irving returns to his familiar style and topics - mothers, inappropriate relationships, car accidents and the east coast.



4. **Memoirs of a Geisha** - Arthur Golden

A beautiful tale of a Japanese geisha. Unbelievably written in the first person, by a man.



5. **Bridget Jones's Diary** - Helen Fielding

Bridget's comic struggles with her life as a "singleton" as she tries to lose weight, quit smoking, drink less, find the right job, and the right man.



And an Honorable Mention goes to **Crossing to Safety** by Wallace Stegner, which holds a permanent place on my "Top 5 of All Time." See page 3 for more information.



CHECK INSIDE FOR GREAT BOOKS ON GROWING UP, FOOD, LOVE, RELIGION, WITCHES, ELEVATORS & MORE!

FICTION

The Angel of Darkness - Caleb Carr

I think I've recommended this before. The sequel to **The Alienist**.

The Cape Ann - Faith Sullivan

A cute story about a little girl growing up in the 40's and her family's problems.

Cupid and Diana - Christina Bartolomeo

Just a little romance about a woman who owns a second-hand clothing store.

The Intuitionist - Colson Whitehead

A first novel about a Black woman elevator inspector. A little bit Dashiell Hammett, a little bit Ayn Rand, a little bit strange, a little bit good.

Looking for Mo - Daniel Duane

A guy and his friend climb El Capitan. For climbing enthusiasts only.

Love Invents Us - Amy Bloom

Don't waste your time.

Midwives - Chris Bohjalian

A good read about the daughter of an embattled midwife. It was an Oprah pick, but it's good.

Practical Magic - Alice Hoffman

A somewhat interesting story about modern-day witches. I'd skip the book and rent the video.

Saving Grace - Lee Smith

Another "poor white trash" girl grows up in the South. This time her father's a tent revivalist. Also read **Fair and Tender Ladies**.

NOVELLAS

Remembering Laughter - Wallace Stegner

A turn of the century tale of an immigrant farmer, his wife and her sister.

Old New York - Edith Wharton

Four novellas about 19th century New York society.

NONFICTION

Neither Here Nor There - Bill Bryson

I can't remember what this one's about, but I'm sure it was funny.

Traveling Mercies - Anne Lamott

I love Anne Lamott. She's so earthy and spiritual (in a really,

practical, realistic way.) This is a collection of her essays from *Salon* magazine. They're just her reflections on life, and they're great. Also read...



Operating Instructions

This is the story of her son's first year and the death of her best friend. The ed board of Modern Library voted it #99 in its 100 Best Nonfiction Books of the Century. She's also written several novels.

Philistines at the Hedgerow - Stephen Gaines

Sort of a **Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil** set in the Hamptons.

A Walk in the Woods - Bill Bryson

The ever-entertaining Bill Bryson walks the Appalachian Trail, with Katz, the ultimate anti-hero. He also has a new one, **I'm a Stranger Here Myself; Notes on Returning to America After Twenty Years Away**.

The Best American Short Stories of the Century, edited by John Updike sounds like a "good read."

FUN BOOKS FROM LONDON

Harry Potter & the Philosopher's Stone - JK Rowling

Harry Potter, a ten year old orphan discovers he's a wizard and goes off to a special school. A little bit *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* - great for kids and adults. It's called **Harry Potter & the Sorcerer's Stone** in the US.

***Polly** - Freya North

A silly, steamy romance about a teacher from London who goes to teach in the United States.

***Rosie Meadows Regrets** - Catherine Alliott

A hilarious (and cheesy) romance. A "snuggle up and while away the afternoon" type of book. She's written some other good ones too.

***Ethel & Ernest** - Raymond Briggs

Known for his "Father Christmas" picture books, author and illustrator Raymond Briggs tells the story of his parents lives in cartoon form. They met in the 20's and died in the 70's. It will make you cry.

*These books are available via amazon.co.uk



LOSE YOURSELF IN A GOOD MYSTERY

Catering to Nobody – Diane Mott Davidson

Disaster strikes for Goldy when her former father-in-law mysteriously receives a dose of rat poisoning from her food and her business is shut down until she can catch the culprit. Part of a series.

Concrete Blood – Michael Connelly

LAPD detective Harry Bosch tracks a serial killer, after he kills the prime suspect.

God Save the Queen – Dorothy Cannell

When Sir Henry Gossinger announces that he intends to leave his stately home to the man who has been his butler for 50 years, all sorts of upper-class stuff begins to hit a variety of fans.

The Staked Goat – Jeremiah Healy

A John Francis Cuddy book, takes place in Boston. It was good, and this series is good – but I can't remember more than that. He has a new one **The Only Good Lawyer**.

Jane and the Unpleasantness at Scargrave Manor – Stephanie Barron

"In a far-fetched but lighthearted ruse, Barron claims in the preface that she has found a number of manuscripts authored by Jane Austen detailing her detective adventures." Written in Jane Austen's style – this is great!!! There are three in the series, this is the first.

You might also like Margaret Maron's Sigrid Harald and Deborah Knott series!



Check out amazon.com's Summer Reading Lists – but buy the books at your local independent bookstore!



Thanks to Carol Ulmer for completing the Reader Satisfaction Survey in the last edition. Here are some of her recommendations:

Cloudsplitter – Russell Banks
Memoirs of a Geisha – Arthur Golden
Birdsong – Sebastian Falks

Correlli's Mandolin – Louis De Bernieres
Stones from the River – Ursula Hegi
and any P.D. James

If you would like to recommend a great book, or warn against a not-so-great one, send a note or email to: Amy Kilgus Chamley, 1320 Brighton Drive, Urbana, IL 61801 or achamley@ncte.org. Thanks for your input!

COVER2COVER THE NCTE BOOK CLUB

Selections for 1999 (so far)

January

The Adventures of Augie March – Saul Bellow

A lot of people had trouble with this one.

February

Moo – Jane Smiley

An amusing look at life on the campus of a Midwestern University.

March

Alias Grace – Margaret Atwood

Did the 19th century maid kill her employer and his mistress, or didn't she?

April

Crossing to Safety – Wallace Stegner

A great book for discussion. It's the real and touching story of the friendship of two couples. Not everyone liked it, but they were all glad they read it. Wonderful!!!

*May**

The Fool's Progress – Edward Abbey

"An illuminating look into Abbey's time and his way of thinking, especially on matters of ecology and other social issues."

*June**

The Color of Water – James McBride

"A memoir of the true story of a Polish rabbi's daughter who came to the US, married a black man from Harlem, founded a church and put 12 children through college."

*We haven't actually read these yet, synopses are courtesy of amazon.com.

Books we didn't choose, but I'd still like to read:

The Archivist, Martha Cooley; **A Patchwork Planet**, Anne Tyler; **Vineland**, Thomas Pynchon; and **The Prisoner's Dilemma**, Richard Powers.

BOOKS ON MY LIST THIS SUMMER:

FICTION

Big Night Out – Tara McCarthy & Lorraine Freaney
Bridget Jones meets "Choose Your Own Adventure"

Charming Billy – Alice McDermott
 "Charming Billy is a devastating account of the power of longing and lies, love's tenacity, and resignation's hold. Even at his funeral party, Billy Lynch's life remains up for debate."

Folly – Susan Minot
 "Set in 1917 New England, it is the story of a conventional girl with unconventional stirrings, in a world where the choosing of a husband determines a woman's life."

Girlfriend in a Coma – Douglas Coupland
 I promised to read this last year, but never got around to it.

A Man in Full – Tom Wolfe
 I really liked *Bonfire of the Vanities*.

The Reader – Bernhard Schlink
The Reader is a brief tale about sex, love, reading, and shame in postwar Germany. "...an austere beautiful narrative of the attempt to breach the gap between Germany's pre- and postwar generations."

Underworld – Don DeLillo
 "Spanning five decades and using recurrent images (garbage, graffiti, a smudged baseball) to link dozens of vignettes and characters, the mammoth new novel by Don DeLillo ... takes for its subject nothing less than the complete Cold War."

The Weight of Water – Anita Shreve
 "A newspaper photographer, researches the lurid and sensational murder of two women in 1873 as an editorial tie-in with a brutal modern double murder." By the author of *The Pilot's Wife*, which I'll probably also read.

SHORT STORIES

Birds of America – Lorrie Moore
 "Lorrie Moore... proved that she could write about sadness, sex, and the single girl with wit and tenderness."

For the Relief of Unbearable Urges – Nathan Englander
 "The stories are powerfully inventive and often haunting, steeped in the weight of Jewish history and in the customs of Orthodox life."

Keys to the City – Joel Kostman
 "Over years of letting some people in and bolting others out, locksmith author Kostman has played hero to enough New York crazies to stuff a dozen Woody Allen movies. These understated episodes are by turns hilariously erotic and terribly sad."

Also, David Foster Wallace has a new collection.



NONFICTION

Dear Exile – Hilary Liftin & Kate Montgomery
 Close friends who promised to write when one was in the Peace Corps in Africa. Over the course of a single year, they exchanged an offbeat and moving series of letters from rural Kenya to New York City and back again.

Feel This Book – Janeane Garofalo & Ben Stiller
 "If you're tired of following the rules, dating people from Mars and Venus, gorging on chicken soup for your soul, or getting lost on a road less traveled, then it's time you listened to two people who actually sweat the small stuff."

A Hope in the Unseen – Ron Suskind
 "Ron Suskind won the Pulitzer Prize in 1995 for his stories about a talented black teenager struggling to succeed in a Washington, D.C. public high school. This full-length nonfiction narrative follows Cedric Jennings beyond his high-school graduation to Brown University."

Other People's Dirt – Louise Raskin
 "Louise Raskin is a professional housecleaner/sleuth/writer who delights in not only taking her broom out of the closet but other people's secrets as well."

Pure Drivel – Steve Martin
 "Pure Drivel is a collection of pieces, most of them written for the *New Yorker*, that demonstrate Martin's playful way with words."

Tender at the Bone – Ruth Reichl
 "New York Times restaurant critic Ruth Reichl shares lessons learned at the hands (and kitchen counters) of family members and friends throughout her life."

AUTHOR LIST

Fiction

Abbey, Edward
 Allison, Catherine
 Atwood, Margaret
 Banks, Russell
 Bartolomeo, Christina
 Bellow, Saul
 Bloom, Amy
 Bohjalian, Chris
 Carr, Caleb
 Cooley, Martha
 Coupland, Douglas
 De Bernieres, Louis
 DeLillo, Don
 Duane, Daniel
 Falks, Sebastian
 Fielding, Helen
 Golden, Arthur
 Hegi, Ursula
 Hellenga, Robert
 Hoffman, Alice
 Irving, John
 McBride, James
 McCarthy, Tara
 McDermott, Alice
 North, Freya
 Minot, Susan
 Powers, Richard
 Pynchon, Thomas
 Rowling, J.K.
 Schlink, Bernhard
 Shreve, Anita
 Smiley, Jane
 Stegner, Wallace
 Sullivan, Faith
 Tyler, Anne
 Wharton, Edith
 Whitehead, Colson

Nonfiction

Briggs, Raymond
 Bryson, Bill
 Gaines, Stephen
 Garofalo, Janeane
 Lamott, Anne
 Liftin, Hilary
 Martin, Steve
 Raskin, Louise
 Reichl, Ruth
 Suskind, Ron
 Winchester, Simon

Mysteries

Baron, Stephanie
 Cannell, Dorothy
 Connelly, Michael
 Davidson, Diane Mott
 Henly, Jeremiah
 James, P. D.
 Maron, Margaret

Short Stories

Englander, Nathan
 Kostman, Joel
 Moore, Lorrie