

BOOK GROUPS TASMANIA

CATALOGUE 2009/2010

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This catalogue contains the full range of books available to members of Book Groups Tasmania and includes a brief description of each.

Please note that books are organised in alphabetical order by title.

"People are very different, everything about them, and yet the sense of common humanity was so strong that sometimes I would find tears in my eyes. Every person I saw was a story no one had told."

God in the Ink by Kathryn Lomer.

Book Groups Tasmania
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E26: HANFF, Helene

84 Charing Cross Road

Futura, 1971, 220pp (non fiction)

This volume brings together twenty years of correspondence between an author and a clerk named Frank Doel, who worked for a dealer in used books in London. This little book contains much more than just letters between two people. It is a special book for a discerning palate that can enjoy the flavour and humour of Hanff's comments.

A

H40J: JORDAN, Toni

Addition

Text Publishing, 2008, 218pp (fiction)

Grace counts everything because numbers hold the world together. She meets Seamus and her life changes. He thinks she might be better off without the counting. "Addition raises a lot of questions about our values and our society, couched in disarmingly easy-to-read prose... The core message of this kind of book is about being loved on your own terms..." (Australian Book Review). Contains humour and pathos. Some sex scenes. Also includes interesting insights into the wonders of numbers and the life of Nikola Tesla.

B17H: HAMILTON, Clive and DENNISS, Richard

Affluenza: When Too Much is Never Enough

Allen and Unwin, 2005, 224pp (non fiction)

Worried about global warming? Why not try over-consumption for a change? Go on, reward yourself. You know you deserve it. The authors explore the question of why, in the midst of unprecedented affluence, we are unhappier than ever.

J42b: WHARTON, Edith

The Age of Innocence

Penguin, 1966, 300pp (fiction)

Countess Olensky returns to the rigid New York society of the 1870. Separated from her husband, the Countess is a woman with a love for life that captures the imagination of Newland Archer (engaged to be married to May Welland). As the consequent drama unfolds, a disturbingly accurate picture is drawn of men and women trapped in a code of living that denies humanity while desperately defending 'civilisation'.

K02E: COELHO, Paulo

The Alchemist

Harper, 1998, 197pp (fiction)

An Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search for a treasure buried in the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. What starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasure found within.

J03b: ATWOOD, Margaret

Alias Grace

Bloomsbury, 1996, 542pp (fiction)

A complex book, lengthy and tantalising. Grace Marks was imprisoned for thirty years for murder and was released in 1872. The conversations between Grace and her psychiatrist explore her life before the murders. Each chapter is illustrated by a piece of patchwork, each sewn together to compose the quilt of her life. Is Grace mad? Does she deserve to hang?

M07B: TURNBULL, Sarah

Almost French: A New Life in Paris

Bantam, 2002, 310pp (non fiction)

After a chance meeting with a Frenchman journalist Sarah Turnbull travels to Paris and falls in love him and the city. An entertaining story filled with cultural clashes and unique observations of French life. Funny, perceptive and poignant, Almost French is the story of an adventurous heart, a magical city – and finding love.

H82b: WOOD, Danielle

The Alphabet of Light and Dark

Allen & Unwin, 2003, 359pp (fiction)

Descriptive and atmospheric. A successful blending of two persons' stories and Tasmanian history. Accessible but not pacey.

J38E: TYLER, Anne

The Amateur Marriage

Vintage, 2004, 306pp (fiction)

This novel tracks the marriage and family life of Michael and Pauline Anton from World War II onwards. This life doesn't live up to the expectations of the couple. Tyler captures the nuances of everyday life with telling precision and humour.

I64g: McEWAN, Ian

Amsterdam

Vintage, 1998, 178pp (fiction)

Opening with a funeral, this psychological thriller is superbly written. All the characters gather at Molly Lane's grave, drawn by their parts in her life. At least three of her lovers are there. A secret set of photographs could spark off a scandal and disaster. Is it in the public interest for them to be publicised? This novel is full of surprising and shocking events that portray heartlessness and the dark side of human nature.

E43d: McCOURT, Frank

Angela's Ashes

Flamingo, 1996, 364pp (non fiction)

Winner of the 1997 Pulitzer Prize, this book takes us through the author's poverty stricken childhood in Brooklyn and Limerick. His father's drinking bouts put incredible strains on the family and Frank McCourt felt all the frustrations of social, physical and mental deprivation. Written with wit and compassion.

E34K: KINGSOLVER, Barbara

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: One Year of Seasonal Eating

Faber and Faber, 2007, 370pp (non fiction)

"This is the story of the year in which we made every attempt to feed ourselves animals and vegetables whose provenance we really knew... and how our family was changed by one year of deliberately eating food produced in the same place where we worked, loved our neighbours, drank the water and breathed the air". Barbara Kingsolver. Part memoir, part journalistic investigation into the production of food. Also contains humour and recipes.

I64f: MANTEL, Hilary

An Experiment in Love

Penguin, 1996, 250pp (fiction)

It was the year after Chappaquiddick, and all spring Carmel had watery dreams about the disaster. Now she, Karina and Julianne are escaping the dreary north of England for a London University hall of residence. Awaiting them is a winter of new preoccupations - sex and politics, food and fertility - and a pointless grotesque tragedy of their own.

K22c: ONDAATJE, Michael

Anil's Ghost

Picador, 2000, 307pp (fiction)

A story about love, family, the unknown enemy and the quest to unlock the hidden past. Anil Tissera, a young woman born in Sri Lanka, educated in England and America, steps into the maelstrom of civil war. She is a forensic anthropologist sent by an international human rights group to investigate the organised murder campaigns engulfing the island.

H48ab: MALOUF, David

An Imaginary Life

Published 1978, 152pp (fiction)

Exiled Roman poet Ovid tells the story of his encounter with a wild boy brought up among wolves in the snow. At first, the poet assumes the role of protector to the boy. Gradually, the roles of protector and protected are reversed as the two form a curious and touching alliance.

I69: ORWELL, George

Animal Farm

Penguin, 1945, 120pp (fiction)

This short book is a political allegory, but even children can enjoy its story of how the animals revolted against the farmer and tried to run their own affairs. The book is an indictment of both totalitarianism and mob rule.

K30: TOLSTOY, Leo

Anna Karenina

Penguin, 1954, 853pp (fiction)

The eternal triangle features in this tragic love story filled with moral overtones. It remains a hallmark of Russian literature and it is set in late Tsarist Russia. It has been made into a moving film.

B14: ECO, Umberto

Apocalypse Postponed

Flamingo, 1995, 300pp (non fiction)

Apocalypse Postponed is the anguished portrait of Western culture on the brink of self-destruction. With consummate ease, Eco provides a perfect attack on an apology for mass culture. Exploring such exotica as La Cicciolina, Charlie Brown, Fellini and American comics, as well as appraising illiteracy, the state of the counterculture and his own reaction to the media's consumption of his work, he exposes contemporary mass culture both as mankind's nemesis and as its salvation. A complex and difficult read.

M02A: DE BOTTON, Alain

The Art of Travel

Hamish Hamilton, 2002, 261pp (non fiction)

A great easy-going read and highly recommended. More about philosophical approaches to life than travel. De Botton compares and contrasts personal anecdotes with potted biographies of historical notables such as Flaubert, Van Gogh and Wordsworth to advance his arguments. Sure to lead you down many interesting avenues burgeoning with points for discussion. A page-turner.

I02D: BARNES, Julian

Arthur and George

Vintage Books, 2005, 505pp (fiction)

Arthur (Conan Doyle) and George (Edalji) grow up worlds apart in late nineteenth-century Britain. As the new century begins, they are brought together by a sequence of events that made sensational headlines at the time. With a mixture of intense research and vivid imagination Julian Barnes brings to life not just this long-forgotten case, but the inner workings of these two different men. Shortlisted for the 2005 Man Booker Prize.

H25c: GRAY, Stephen

The Artist is a Thief

Allen & Unwin, 2001, 278pp (fiction)

An Aboriginal painter from a remote community in the Northern Territory is used to her paintings commanding high prices - until a new painting is unveiled. It is slashed, the words "The artist is a thief" scrawled across it. Jean-Loup Wild is brought in to investigate, and is caught between the wealthy, sophisticated art-world and the Aboriginal community with its poverty, social problems, kinship ties and unchanging traditional law.

I87I: VINE, Barbara

Asta's Book

Penguin, 1993, 437pp (fiction)

From Ruth Rendell writing as Barbara Vine, this engrossing tale spans three generations and centres on the mystery of a child's identity. Asta, who came from Denmark to live in London at the turn of the century, meticulously kept a diary, and this holds the key to the mystery.

E37: LANE, Terry

As the Twig is Bent

Dove, 1979, 203pp (non fiction)

The childhood recollections of sixteen prominent Australians are chronicled. They include Manning Clark, Kath Walker, Jim Killen, Bob Hawke, Anne Deveson and Phillip Adams.

I48d: JENNINGS, Luke

Atlantic

Vintage, 1996, 237pp (fiction)

An extraordinary portrait of the glittering brilliance of the post-war years - their fragile optimism, heady decadence and bittersweet nostalgia. As the luxurious ocean liner Carmelia voyages towards New York, Cato Parkes wanders the decks looking for love, and finds the sultry, mysterious Ayrest MacLean. But she, like her fellow-passengers, is part of a lost world, shadowed by the past and fearful for her future.

I64J: McEWAN, Ian

Atonement

Vintage, 2002, 384pp (fiction)

Brilliant and utterly enthralling in its depiction of childhood, love and war; England and class, at its centre is a profound – and profoundly moving – exploration of shame and forgiveness, of atonement and the difficulty of absolution. Shortlisted for the 2001 Booker Prize.

J17b: HANSON, Ron

Atticus

Flamingo, 1996, 246pp (fiction)

Page-turner. Atticus Cody, a rancher and now oil-rich from his Colorado acres, has two sons. Scott, the younger wayward son, lives in Mexico and divides his plentiful time between drugs, painting and his obsession with Renata. Upon hearing of his son's death, Atticus goes to Mexico to sort out details. He starts to believe that his son was murdered, and he begins the search for truth that leads him to the depths of the human heart.

E15a: DALTON, Robin

Aunts up the Cross

Penguin, 1965, 172pp (non fiction)

A light, frothy, amusing book of life in Kings Cross in the '20s to the '40s. Filled with photographs of Robin Dalton's family, it chronicles her childhood, full of aunts, uncles and cousins, all living life as they see fit. It depicts Sydney in those days and has become an Australian classic.

E63C: SYMONDS, John

Aussie John

Penguin, 2003, 198pp (non fiction)

The founder of Aussie Home Loans – his happy childhood and financial failure and his emergence as one of Australia's most inspiring businessmen. A very positive, inspiring story of how to succeed in business and in life. Very readable.

E43e: MATTHEWS, Gordon

An Australian Son

William Heinemann, 1996, 229pp (non fiction)

Gordon Matthews was a boy who never belonged. Adopted at birth, he grew up in the 1950s in the leafy suburbs of Melbourne. While he had every comfort, colour set Gordon apart and he had no answers to the crucial questions of whom he was and where he came from. Through an extraordinary chain of circumstances, Gordon came to believe he was of Aboriginal descent.

E63D: STEIN, Gertrude

The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas

Penguin Books, 2001 (1933), 272pp (non fiction)

This is in fact Gertrude Stein's own autobiography and contains stories of the entertaining conversations with some of the most extraordinary painters and writers she met between 1903 and 1932 including Picasso, Matisse, Hemingway and Fitzgerald. Also provides humorous insights into the domestic lives of these famous figures. Also available for bookings with this title is E63E: The Alice B. Toklas Cookbook.

B

J38B: TYLER, Anne

Back When We Were Grownups

Published 2002, 274pp (fiction)

"Once upon a time, there was a woman who discovered she had turned into the wrong person." The main character Rebecca reviews her life and wonders can someone ever recover the person they left behind?

B22: JORDAN, Mary Ellen

Balanda: My Year in Arnhem Land

Allen & Unwin, 2005, 224pp (non fiction)

Mary Ellen Jordan left her Melbourne city life to spend fourteen months in Maningrida, a coastal community in Arnhem Land. This experience would challenge her perceptions of race, culture, political correctness, art, language, and whiteness.

K28b: SIJIE, Dai

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress

Vintage, 2001, 172pp (fiction)

Set at the time of Mao's Cultural Revolution in the 1970s. Two boys sent to 're-education' camp discover a suitcase packed with the great Western novels of the nineteenth century. Their lives and the daughter of the local tailor will never be the same again.

E19E: DOHERTY, Peter

The Beginner's Guide to Winning the Nobel Prize

The Miegunyah Press, 2005, 282pp (non fiction)

'Starting with the story of his own career—its improbable origins in the outer-suburbs of Brisbane, and its progression to a breakthrough discovery about how human immunity works—Doherty explores the realities of a life in science.' (Book jacket).

J28E: PATCHETT, Ann

Bel Canto

Fourth Estate, 2002, 318pp (fiction)

A lavish birthday party in South America is taken over by a group of terrorists. The guests at the dinner party include a Japanese businessman, a famous soprano and VIPs from various countries. Don't be put off by this scenario. This novel is about the friendship, companionship and in some cases love that develops between the guests. Patchett gives the reader astute observations of human behaviour with wisdom and humour.

I71: PLATH, Sylvia

The Bell Jar

Faber & Faber, 196-, 258pp (fiction)

This book appeared in England in 1963 under the pen name of Victoria Lucas, just a month before this tragic writer killed herself. Set includes one copy of Birthday Letters (poetry) by Ted Hughes.

M3D: HUGGAN, Isabel

Belonging

Bantam, 2004, 335pp (non fiction)

Isabel Huggan explores the way chance and choice shape our lives. She travels through Kenya, Philippines, Tasmania and France, and gives an interesting account of what it's like to settle in a new country and learn a new language. About family, love, memories and where we belong.

J29O: MORRISON, Toni

Beloved

Vintage Books, 2004, 324pp (fiction)

Voted the best American novel published in the previous twenty five years by a panel organised by The New York Times Book Review. This novel is loosely based on the life of Margaret Garner, an escaped slave who killed her child to prevent the child from being taken back into slavery. The novel won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1988.

I57d: LESSING, Doris

Ben, in the World

Flamingo, 2000, 178pp (fiction)

Sequel to The Fifth Child. Ben Lovatt is now living in the wider world. How he copes in the world and people's reactions to him will captivate the reader. Suggestion for groups: book in this title with The Fifth Child for the same discussion month.

D06b: DAVIES, Paul

The Big Questions

Published 1996, 150pp (non fiction)

How did the universe come to exist? Are we alone in the vastness of the cosmos? Can scientists solve the riddle of time? What is the ghost in the machine? Is there a God? In these lucid and engaging conversations, world-renowned physicist Paul Davies and persistent iconoclast Phillip Adams examine the whys and wherefores of the cosmos, its beginning, a choice of endings, and where, if at all, humans fit in.

I27e: FAULKS, Sebastian

Birdsong

Vintage, 1994, 497pp (fiction)

Life for a young Englishman who has gone to live in Amiens sets the scene for the opening chapters of this amazing book. Moving on to 1916, the book becomes a mesmerising tale of love and war, rich in human drama.

H61b: OWEN, David

Bitters End

Published 1993, 261pp (fiction)

Shattered by the bizarre death of his fiancée, Raoul abandons civilisation and drives inland. Forced by a compulsion beyond grief, he is drawn into the harsh country, an unfamiliar sun-scorched world of vast space and very few people. He settles at Hurrah, a dilapidated property surrounded by five hundred acres of wasted stubble and nothingness, a dead, parched hell on earth. There he retreats into loneliness, the isolation and hardship of his life cocooning him from the demands of memory and time.

J18B: HOFFMAN, Alice

Blackbird House

Chatto & Windus, 2004, 225pp (fiction)

Twelve intricately connected stories set in a farmhouse on the tip of Cape Cod that trace the history of the farm's inhabitants from 1778 to the 21st Century. Celebrates the strength and endurance of women. Atmospheric and some stories have a fairytale quality. Very accessible read.

E56: PURCELL, Leah

Black Chicks Talking

Hodder, 2002, 363pp (non fiction)

Meet the new generation of Aboriginal women, as Leah Purcell speaks with nine women from a diverse range of backgrounds (includes well known Tasmanian Kathryn Hay). Humorous, moving, entertaining and enlightening conversations.

I64ab: Mc EWAN, Ian

Black Dogs

Picador, 1992, 173pp (fiction)

"Black Dogs is a complex statement about violence, that 'disease of the human imagination'. Compassionate without resorting to sentimentality, clever without ever losing its honesty, an undisguised novel of ideas which is also Ian McEwan's most human work" (Times Literary Supplement).

J29a: MOORE, Brian

Black Robe

Grafton, 1985, 224pp (fiction)

A short, controversial novel. Its theme is one that will create discussion. The Jesuits try to bring their beliefs to the Algonquian Indians who already hold strong beliefs of their own. The tragedy that unfolds because of the conflict is one that seems inevitable. Much research has gone into this novel, and the scatological language of the Indians, although authentic, may offend some readers.

K29c: TÓIBÍN, Colm

The Blackwater Lightship

Published 1999, 273pp (fiction)

Families are full of individuals preventing life from being smooth sailing in home waters. This book involves the reader in a family where Dedan, favourite son and brother, is dying and the women in the family meet together to come to terms with Dedan's dying and with each other.

JO3c: ATWOOD, Margaret

The Blind Assassin

Virago Press, 2001, 641pp (fiction)

This multi-layered novel is an epic tale of memory, intrigue and betrayal. Iris Chase is remembering the death of her sister, Laura, and all that led up to it. Laura was the writer of a novel called "The Blind Assassin" which is woven into this intricate story. This is a journey into the shifting layers of memory, a journey well worth the effort. A Booker Prize winner.

K18BC: LEON, Donna

Blood from a Stone

William Heinemann, 2005, 276pp (fiction)

Mystery set in Venice from a prize-winning, well-respected crime writer. Why would anyone kill a street vendor? Could it be because he was black? African? Or an illegal immigrant? Such a person in Venice has few social connections and little money. Once Brunetti begins to investigate this case, he discovers that matters of great value are at stake within the immigrant society.

J23L: LE, Nam

The Boat

Hamish Hamilton, 2008, 313pp (fiction)

Short story collection. In 1979, Nam Le's family left Vietnam for Australia, an experience that inspires the first and last stories in The Boat. "A fearless new Australian voice that accepts no geographical limits: these are stories of leaping power and the most breathtaking grace and intimacy" (Helen Garner).

H32a: HEWETT, Dorothy

Bobbin Up

Vulgar Press, (1959) 1999, 233pp (fiction)

Based on the author's experiences working in a factory, living in inner city Sydney and her involvement in the Communist Party. Examines the life and attitudes of women factory workers as they start to stand up for their rights in the early 1950s. An Australian classic about women, work and identity. This edition includes critical essays about the novel.

K12: HULME, Keri

The Bone People

Picador, 1983, 445pp (fiction)

"Set on the harsh Sth Island beaches of New Zealand, bound in Maori myth and entwined with Christian symbols, Hulme's provocative novel summons power with words, as a conjurer's spell. She casts her magic on three fiercely unique characters, but reminds us that we, like them, are 'nothing more than people' and that, in a sense, we are all cannibals, compelled to consume the gift of love with demands for perfection." New York Times

A08a: HARWOOD, Gwen

Bone Scan

Angus & Robertson, 1988, 56pp (poetry)

Very personal collection of poems, where music is always hovering. Includes poignant, humorous and philosophical insights about the past and present. Harwood delves into her soul to produce poems that touch the heart.

M10S: SEIERSTAD, Asne

The Bookseller of Kabul

Published 2003 (non fiction)

In 2002, following the fall of the Taliban, award-winning journalist Anne Seierstad spent four months living with a bookseller and his family in Kabul. For more than 20 years her host defied the authorities to supply books to the people of Kabul. Seierstad moved freely between the private restricted sphere of the women and the freer, more public lives of the men.

I28a: FITZGERALD, Penelope

The Bookshop

Flamingo, 1978, 123pp (fiction)

Florence Green decides to open a bookshop in a small East Anglian town. Florence does not realise what opposition there is to her decision until Hardborough becomes a battleground. Beautifully written and a joy to read.

H48B: ZUSAK, Markus

The Book Thief

Picador, 2005, 584pp (fiction)

Set in Nazi Germany, we see the world through the eyes of young Liesel Meminger when she moves in with a foster family in a village in 1939. Liesel learns to read with the help of her accordion-playing foster father. So begins a love affair with books and words. A story about the power of words to make worlds. Superbly written. This author is a fine story teller. For readers who enjoy strong characterisation.

E56A: REES, Peter

The Boy from Boree Creek: The Tim Fischer Story

Allen & Unwin, 2002, 361pp (non fiction)

This is the story of much respected politician Tim Fischer's journey into politics. It is also the personal story of a man who acknowledged the conflict between the demands of a high - profile public life and the needs of a family life. He stepped down as Deputy Prime Minister of Australia to spend more time with his family. His story also gives us a view, from the "inside" of how politics works in Australia.

E14ab: DAHL, Roald

Boy and Going Solo

Puffin, 1993, 394pp (non fiction)

Dahl's childhood in Wales, his school life and his family life are better than fiction. Wry, humorous and written with a savage wit. Reveals a fascination with danger and horror.

H42: KOCH, Christopher

The Boys in the Island

Hamish, 1958, 250pp (fiction)

Young people, resenting what they consider the restriction of life in Tasmania, move to the Mainland only to find disillusionment.

I47: HUXLEY, Aldous

Brave New World

Flamingo, (1932) 1992, 237pp (fiction)

Utopia or Dystopia? In this vision of the future, technology and mass brainwashing creates mass happiness and mass conformity. There's a place for everyone, and everyone's in their place. Free recreational drugs without negative side-effects are available. A dream-come-true, or a living nightmare? Huxley gives you the case for the negative. But maybe ignorance really is bliss.

I01B: ALI, Monica

Brick Lane

Transworld, 2003, 389pp (fiction)

A contemporary novel about the life of an Asian immigrant girl. Deals with issues of love, cultural difference and the human spirit. Nazneen is a teenager forced into an arranged marriage with a man considerably older than her: Leaving her Bangladeshi village, Nazneen finds herself in a small flat in a high-rise block in the East End of London. This is a novel of genuine insight. Nominated for the 2003 Booker Prize.

I87: WAUGH, Evelyn

Brideshead Revisited

Penguin, 1945, 395pp (fiction)

Subject of the B.B.C. television series. Traces the lives of various members of a Catholic, aristocratic English family between the two World Wars.

H71T: TEMPLE, Peter

The Broken Shore

Text Publishing, 2005, 345pp (fiction)

The Broken Shore falls into the sub-genre of crime fiction where the focus is on mood and the qualities of the characters with plot as a secondary concern. In this genre detectives tend to be complex men, melancholy, and flawed but with some redeeming qualities. Beyond their own dysfunctional lives they have a passion for justice and an integrity which drives them to challenge corruption and authority. (Viv Hamilton, Notewriter 2008). Contains strong language.

B40: VENO, Arthur

The Brotherhoods: Inside the Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs

Allen & Unwin, 2002, 277pp (non fiction)

Professor Arthur Veno provides a fascinating account of the rise of the bikie gang counterculture after World War 2. He actually lived with the clubs and provides us with a unique insider view of their codes of conduct. Compare the clubs' rules to any club you have ever belonged to - even a book group! Not for the gentle reader.

H67A: ROSE, Heather

The Butterfly Man

Published 2005, 317pp (fiction)

Henry Kennedy lives on a mountain in Tasmania. He is not who he says he is. Is he a murderer or a man who can never clear his name? And is he the only one with something to hide? What truth and lies do we tell ourselves?

C

H84: ZABLE, Arnold

Café Scheherazade

Text Publishing, 2001, 223pp (fiction)

A journalist tells the stories of love, loss, displacement and survival after WWII through the lives of the owners and patrons of Café Scheherazade. At once fable and history, Café Scheherazade takes the reader on a journey that ranges from Kobe to Paris, from Vilna to Melbourne. It remains faithful to the experiences of Jewish survivors, whose lives reflect the courage of refugees everywhere.

H46b: LOHREY, Amanda

Camille's Bread

Flamingo, 1995, 277pp (fiction)

A contemporary story of complex family relationships and individual soul-searching. Marita, a single mother, takes a year off work to spend more time with her daughter Camille and to get her life in order. Along comes Stephen, a discontented public servant who is training to be a Zen shiatsu masseur.

H5B: BIRD, Carmel

Cape Grimm

Flamingo, 2004, 302pp (fiction)

Set in the far northwest tip of Tasmania. In 1851, a Scottish man and a Peruvian woman are shipwrecked. Mix of fact, fiction and fairytales. This novel explores charismatic leaders, cults, loss of innocence, and the nature of evil. Many reviewers have assumed that the whole novel is a literary response to Port Arthur; while Bird herself refers to her lack of Port Arthur references as being "a very interesting gap in the novel".

119c: de BERNIÈRES, Louis

Captain Corelli's Mandolin

Minerva, 1994, 435pp (fiction)

This is a dense rich saga that takes place on the Greek Island of Cephallonia. Pelagia is the local doctor's daughter; she meets Captain Corelli, a member of the Italian occupation force and the two fall in love. Likened to Tolstoy's War and Peace, this epic tale brings together many colourful characters and a myriad of fascinating situations taking place in Greece during World War II.

H60D: ROBERTSON, Deborah

Careless

Picador, 2006, 293pp (fiction)

A gripping, seductive novel about the ties of caring, grief and responsibility that are formed and broken in our society. Confronting at times. Some interesting references to Fallingwater and Frank Lloyd Wright and the power of art to help healing.

H85: WRIGHT, Alexis

Carpentaria

Giramondo, 2006, 520pp (fiction)

An epic set in the coastal town of Desperance in Gulf country of north-western Queensland dominated by two different aboriginal tribes, white officials and a powerful mining company. A blend of myth and scripture, politics and farce. Extraordinary characters. Incredible descriptions of the landscape and profound insights into some aspects of Aboriginal folklore. Winner of the 2007 Miles Franklin Award.

101D: ATKINSON, Kate

Case Histories

Black Swan, 2004, 410pp (fiction)

A bitter and cynical private detective looks into three case histories that involve disappearances of children and the murder of a husband. It is concerned with the grief and impact of these events on the family's lives. A sophisticated crime plot told with humour. Has general appeal - not just for devotees of crime fiction.

J03a:ATWOOD, Margaret

Cat's Eye

Virago, 1988 (fiction)

This is a very readable book, although complex. It tells of a heroine who revisits the world of her childhood where she was alternately fascinated and tormented by her best friend.

E32a:JOLLEY, Elizabeth

Central Mischief

Penguin, 1992, 185pp (non fiction)

Edited by Caroline Lurie, Elizabeth Jolley has compiled a collection of articles, speeches and essays. It gives readers a greater insight into the works of this extremely popular writer and shows the complexity of her character.

I27f: FAULKES, Sebastian

Charlotte Gray

Random House, 1999, 399pp (fiction)

Second of a trilogy the story is set against a wartime backdrop in 1942. Charlotte is a young idealistic woman with a mind of her own and a strong sense of history and identity. Charlotte believes that there are things worth fighting for.

E60b: SCOTT, Margaret

Changing Countries

ABC Books, 2000, 235pp (non fiction)

This book is not strictly autobiographical. It is a mix of autobiography, fiction, essays and poetry. There is a little poetry and a lot of soul in this book.

E64B: SHAKESPEARE, Nicholas

Chatwin

Vintage, 2000, 550pp (non fiction)

Much acclaimed biography of Bruce Chatwin the famous journalist, best selling author and traveller. A fascinating account of the man (married, active homosexual, socialite and a loner) behind the myth. Comprehensively researched and elegantly written.

H82C: WOOD, Charlotte

The Children

Allen & Unwin, 2007, 269pp (fiction)

When their father is critically injured, foreign correspondent Mandy and her siblings return home, bringing with them the remnants and patterns of childhood. The acutely observed novel exposes the tenacious grip of childhood, the way siblings seem to grow apart but never do, and explores the price paid for bearing witness to the suffering of others.

I87k: VINE, Barbara

The Chimney Sweeper's Boy

Penguin, 1998, 439pp (fiction)

The plot begins with the death of author Gerald Candless from a heart attack. One of his daughters is asked to write his biography and finds that he had no evidence of a past life. Who was he really? Why did he hide his real identity?

I44a: HARRIS, Joanne

Chocolat

Transworld, 1999, 395pp (fiction)

A bigoted, xenophobic priest sees the chocolate shop across the street and its owner as followers of the devil. The characters of the small town seem to be disciples of one or the other. Vianne, owner of the shop and a single mother, seems also to be a white witch. She weaves her chocolate magic, enriching the lives of others, unaware that she causes intense feelings to rise in the breast of Father Reynaud. He sets out to destroy all temptation.

D19: OATS, William

Choose Your Dilemma - An Australian Pacifist in Hitler's Europe

Montpelier Press, 1999, 150pp (non fiction)

Letters from Europe from 1938 to 1940, written by a young Bill Oats to his family, underline the philosophical and practical problems of being a pacifist just before WWII. Pacifism would be wonderful if there weren't any nasty boys on the block. Where do you stand on these issues?

M1: BERENDT, John

The City of Falling Angels

Sceptre, 2005, 371pp (non fiction)

Berendt, the author of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, takes the reader on a unique tour of Venice, revealing some eccentric personalities and aspects of the city that tourists rarely see. A compelling and witty read.

H80A: WINTON, Tim

Cloudstreet

Published 1991, 426pp (fiction)

Australian Classic. Voted the No. 1 favourite Australian book in a national ABC and Australian Society of Authors poll in 2003. Find out if you agree. Follow the ups and downs of the lives of two working class families over 20 years in the post-war period. Tim Winton's funny, sprawling saga is an epic novel of love, acceptance and human values. Winner of the Miles Franklin Award.

H6: BLAIN, Georgia

Closed for Winter

Penguin, 1998, 249pp (fiction)

A story of mothers, daughters, family relationships and loss. A powerful and positive story about the pain of letting go. The style is easy to read, but the plot is complex as the author weaves together memory and thought.

I36b: GIBBONS, Stella

Cold Comfort Farm

Penguin, 1932, 233pp (fiction)

A classic: entertaining and clever. One sane person is living in a world of eccentrics on an English farm. Gibbon's wicked and witty pen brilliantly parodies the earthy, melodramatic novels of the period. Audio available.

J13: FRAZIER, Charles

Cold Mountain

Sceptre, 1997, 438pp (fiction)

A young soldier wounded in the American Civil War, Inman sets out on an epic journey, heading for home. Ada, the woman Inman left behind, has struggled to make a living from the land bequeathed to her by her once wealthy father. Her story makes fascinating reading too.

A09e: SCOTT, Margaret

Collected Poems

Montpelier Press, 2000, 174pp (poetry)

A series of poems which give a new look at what it really means to be a Tasmanian. In her poems, she imbues ordinary domestic chores with a wonder and mystery that takes them beyond the everyday.

J29C: MOORE, Brian

The Colour of Blood

Paladin, 1987, 191pp (fiction)

A Cardinal in a communist country has to make a decision that will affect his life and the future of his people. Personal morality and political intrigue are only part of this novel that, like Moore's other books, is unputdownable.

G14B: PYBUS, Cassandra

Community of Thieves

Published 1991, 188pp (non fiction)

In 1829 Richard Pybus took up a large land grant on Bruny Island, the traditional home of the Nuenone people of south-east Tasmania. Within months of his arrival there were no Nuenone left on the island - they had either died from disease, or been murdered or exiled. Truganini, the last of the Neunone, died in 1876.

H55: MILLER, Alex

Conditions of Faith

Published 2000, 406pp (fiction)

Emily Stanton, an Australian, seeks adventure by marrying Georges Elder, an engineer who lives in Paris. Disappointed by a conventional marriage, she takes an illicit lover; only to find herself faced with a choice between living her dreams and trying to find fulfilment in reality.

I57A: LE CARRÉ, John

The Constant Gardener

Coronet, 2001, 506pp (fiction)

A book much requested by groups. Suspenseful and moving. Le Carré ranges over many topics that confront us today, including death, exploitation and free-enterprise. All this packed into an impressive thriller.

H48a: MALOUF, David

The Conversations at Curlow Creek

Published 1997, 214pp (fiction)

Set in New South Wales in the early part of the 18th century, an escaped convict-turned-bushranger spends the night prior to his execution conversing with the officer who is to oversee the execution. This is a beautiful book with elegant and sensitive prose. Winner of the 1996 International Impac Dublin Literary Award.

H40C: KUROSAWA, Susan

Coronation Talkies

Viking, 2004, 488pp (fiction)

A novel of 1930's India. In a small town in the Indian highlands, two women decide to turn a decrepit theatre into an up-to-date movie house. There is a meeting of east and west through Mrs Banerjee and Lydia Rushmore, the latter wrestling with her identity in an outlying province of the crumbling British Empire.

J12B: FRANZEN, Jonathan

The Corrections

Fourth Estate, 2001, 653pp (fiction)

A troubled family are forced to face the secrets and failures that haunt them. As the father's health (he has Parkinson's Disease) worsens the mother tries to gather everyone together for one last family Christmas. A powerful readable epic.

J34S: SHIELDS, Jody

The Crimson Portrait

Doubleday, 2007, 296pp (fiction)

How much of our identity is wrapped up in our face? A country estate in England is turned into a hospital during World War I for soldiers with horrific facial injuries. It is a story based on the real collaboration between artists and surgeons in the treatment of wounded men during the First World War. Striking descriptions and imagery. For readers interested in medicine, art, and relationships.

I70d: PHILLIPS, Caryl

Crossing the River

Picador, 1994, 236pp (fiction)

Spans two hundred and fifty years of the African diaspora. It tracks two brothers and a sister on their separate journeys through different eras and continents - as a missionary to Liberia in the 1830's, a pioneer on a wagon trail to the American Wild West later that century, and a GI posted to a Yorkshire village in the Second World War.

I42: HADDON, Mark

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

David Fickling Books, 2003 (fiction)

Fifteen-year-old Christopher has Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism. Funny and sad, Christopher offers innocent but profound insights into the people around him. He understands maths and science (the book actually contains maths and logic problems groups may like to try and argue over!) Contains a murder mystery with a difference.

D

K18E: McCANN, Colum

Dancer

Phoenix, 2003 (fiction)

Based on the life of the dancer Rudolf Nureyev. Unusually poetical. The author paints the dancer's life by colouring in the people that coloured his life in Russia and New York. Different voices tell the story and provide interesting insights. Some groups commented that they were expecting more about dance. Most agreed it is a unique and rewarding work. Some commented that some of the writing on homosexuality was a bit too much for them.

E56R: RIGNEY, Victoria

Dancing on the Edge of the Empire:

A Transformative Tale of Pauline Melikoff Hobart Girl and Russian Princess

Published 2008, 203pp (non fiction)

"Victoria Rigney has produced that happy combination of well researched history and a great story of a young Tasmanian woman who married into the European aristocracy. Dancing on the Edge of the Empire is well written and highly entertaining to read while retaining all the rigour of first class historical scholarship" (Henry Reynolds).

J13a: EBERSHOFF, David

The Danish Girl

Allen Unwin, 2000, 310pp (fiction)

This elegantly written novel is based on the case of Einar Wegener and his wife. No amount of conjecture can compete with the true facts. This story of a marriage that confronts sexual and personal identity is told with an intellectual distance that gives great dignity to what was once, in 1931, a newspaper's dream headline.

E30H: HOWELL, Georgina

Daughter of the Desert: The Remarkable Life of Gertrude Bell

Pan Books, 2007, 518pp (non fiction)

Archaeologist, spy, Arabist, linguist, author, poet, photographer, mountaineer and nation builder; Gertrude Bell was born in 1868 into a world of privilege and plenty, but she turned her back on all that for her passion for the Arab peoples. This is a compelling portrait of a woman who transcended the restrictions of her class and age and in doing so created a remarkable and enduring legacy.

E43M: MIRÓ, Asha

Daughter of the Ganges

Bantam, 2006, 274pp (non fiction)

Asha was adopted from an orphanage in India when she was seven by a loving and caring couple from Barcelona. In her late twenties she returns to her birthplace to do some volunteer teaching and to try to find out about her birth family. She eventually finds out the story of why she was given to the nuns at the orphanage and is reunited with her sister. A very moving interesting read offering insights into overseas adoptions.

JO8B: BROWN, Dan

The Da Vinci Code

Corgi, 2003, 593pp (fiction)

Described as a "brainy thriller" by the New York Times. The curator of the Louvre has been murdered inside the museum. Alongside the body there is a series of baffling codes which start a trail of riddles leading back to the works of Leonardo Da Vinci. For those who love a good mystery/thriller mixed with history.

J18: ITANI, Francis

Deafening

Sceptre, 2003, 378pp (fiction)

A first novel from this Canadian author: Brilliant characterisations, especially of Grania as a young girl who loses her hearing after a bout of scarlet fever. Set in Canada before and during World War I. Provide insights into the power of language to isolate or include.

E64: USTINOV, Peter

Dear Me

Heinemann, 1977, 270pp (non fiction)

Autobiography. As could be expected, it is witty, erudite and filled with delightful anecdotes. It has proved to be a most popular book.

M09: ROBB, Peter

A Death in Brazil

Dully and Snellgrove, 2005, 372pp (non fiction)

Combines travel, history, culture and Robb's own memories of living in Brazil. Insights into a vibrant often-violent society flavoured with descriptions of exotic food and the passions of the people. Robb is a well-respected author with a unique style.

H21b: FLANAGAN, Richard

Death of a River Guide

McPhee Gribble, 1994, 326pp (fiction)

River guide Aljaz Cosini lies drowning beneath a waterfall on the Franklin River. Beset by visions at once horrible and fabulous, he relives not just his own life but also that of his family and forebears. As the river rises, his visions grow more turbulent, and in the flood of the past Aljaz discovers the soul of his country.

B43: WATSON, Don

Death Sentence: the Decay of Public Language

Knopf, 2003, 198pp (non-fiction)

Part diatribe, part reflection on the state of Australia's public language. Watson takes a blowtorch to the words politicians, the media and large corporations use that lack imagination and clarity. A small, profound and humorous book.

J28c: MITCHARD, Jacquelyn

The Deep End of the Ocean

Flamingo, 1996, 516pp (fiction)

Beth is the mother three-year-old Ben, who goes missing. Fear, guilt and a myriad of other feelings tear the family apart, but they continue to search for Ben. One day, a young boy knocks on their door and asks if they have any odd jobs for him to do. He looks so like Ben, but Beth has been disappointed before.

K05a: ENDO, Shusaku

Deep River

Sceptre, 1994, 215pp (fiction)

Five Japanese visit the Ganges. Ostensibly tourists, each is on an important personal quest. One woman in the group touches on her past when she re-acquaints herself with a man she seduced at college in a cynical attempt to undermine his faith. Now this man is working with the poor, sick and dying. About death, guilt and the inability to love.

J24A: LOPEZ, Barry

Desert Notes and River Notes

Picador, 1990, 176pp (fiction)

Atmospheric writing, something really different, evocative and personal. Lopez has brought his feelings and senses on the page to readers. Both the river and the desert come alive to us, so that can almost breathe the air of both. Breaks new ground in writing and is unusual and thought provoking.

I48b: JAMES, P.D.

Devices and Desires

Faber & Faber, 1989, 408pp (fiction)

Set near a nuclear power station on the south-east coast of England, where local people and employees of the station are at the mercy of "The Whistler", a serial killer of young women. The story takes on a twist and there is much to investigate. Extremely well written and worth the read.

KO2d: COELHO, Paulo

The Devil and Miss Prym

Harper Collins, 2001, 172pp (fiction)

Is the human race intrinsically good or evil? This is the issue under test when a stranger enters a small town known for the honesty of its inhabitants. He singles out a young girl, Miss Prym, to be his first test case in the town. Will she steal a hidden treasure consisting of a gold bar; will she tempt the other villagers to commit murder in order to gain even more gold or will she prove that humans can resist temptation?

J38F: TYLER, Anne

Digging to America

Vintage Books, 2007, 330pp (fiction)

Two tiny Korean babies are delivered to two very different Baltimore families including a family whose parents were born in Iran. The families become connected due to this event. "Digging to America is a novel about belonging and otherness, pride and prejudice, young love and unexpected old love and about families and the impossibility of ever getting it right..." Humorous episodes.

E19b: DINGO, Sally

Dingo, The Story of our Mob

Random House, 1997, 299pp (non fiction)

Sally married Ernie Dingo, a well-known media personality, and consequently became part of the Dingo tribe. This warm and compassionate family story spans three generations of the Dingo mob. It traces their deeply moving struggle to find dignity, worth and meaning in a culture not their own. It provides some valuable insights into the joys and pitfalls that Sally experiences in becoming part of another culture.

B44W: WYNHAUSEN, Elizabeth

Dirt Cheap: Life at the Wrong End of the Job Market

Pan Macmillan, 2005 (non-fiction)

Elizabeth Wynhausen, an experienced journalist, took leave without pay to live as an unskilled worker in various jobs, and write about the experience. The work was often hard, grim and relentless, and poorly paid: but she was surprised by the extra challenges she had to confront, about alienation and management, invisibility and the sheer uncertainty of getting work.

H80: WINTON, Tim

Dirt Music

Picador, 2001, 645pp (fiction)

This award-winning novel traces the journey of Georgie Jutland and Luther Fox, two outsiders who embark on a reckless affair at a crisis point in both their lives. Set in a small fishing town, Broome and the islands off the Northern coast of Western Australia. Winner of Australia's Miles Franklin Literary Award and short listed for the 2002 Booker Prize.

K19C: NADOLNY, Sten

The Discovery of Slowness

Canongate, 2003, 311pp (fiction)

Fictionalised account of Governor John Franklin's character and voyages. Concentrates on his childhood and his expeditions to find the North-West Passage but does contain some interesting observations of the Franklin's time in Tasmania and in particular the unique character of Lady Jane Franklin.

K03a: COETZEE, J.M.

Disgrace

Vintage, 2000, 220pp (fiction)

A multi-layered story of events in the lives of a father and daughter set against the backdrop of political turmoil in the "new" South Africa. A powerful and sometimes disturbing novel that raises many questions about personal relationships and political and social change in South Africa.

LIa: BAUBY, Jean-Dominique

The Diving-Bell and the Butterfly

Fourth Estate, 1997, 139pp (non fiction)

Jean-Dominique Bauby was editor-in-chief of the French magazine *Elle* before a debilitating stroke left him with severe quadriplegia, in a condition known as 'locked-in syndrome'. After his stroke, Bauby's only means of communication was by means of blinking an eyelid to indicate each letter of the alphabet in order to spell out words. By this painstaking means, Bauby was able to create a book that communicates his feelings and frustrations. Bauby was said to have been thrilled to learn that, on the first day of the books' release, it sold out all 25,000 copies. He died in a Paris hospital only three days later.

H4I: KOCH, Christopher

The Doubleman

Chatto & Windus, 1985, 326pp (fiction)

Koch investigates a group of folk musicians who dabble in the occult. The novel begins in Tasmania and then moves to Sydney. Watch for the "doppelganger". An audiotape is available with this book.

EI 1a: CONRAD, Peter

Down Home

Minerva, 1988, 232pp (non fiction)

Controversial Tasmanian academic, who now lectures in English at Christ Church, Oxford University, takes a jaundiced look at his origins and offends everybody. Peering through a glass darkly, Conrad describes the "clean green" isle of Tasmania as a gulag, where those living here don't know they are still imprisoned. Visiting back home, he somehow manages to evoke a gloomy view of the place and its people. Read this book to discover what you didn't know about where you live.

E53O: OBAMA, Barack

Dreams of My Father

Text Publishing, 2004 (1995), 442pp (non fiction)

Before Barack Obama became a politician he was, among other things a writer. This is a refreshing and revealing portrait of a young man asking the big questions about identity and belonging.

H4I J: JONES, Gail

Dreams of Speaking

Vintage, 2006, 214pp (fiction)

Alice is entranced by the aesthetics of technology and, in every aeroplane flight, every Xerox machine, every neon sign, sees the poetry of modernity. Mr Sakamoto, a survivor of the atomic bomb, is an expert on Alexander Graham Bell. Like Alice, he is culturally and geographically displaced. The pair forges an unlikely friendship as Mr Sakamoto regales Alice with stories of twentieth-century invention.

E39L: LLEWELLYN, Kate

The Dressmaker's Daughter

Fourth Estate, 2008, 427pp (non fiction)

The Dressmaker's Daughter is a candid account of this well known author's life, from her earliest days on the Eyre Peninsula in South Australia through to her nursing training, her marriage, and life in bohemian Adelaide in the Sixties and Seventies, her time as an art-gallery owner and the beginning of her journey as a writer.

H1 6a: DREWE, Robert

The Drowner

Picador, 1996, 329pp (fiction)

A rich and challenging novel. This historical, romantic tale recounts the amazing feat of laying 350 miles of water pipes from Perth, inland to the goldfields. The question of Australian identity is a central concern of this story. Winner of 1997 Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction.

I64c: MORTIMER, John

Dunster

Penguin, 1992, 296pp (fiction)

What is a friend? Does a friend always tell you the truth? Do they sacrifice your feelings on the altar of truth? Do they stand by you at all costs? Who is Dunster? What is truth? This book will keep you talking as the plot unfolds. Dunster is determined to find out the truth of an incident during the Second World War; no matter what the consequences.

E

MO3G: GILBERT, Elizabeth

Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything across Italy, India and Indonesia

Bloomsbury, 2006, 335pp (non fiction)

After a bitter divorce and turbulent love affair, Liz starts to travel. First she spends four months in Rome where she learns Italian. Then four months in an Ashram in India. Finally she heads to Bali where a toothless medicine man offers her a new path to peace.

F8: O'ROURKE PJ.

Eat the Rich

Picador, 1998, 246pp (non fiction)

Controversial writer PJ. O'Rourke has done it again, amusing some and annoying others. In this seriously funny book, he explores the bewildering world of economics. Why do some countries have so much and some so little?

B46: TRUSS, Lynne

Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation

Profile Books, 2003, 209pp (non fiction)

No 1 bestseller (can you believe it?) about punctuation as an endangered species. Light, entertaining and interesting read.

I65: MANTEL, Hilary

Eight Months on Ghazzah Street

Penguin, 1988, 298pp (fiction)

When Frances Shore joins her engineer husband in Jeddah she is warned not to ask questions. Bored, she begins to speculate about her neighbours and the empty flat above her. At first she believes the rumours that it is used as a lover's tryst. Then a darker truth begins to unfold.

K19M: MARAI, Sandor

Embers

Penguin, 2001, 249pp (fiction)

'As darkness settles on a forgotten castle at the foot of the Carpathian mountains, two men sit down to a final meal together. They have not seen one another in forty-one years. At their last meeting, in the company of a beautiful woman, an unspoken act of betrayal left all three lives shattered... It is time to talk of old passions and that last, fateful meeting' (book cover).

I05: BOYLAN, Clare

Emma

Brown Little Brown, 2003, 480pp (fiction)

When Charlotte Bronte died in 1855, she had begun a new novel. Almost 150 years later Clare Boylan has turned the fragments into a story of mystery, atmosphere and page turning suspense.

I64b: McEWAN, Ian

Enduring Love

Vintage, 1998, 247pp (fiction)

An out-of-control air balloon with a child still on board sends several men rushing to prevent a catastrophe. How this affects the lives of the rescuers is the essence of the novel. Filled with surprises, suspense and tension, the book is difficult to put down.

I02c: BARNES, Julian

England, England

Picador, 1998, 266pp (fiction)

Always full of outrageous ideas, Julian Barnes is a writer who keeps his tongue firmly in his cheek. Humour and robust language do not detract from his philosophical messages. Here he tackles perception and illusion, marketing and tourism, reality and truth. Imagine visiting all the main tourist attractions of England on the Isle of Wight. Save yourself the bother of travelling, you can see it all comfortably in a few days.

I54b: KNEALE, Matthew

English Passengers

Penguin, 462pp (fiction)

In 1857, the Rev Geoffrey Wilson charts a sailing ship bound for Tasmania to look for the true site of the Garden of Eden. Unknown to the Reverend, the ship is on the run from the Customs authorities as it is implicated in smuggling activities. Another surprise awaits the passengers when they arrive in Tasmania where the aboriginal tribes are attempting to defend themselves from genocide.

K22b: ONDAATJE, Michael

The English Patient

Penguin, 1993, 301pp (fiction)

Set in Europe just after WWII and is about a small group of survivors who find themselves thrown together in a deserted villa. All damaged in one way or another; these characters make their way through physical and emotional trauma and discover forms of peace. Poetical, full of extravagant language and journeys into the soul.

E62: STONEY, Barbara

Enid Blyton

Hodder & Stoughton, 1974, 220pp (non fiction)

Enid Blyton maintained a certain anonymity throughout her life, which Stoney has overcome. Her background in teaching, her religious struggle, her love affairs, her husband's alcoholism, her admission of intellectual pride and her incredible photographic memory all go to make this book good discussion material.

H5: BAIL, Murray

Eucalyptus

Text, 1999, 255pp (fiction)

This unusual book took Bail ten years to write. A gentleman in a country town has an unusually lovely daughter. His problem is how to choose a husband for her. He is a collector of Eucalyptus trees and has an enormous collection of them. He decides that the first man to identify all the trees can have his daughter's hand in marriage. Won the 1999 Commonwealth Award.

E34: KEENAN, Brian

An Evil Cradling

Vintage, 1993, 296pp (non fiction)

Brian Keenan, a fiery working class Irishman, went to Beirut in 1985 for a change of scene from his native Belfast. He became headline news when he was kidnapped by fundamentalist Shi'ite militiamen waging a war against the West. John McCarthy, another hostage, and Keenan bond, surviving solitary confinement, cruel beatings and the horror of not knowing when, or if, they were going to be freed. This book gives a searing personal account of the trauma of being held hostage. A powerful book.

I71a: PYM, Barbara

Excellent Women

Jonathan Cape, 1980, 256pp (fiction)

Pym's writing deals with the minutiae of the everyday lives of ordinary women. Her subject here is women in the 1950's in Britain and what it was like to be aged 30 and unmarried. Written with wit and accuracy.

J12F: FOER, Jonathan Safran

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close

Published 2005, 326pp (fiction)

Nine year old Oskar Schell is an inventor; Francophile, letter writer; pacifist, amateur astronomer; romantic, detective, collector of butterflies and much more. When his father is killed in the September 11th attacks he sets out to solve the mystery of a key he discovers in his father's closet. A unique read with pathos and humour.

F

H68C: SCOTT, Rosie

Faith Singer

Hodder, 2003, 327pp (fiction)

This is the story of Faith, a rock singer who lives in Kings Cross, Sydney, and of Angel, a young homeless girl addicted to heroin working on the streets. The story chronicles their friendship and gives insights into the inner life of a woman who has lead an interesting life tinged with tragedy. Despite its gritty subject matter, it is ultimately a story of hope. Not one for the gentle reader – occasional coarse language.

K11b: HORN, Shifra

The Fairest Among Women

Judy Piatkus, 2001, 356pp (fiction)

Rosa's start in life takes place against the sound of shells and guns. As a child, she moves into a Jerusalem home so recently vacated by its previous Arab occupants that they have left a meal on the table. Though a prophecy forecasts that she will have four husbands, nothing prepares her for the diverse life she is to lead. A blend of family saga and magic realism.

E66a: YEN MAH, Adeline

Falling Leaves

Penguin, 1997, 277pp (non fiction)

Set against the background of changing political times, Mah describes her painful childhood. The youngest child of a wealthy father, she suffers emotional deprivation when he remarries after the death of her mother. In spite of all the difficult times, Adeline went on to make a successful career for herself. All the changes that occurred in China and how they affected her family are part of the patchwork of this well told and moving tale.

I71b: RANKIN, Ian

The Falls

Orion, 2001, 479pp (fiction)

Complex mystery story, of a missing heiress, based on the real life discovery of carved wooden dolls found at Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh in 1836. Themes include the dilemmas facing police officers and the difficulties of being a female in power. Great mix of contemporary issues and the mysterious history of Edinburgh.

H68A: SCOTT, Margaret

Family Album

Vintage, 2000, 523pp (fiction)

A compelling and complex story of parallel lives. When Louie's father dies, she discovers he had many secrets and starts to research his life in Victorian London.

J28d: MISTRY, Rohinton

Family Matters

Faber and Faber, 2002, 487pp (fiction)

Set in Bombay in the 1990s. A Parsi family is torn between tradition, duty and love. Themes include the reversal of roles between generations as people age and the effect poverty has on all sectors of modern India.

G02: BARBALET, Margaret

Far From A Low Gutter Girl

Published 1983, 283pp (non fiction)

Barbalet writes about the girl state wards of South Australia between 1887 and 1940. The book contains their letters to the departments in S.A. It offers insights into the world of poverty and what life was like for orphans.

K18b: LEON, Donna

Fatal Remedies

William Heinemann, 1999, 232pp (fiction)

Poses a number of moral questions that are interesting. Commissario Guido Brunetti is called out to find that his wife has committed an act of vandalism. Once the media discover Brunetti's wife is charged with vandalism, they will not leave him alone. His career and his personal life collide and he has to sort out the problems.

H5A: BALLOU, Emily

Father Lands

Picador, 2002, 349pp (fiction)

The impact of separation on children, role of fathers and racial issues, seen from the perspective from two children from different racial backgrounds. Set in America. Unique literary style. Interesting insights into the role of fathers.

D23a: STORR, Anthony

Feet of Clay

Harper Collins, 1997, 232pp (non fiction)

An interesting and illuminating book that looks not only at the deluded followers of gurus, but also at gurus themselves. Charisma might be a gift of the gods, but it is a gift that can be taken back. Storr has combined readability and scholarly insight in a topic that intrigues and frightens many.

I86d: TREVOR, William

Felicia's Journey

Penguin, 1994, 213pp (fiction)

"You're beautiful," Johnny told her. And so, full of hope seventeen-year-old Felicia crosses the Irish Sea to England to find her lover and tell him she is pregnant. Vividly and with heart-aching insight Trevor traces her desperate search through the post-industrial Midlands.

K23c: PEREZ-REVERTE, Arturo

The Fencing Master

Published 1998, 212pp (fiction)

Jaime Astarloa, an honourable man, teaches fencing to young men of noble and/or expensive houses. Living in relative poverty himself, Astarloa leads a quiet, predictable life. The peace is shattered by the arrival of a young woman.

I57b: LESSING, Doris

The Fifth Child

Paladin, 1989, 159pp (fiction)

Harriet and David are so happy with their four children and their big house, just made for a big old-fashioned family. They are so happy that they plan a fifth child, not realising that the pregnancy will be very different. This book can be read on many levels. A riveting read.

D09: GARNER, Helen

The First Stone

Published 1995, 222pp (non fiction)

One morning in August 1992, I opened the Age at breakfast time and read that the Master of Melbourne University's Ormond College was up before a magistrate: a student had accused him of having put his hand on her breast while they were dancing. All morning at work I kept thinking about it. I got on the phone to women friends my age ... They had all noticed the item and been unsettled by it. Has feminism come to this? (Book jacket) Helen Garner was determined to discover the truths behind the public clash.

E57A: PILKINGTON, Doris / GARIMARA, Nugi

Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence

University of Queensland Press, 2002, 136pp (non fiction)

Based on the true story of three Aboriginal children who escaped from the Moore River Native Settlement in Western Australia in the 1930s. They travelled 1600 kilometres on foot, along the rabbit proof fence, to their homes in Jigalong. This inspiring story was adapted into a critically acclaimed film. "This is a marvellous adventure story and thriller; celebrating courage and the resilience of the human heart" (Phillip Noyce, Director of 'Rabbit-Proof Fence').

K29a: TAMARO, Susanna

Follow Your Heart

Minerva, 1995, 163pp (fiction)

An elderly Italian grandmother writes from her home in Trieste to her granddaughter in America. With details of her daily life and advice for the future. A beautiful novel that is relevant to us all.

M4: DEWOSKIN, Rachel

Foreign Babes in Beijing: Behind the Scenes of a New China

Granta, 2005, 332pp (non fiction)

Rachel DeWoskin arrived in Beijing in 1994 to work for an American PR firm. She ends up starring in a soap opera that is watched by six hundred million viewers. Her group of American and Chinese friends witnessed vast changes sweeping through China. This account of a young woman's life in a different culture raises important questions about the modern world.

H13: CLARK, Marcus

For the Term of His Natural Life

Collins, 1874, 440pp (fiction)

This is the famous account of convict life at Port Arthur and on Norfolk Island. A novel of social protest that has become a classic.

E20: FACEY, A.B. (Bert)

A Fortunate Life

Penguin, 1981, 422pp (non fiction)

Classic Australian autobiography. Voted one of the top 100 books in a recent ABC poll. Facey recounts his life, and we learn much about the Australia of yesteryear. Facey recounts the hardships of being orphaned at age eight, fighting at Gallipoli, struggling on the land during the depression, losing his son in WWII and the loss of his wife. Yet he manages to look on the bright side of life. An extraordinary ordinary man.

I06C: BENNETT, Alan

Four Stories

Profile Books, 2006, 282pp (fiction)

Alan Bennett's four hugely admired short stories are playful, perceptive and immensely funny. The stories include The Laying on of Hands, The Clothes They Stood up In, Father! Father! Burning Bright and The Lady in the Van.

E16A: DeNEEFE, Janet

Fragrant Rice: My Continuing Love Affair With Bali: A Tale of Passion, Marriage and Food

Flamingo, 2003, 241 pp (non fiction)

The story of an Australian woman who runs a restaurant in Bali and is married to a Balinese man. Provides insights into Balinese culture – rituals, myths, and food plus a small section on reactions to the Bali Bombing. Warning! This book contains recipes. The author conveys her love for Bali and its people and brings to life the sights and smells of the island.

DI4A: LEVITT, Steven D. and DUBNER, Stephen J.

Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything

Allen Lane, 2005, 242pp (non fiction)

What? A funny and entertaining book about economics? Can such a thing be? Yes! Economic whiz kid Stephen Dubner shows you the world as you have never seen it before. He answers the questions you never thought of asking: Why do drug pushers still live with their mums? What do real estate agents and the Ku Klux Klan have in common? Does your child's name affect their chances in life?

E24: GYATSO, Tenzin (the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet)

Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama of Tibet

Abacus, 1998, 324pp (non fiction)

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet describes what it was like to grow up revered as a deity in Tibet. He reveals his feelings about his role and offers insights into the mysteries of Tibetan Buddhism. His Holiness The Dalai Lama also discusses the world leaders he has known. A very readable and moving story with touches of humour.

K18M: McCALL Smith, Alexander

Friends, Lovers, Chocolate

Little Brown, 2005, 277pp (fiction)

Mystery and philosophy without violence. Isabel Dalhousie, an Edinburgh philosopher, seeks to solve the mystery surrounding a man who has recently had a heart transplant and is now having memories that cannot be rationally explained. Along the way, Isabel has time to think about friendships and temptations, including her attraction to a younger man.

E37L: LEROUX, Marie-Paule

A Frog in the Billabong: A French Woman in Tasmania

Littlefox, 234pp (non fiction)

Marie-Paule Leroux tells many humorous and often moving stories of the ups and downs of setting up her gourmet food business in Tasmania. Originally written in French for French readers this book recounts an eleven year personal journey via a discovery tour of Tasmania – its history, people and environment. Insightful comments about Australian culture.

M06c: SETH, Vikram

From Heaven Lake

Phoenix, 1983, 178pp (non fiction)

This is a personal account of Seth's travels through Tibet. He did not know much about the country, but obviously overcame the language barriers to make friends on his journey. Reading the novel is like hearing a friend recall an interesting journey.

C14: WARNER, Marina

From the Beast to the Blonde

Chatto & Windus, 1994, 418pp (non fiction)

Marina Warner has peeled the onion layers of the meaning of our mythical past to discover the demons deep in our collective psyches. What is so important about our hair? Why are wolves always evil? Why was a step-mother always wicked? This book is a two month read, one where you can dip into one section and savour the anticipation of the next.

M01: DALRYMPLE, William

From the Holy Mountain

Flamingo, 1998, 483pp (non fiction)

Historical, travelogue. In AD587, two monks set off on an extraordinary journey that would take them in an arc across the entire Byzantine world, from the shores of the Bosphorus to the sand dunes of Egypt. William Dalrymple set off to retrace their footsteps.

K19b: MICHAELS, Anne

Fugitive Pieces

Bloomsbury, 1997, 294pp (fiction)

Set in Poland, Greece and Canada. Startlingly beautiful and enchants the reader with its use of exquisite language and metaphors. It tells the interlocking stories of two men from different generations whose lives have been transformed by war. Enthralling.

G

H45b: LONDON, Joan

Gilgamesh

Picador, 2002, 256pp (fiction)

Moving between rural Australia, London, the Caucasus and the Middle East, from the last days of the First World War to the years following the Second, Joan London's stunning novel examines what happens when we strike out into the world, and how, like Gilgamesh, we find our way home. Includes the tale of Gilgamesh, the legendary king of Uruk in ancient Mesopotamia who went on a journey to search for the secret of eternal life.

J08: CHEVALIER, Tracy

Girl with a Pearl Earring

HarperCollins, 2000, 249pp (fiction)

Beautifully written historical fiction. The story centers on the possible life of the anonymous girl in a painting by the mysterious 17th century Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer.

E02b: BLACKMAN, Barbara

Glass after Glass

Penguin, 1997, 400pp (non fiction)

Autobiography of well-known literary figure takes us from her early childhood in Brisbane, to becoming an artists' model for some of Australia's most talented artists, and to eventually becoming a dynamic force in many areas of Australian society. We are given a rare insight into artistic circles of the fifties and sixties in Australia: Nolan, the Boyds and Barry Humphries to name a few. Being married to Charles Blackman, the famous painter, for thirty years, and coping with sight problems life was often a struggle for the author. This inspirational memoir will charm and inspire.

H46c LOMER, Kathryn

The God in the Ink

UQP, 2001, 221pp (fiction)

Set in Tasmania and Japan. A story of people trying to make sense of their personal and family histories. A contemporary novel interwoven with historical stories. Includes details of the lives of female pearl divers, descriptions of Japanese ink painting and the contrasts between Australian and Japanese cultures. A very sensual poetic read, almost Zen-like in parts.

K27a: ROY, Arundhati

The God of Small Things

Flamingo, 1997, 339pp (fiction)

A fascinating mix of Indian history and mysticism. Strong narrative and impressive use of words and images create a rich, compelling story. The Kochamma family are from Kerala, they are educated, anglicised and by religion are Christians.

D13a: LANE, Terry

GOD: The Interview

Published 1993, 129pp (non fiction)

This could be considered a deeply irreverent work to some and a stimulating confrontation to others. Terry Lane has interviewed many famous people with diverse talents, but none as famous and talented as God. If you do not agree with the thesis put forward by Lane, he invites you to write your own.

E60S: SARA, Sally

Gogo Mama: a Journey into the Lives of Twelve African Women

Macmillan, 2007, 345pp (non fiction)

Gogo Mama is a journey of discovery into the lives of a dozen very different women... While introducing these inspiring women, award-winning journalist Sally Sara takes us on a trip across Africa, in all its complexity – from the frenetic townships of Johannesburg, to a cliff-top village in Mali; from the horror of the frontline of war in the Sudan, to the glamour of Cairo nightclubs.

H45C: LONDON, Joan

The Good Parents

Vintage Books, 2008, 351pp (fiction)

As Toni and Jacob search for their daughter Maya in Melbourne, everything in their lives is brought into question. They recall the dreams and ideals, the betrayals and choices of their pasts – choices with unexpected and irrevocable consequences. Contemporary Australian story with strong characters and a touch of Buddhist philosophy thrown into the mix.

Bl6: FOSSEY, Dian

Gorillas in the Mist

Penguin, 1983, 304pp (non fiction)

The Mountain Gorilla is growing smaller in number. Fossey spent thirteen years living with three generations of this endangered species. Who should live, the local tribes or the gorillas? What should a government do in this dilemma? Her findings are fascinating and enlightening.

H21 D: FLANAGAN, Richard

Gould's Book of Fish: A Novel in Twelve Fish

Picador, 2001, 446pp (fiction)

An internationally acclaimed award-winning novel. The story of the real life character of William Buelow Gould, prisoner and artist, sent to a penal colony (Sarah Island) in the 1830s. Gould is given orders to paint pictures of the marine life of the island.

I19D: DICKENS, Charles

Great Expectations

Penguin, (1860-61) 1996, 514pp (fiction)

A terrifying encounter with an escaped convict in a graveyard on the wild Kent marshes; a summons, to meet the bitter, decaying Miss Havisham and her beautiful, cold-hearted ward Estella; the sudden generosity of a mysterious benefactor – these form a series of events that changes the orphaned Pip's life forever; and he eagerly abandons his humble origins to begin a new life as a gentleman.

H32B: HAZZARD, Shirley

The Great Fire

Virago, 2003, 314pp (fiction)

Tells the story of how people build new lives after war - in this case, the aftermath of the bombing in Japan during the Second World War. At its centre is a classic old-fashioned love story between an English war hero and a young Australian girl. Set in post war Japan, Hong Kong, England and New Zealand, Hazzard's vivid descriptions convey the atmosphere of these locations and the essence of post war feelings. Winner of the 2004 Miles Franklin Award.

J14: FITZGERALD, F. Scott

The Great Gatsby

Penguin, (1925) 2000, 177pp (fiction)

The great American novel of the roaring-20's. A generation of young men return disillusioned from WWI. The old civil certainties of life were shattered, but love, lust and hatred remain constant human traits. In this setting, Jay Gatsby and Daisy rekindle their erotic love after Gatsby's five year absence. The problem is Daisy is now married to wealthy Tom Buchanan. Tensions mount. It takes one drunken night, one error in judgement and one lie to make tragedy strike.

D14: LEWIS, C.S.

A Grief Observed

Published 1961, 60pp (non fiction)

Begun after his wife's death from a long and painful illness, the journal might itself have been an instrument of escape. Its honest dissection is the negation of self-pity. Lewis invites not sympathy, but co-operation in his attempt to argue out a grief. The author of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* shows the compassionate, personal side of his nature.

E57P: PUNG, Alice (ed.)

Growing up Asian in Australia

Black Inc, 2008, 351pp (non fiction)

Asian-Australians tell their own stories with courage and humour. Here are well-known authors and exciting new voices, spanning several generations and drawn from all over Australia. They tell tales of leaving home, falling in love, coming out and finding one's feet. A young Cindy Pan vows to win every single category of Nobel Prize. Tony Ayres blows a kiss to a skinhead and lives to tell the tale. Benjamin Law has a close encounter with some angry Australian fauna, and Kylie Kwong makes a moving pilgrimage to her great-grandfather's Chinese village.

I14c: COBBOLD, Marika

Guppies for Tea

Black Swan, 1993, 287pp (fiction)

Amelia Lindsey loved her granny, Selma, who had been more of a mother to her than her own neurotic one. Gerald had been in love with Amelia, but is now not so sure. Selma was put into an aged care facility, and Amelia knows that she is deeply distressed. Amelia sets out to right wrongs.

J33S: SHAFFER, Mary Ann

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

Allen & Unwin, 2008 (fiction)

It's 1946 and witty newspaper columnist Juliet Ashton receives a letter from Dawsey Adams of Guernsey. Emboldened by their mutual love of books, they begin a correspondence. Dewey is a member of The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, and it's not long before the rest of the members write to Juliet. She comes to know the extraordinary personalities of the Society and their lives under Nazi occupation of the island. A moving tale of post-war friendship, love and books told with humour.

H

E66c: WRIGHT, Judith

Half a Lifetime

Text Publishing, 1999, 296pp (non fiction)

Autobiography that includes some of her poems and family photographs. She tells her story as a woman and poet, a mother and lover. What also emerges is her love of the natural environment and commitment to the rights of the Aboriginal people.

K04D: DE KRETZER, Michelle

The Hamilton Case

Vintage, 2003, 369pp (fiction)

Winner of the Tasman Pacific Prize. Commonwealth Writers Prize. Set in Ceylon in the first half of the 20th century. Deals with issues of colonisation and family. Recommended for readers who enjoy characterisation and finding out about history through fiction. Vivid descriptions of an exotic landscape.

H15b: DEMIDENKO/ DARVILLE Helen

The Hand That Signed the Paper

Allen & Unwin, 1994, 157pp (fiction)

Tells the story of Vitaly, a Ukrainian peasant, who endures the destruction of his village and family by Stalin's communism. He welcomes the Nazi invasion in 1941 and willingly enlists in the SS Death Squads to take a horrifying revenge against those he perceives to be his persecutors. This novel was the subject of great controversy, which can only add to group debate.

J03:ATWOOD, Margaret

The Handmaid's Tale

Virago, 1985, 324pp (fiction)

Offred is a national resource. In the Republic of Gilead her viable ovaries make her a precious commodity, and the state allows her only one function: to breed. She carries no name but her Master's, for whose barren wife she must act as a surrogate. But Offred cannot help remembering subversive details of her former life.

K06c:FREDRIKSSON, Marianne

Hanna's Daughters

Orion, 1994, 299pp (fiction)

A gripping Nordic tale that takes us through three generations of Swedish women from the 1880's to the present day. Deals with family relationships, particularly between mothers and daughters. A delightful book, full of honesty with a genuine feeling of being there during all the fortunes that are woven into the tapestry that form part of a family's life.

M06b:THEROUX, Paul

The Happy Isles of Oceania

Penguin, 1992, 541pp (non fiction)

This is a great holiday read and it includes this incredibly popular author's views on Australia. In search of paradise, Theroux finds the closest you can get to it and happiness. Names like Vanuatu, Tonga, Trobriands and Samoa float before the eyes and you start planning your own holiday.

I72ab:RENDELL, Ruth

Harm Done

Hutchinson, 1999, 394pp (fiction)

Two young girls, entirely different from each other, go missing and neither wants to talk about their experiences. As Chief Inspector Wexford tries to get them to talk, a paedophile is released back into the community, and a toddler is abducted from her home.

I75b:SAVILLE, Diana

The Hawk Dancer

Sceptre, 1997, 280pp (fiction)

James Farley runs his business from London. His wife Claire spends most of her time at their home in Herefordshire. Stuart is a member of the SAS and is anxious to make a man of Sam, his shy, timid child. Claire is feeling vulnerable but finds an unexpected outlet when she offers to keep and help train a hawk for Sam.

I35:FRAYN, Michael

Headlong

Faber & Faber, 1999, 393pp (fiction)

Martin Clay, new father, sometime country cottage dweller and wannabe art historian is falling into the pit of temptation. He finds what he thinks is a long-lost Bruegel owned by the local squire and wants it to be his own. Full of humour and insight. Wonderful to discuss and laugh about.

E61:SMITH, Patsy Adam

Hear the Train Blow

Nelson, 1964, 177pp (non fiction)

Set during the Great Depression, this is Smith's classic autobiography of growing up in the bush. Magnificently illustrated, this book is well up to the standard of her other works.

I18:CONRAD, Joseph

Heart of Darkness

Penguin, 1902, 111pp (fiction)

Based on his own experiences as a riverboat captain in the Belgian Congo, Conrad gives insights into both civilised man's corruption after contact with primitive savagery, and the emptiness of life and purpose for the de-tribalised native. Conrad described the Congo colonisation as the "vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience".

H68:SALLIS, Eva

Hiam

Allen & Unwin, 1998, 139pp (fiction)

This contemporary novel takes us on a grief-driven journey. Hiam is an immigrant from Yemen who leaves her new home in Adelaide, for reasons that are unravelled slowly throughout the story, to explore Australia's outback. Confronting the Australian landscape and her intense grief, Hiam forms a new identity.

E20c: FORSTER, Margaret

Hidden Lives

Penguin, 1995, 309pp (non fiction)

A must for lovers of Forster's work. She has written a fascinating memoir of herself, her mother and grandmother, and it could explain the themes of much of her work, which often seem to centre on family life and the rituals of domesticity. At its heart lies a mystery that she is unable to solve: the mystery of her grandmother's illegitimate daughter.

J62D: LYNCH, Jim

The Highest Tide

Bloomsbury, 2006, 248pp (fiction)

Thirteen year old Miles finds a world of wonder as he explores the mud flats of Puget Sound. One night Miles makes a remarkable discovery and becomes a local celebrity pursued by TV crews. A coming-of-age story told with humour. The story has the bigger message about environmental care and appreciating the natural world around us.

H43a: KOCH, Christopher

Highways to a War

Minerva, 1996, 450pp (fiction)

When Mike Langford, a war photographer with a reputation for unusual risk-taking disappears inside Cambodia he becomes a mythic figure in the minds of his friends. The search for Langford explores the personal highways that led him to war and to his ultimate fate.

K14D: KRAUSS, Nicole

The History of Love

Viking, 2005, 253pp (fiction)

Living alone in New York City, Leo Gursky is trying to survive the best he can. Life wasn't always this way. Sixty years ago, in the Polish village where he was born, Leo fell in love and wrote a book. Although he doesn't know it, that book has survived. Fourteen-year-old Alma was named after a character in that book. Leo and Alma's lives intersect in unexpected ways.

M03M: MACDONALD, Sarah

Holy Cow: An Indian Adventure

Bantam Books, 2002, 298pp (non fiction)

Lively and humorous account of contemporary India. Encounters with Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sufis, Sikhs, Parsees, Christians and an assortment of yogis, sadhus, swamis, nuns and Bollywood stars.

M04P: PUNDYK, Grace

**The Honey Spinner: On the Trail of Ancient Honey,
Vanishing Bees and the Politics of Liquid Gold**

Pier 9, 2008, 388pp (non fiction)

This engaging narrative non-fiction tale follows Grace Pundyk's journey from the wild Yemeni deserts to the jungles of Borneo, and from Russia to Tasmania's leatherwood forests, with many other honey-producing destinations in between. Part travelogue, part treatise on the global economics and history of the regions.

E33a: KEENAN, Michael

The Horses Too are Gone

Bantam, 1998, 344pp (non fiction)

Hardship, drought and sleepless nights are all in a day's work for Michael Keegan. Struggling to survive, he drives his stock north of the border. This book will ensure that you find out more about Australia and its many people. This fifth generation cattle farmer will take you into another side of Australia. Has a dingo ever tracked you or had someone try to steal your cattle? We are talking about modern Australia, not the olden days.

B17A HAMLIN, Dr Catherine with John Little

The Hospital by the River

Pan MacMillan, 2001, 308pp (non fiction)

Gynaecologists Catherine and Reg Hamlin left Australia in 1959 on a short contract to establish a midwifery school in Ethiopia. Over 40 years later, Catherine is still there, running one of the most outstanding medical programs in the world. Warning: contains descriptions of fistulae and medical procedures.

K9a: GORDIMER, Nadine

The House Gun

Bloomsbury, 1998, 294pp (fiction)

Gordimer's post-apartheid novel based in the new political climate is excellent. A middle-aged professional couple have to face the horror of their son being arrested and charged with murder. Their world is turned upside down and they become reliant on the brilliant black lawyer who is defending their son.

J12A: DUBUS, Andre

House of Sand and Fog

Hodder Headline, 2000, 365pp (fiction)

A former colonel in the Iranian Air Force and his family tries to settle in California but meet opposition from the locals. It turns both the traditional immigrant success story and a modern love story upside down.

K01: ALLENDE, Isabel

The House of the Spirits

Black Swan, 1985, 491pp (fiction)

It is the women who keep the culture and tradition of a nation in their care. Whether you believe this or not, you will find this South American novel fascinating. Is this novel an allegory for a message that is much deeper than the surface life of a family? The final chapter holds the key.

I44B: HORNBY, Nick

How to be Good

Published 2001, 244pp (fiction)

A painfully funny account of modern marriage and parenthood. What happens when one partner unexpectedly changes from a self centred negative person to a kind, loving moral crusader? It asks some tough moral questions about inequalities and what it means to be a "good" person. Not too much action but plenty of lively conversations.

I

K29S: SLOVO, Gillian

Ice Road

Virago, 2004, 544pp (fiction)

An epic story of Russia seen through the lives of Irina, a cleaner, and Boris, a revolutionary. Set in Leningrad in the 1930's during Stalin's purges, this is a tale of courage, survival, loyalty and love.

H27b: GRENVILLE, Kate

The Idea of Perfection

Picador, 1999, 401pp (fiction)

Douglas Cheeseman is a middle-aged divorcee who is an authority on bridges. Harley Savage has worked her way through three husbands. When Douglas comes to a quiet country town in order to tear down the Bent Bridge, he gets more than he bargained for from Harley.

J11: CRAVEN, Margaret

I Heard the Owl Call My Name

Picador, 1967, 133pp (fiction)

A young priest, given limited time to live, is sent to a Canadian Indian tribe. It is here that he gains an insight into life and philosophically accepts what it has to offer him. A short but memorable novel.

I50e: JOHNSTON, Jennifer

The Illusionist

Penguin, 1995, 219pp (fiction)

This intriguing tale takes us into the life of Stella, married to Martyn the illusionist. A decade into marriage, with a daughter who is completely enchanted by her father, Stella is pushed beyond endurance. The dark side of family life is portrayed in a brilliant and sophisticated manner.

K01c: ALLENDE, Isabel

The Infinite Plan

Flamingo, 1994, 382pp (fiction)

The story of Gregory Reeves, the son of Charles, an itinerant preacher. As a boy, Gregory accepts the endless journeying and poverty that is his family's lot, never questioning his father's homespun philosophy of life - the Infinite Plan. As manhood approaches, Gregory finds himself possessed by a yearning to escape. Gregory's quest takes him first to the killing fields of Vietnam and thence to law school at Berkeley from where he pitches headlong into a hedonistic pursuit of the American Dream.

K04E: DESAI, Kiran

The Inheritance of Loss

Hamish Hamilton, 2006, 325pp (fiction)

Winner of the 2006 Man Booker Prize. "Set in mid-1980s India, on the cusp of the Nepalese movement for an independent state. Jemubhai Popatlal, a retired judge, lives at the foot of the Himalayas, with his granddaughter, Sai, and his cook. The cook's son, Biju, meanwhile, lives miserably as an illegal alien in New York. All of these characters struggle with their cultural identity and the forces of modernization while trying to maintain their emotional connection to one another" (Publishers Weekly Amazon.com 22/1/ 2006).

E29: HOLDEN, Kate

In My Skin: A Memoir

Published 2005, 285pp (non fiction)

Shy bookish Kate comes from a loving middle-class family. She becomes a heroin addict and begins working as a prostitute to support her habit. This is a very honest and direct account of her life with many surprising revelations. The book does contain a great number of sex scenes and strong language at times. Insightful and very well written.

I28b: FITZGERALD, Penelope

Innocence

Flamingo, 1986, 222pp (fiction)

An opaque novel is the latest by Penelope Fitzgerald that can be read on many levels. The Ridolfi family is from ancient noble stock, and its members have had to come to terms with the problems of modern times. A novel within a novel, it is complex and full of eccentric characters.

E64C: SHAKESPEARE, Nicholas

In Tasmania

Vintage, 2004, 374pp (non fiction)

Shakespeare gives us a new account of Tasmania and its past. It is tinged with the personal. Shakespeare discovers he has Tasmanian relatives on both sides of the family: two elderly women, and the corrupt and intriguing Anthony Fenn Kemp. More than history or biography. Very readable.

J34I: RUBENFELD, Jed

The Interpretation of Murder

Headline, 2006, 533pp (fiction)

Literary thriller based on the true events surrounding Sigmund Freud's last visit to New York in 1909. "Rubinfeld's provocative mystery debut . . . [he] renders rich, complex characters, vivid period detail, and prose riddled with heady references to Hamlet. He deftly blends fiction and fact, and his brisk, sinuous plot makes room for playful interpretations of the world according to Freud."--Booklist)

K18O: MATAR, Hisham

In the Country of Men

Viking, 2006, 245pp (fiction)

Set in Libya in the 1970s. Most of the story is told through the eyes of a nine year old boy who has a close relationship with his mother. The family's life becomes directly affected by the brutality of Gaddafi's regime. Explores how this kind of pressure and the will to survive can influence relationships for the better and for the worse. language. Heavy going in parts but also heart-warming with insights into the every day life of a child living in Libya. Short listed for the Mann Booker Prize 2006.

E20D: FLANAGAN, Martin

In Sunshine or in Shadow

Picador, 2002, 237pp (non fiction)

A unique exploration of what it is to find home and to belong. As Flanagan searches for his past and identity, he also explores Tasmanian history and culture. He writes about the lives of famous figures, such as Truganini, as well as his father, siblings and friends. He has a very close connection with indigenous Australians.

I47A: HUXLEY, Aldous

Island Flamingo

Published 1994 (1962), 330pp (fiction)

A brilliant distillation of a lifetime's study and thought. Will Farnaby is shipwrecked on the forbidden island of Pala. Here he meets the serene and enlightened Palanese, who have developed an ideal society by marrying the best of the East with the best of the West. Pala has only one problem: massive untapped oil reserves, and the West want to control it no matter the cost to the Palanese.

I04: BINDING, Tim

Island Madness

Picador, 1998, 360pp (fiction)

Set on the island of Guernsey during WWII this book is about a community and its behaviour under German occupation. There are elements of love, murder, class and dishonesty. Fraternising with the enemy is something we all think we won't do, but would we? This is an enjoyable book, easy to read with a good plot and displays interesting insights into human nature.

E01B: ARMSTRONG, Lance

It's Not About the Bike

Allen & Unwin, 2000, 289pp (non fiction)

This is the story of early success, near fatal cancer, survival, recovery, victory in the 1999, 2000 and 2001 Tour de France, the Sydney Olympics, marriage and first-time fatherhood.

J

HI 1b: CAREY, Peter

Jack Maggs

UQP, 1997, 417pp (fiction)

Jack Maggs returns to the London of his childhood, risking death at the hands of the hangman. Maggs' secret mission is to locate the wealthy young aristocrat who owes his lifestyle to the former convict Maggs. There are surprises at every turn, trickery, disguise, love, suspense and black humour.

E63a: TONKIN, Daryl & LANDON, Carolyn

Jackson's Track

Published 1999, 286pp (non fiction)

In 1936, mixed marriages were frowned upon and created great problems for all family members. In this novel, Daryl and Euphie still manage to find true happiness together in the Australian bush. They set their own agenda and the story that arises is both heart-warming and thought-provoking.

J12D: FOWLER, Karen Joy

The Jane Austen Book Club

Viking, 2004, 288pp (fiction)

Set in America, this is a book about a book group devoted to Jane Austen novels. The lives of the group members are clever reflections of the characters in the novels they discuss. A lighter read.

I08: BRONTE, Charlotte

Jane Eyre

Penguin, (1847) 2006, 578pp (fiction)

Life is tough for Jane Eyre, a spirited but destitute orphan. At a severe orphanage she finds succour and friendship, yet the years pass miserably. Now a grown woman, Jane gains employment as a governess to the illegitimate child of Mr Rochester, a romantic hero to rival Heathcliffe of Wuthering Heights. Jane and Rochester fall in love, and their trials only just begin.

BI6D: GARNER, Helen

Joe Cinque's Consolation

Pan MacMillan, 2004, 328pp (non fiction)

Based on the true story of Joe Cinque, unsuspecting, killed, for no rational reason, by his lover Anu Singh. The rights of the victim's family, the right of an accused to remain silent - it is a fascinating and disturbing story. Poses questions of conscience, responsibility and human evil. Easy to read, and clear.

E13: CRACKNELL, Ruth

Journey from Venice

Penguin, 271pp (non fiction)

This highly readable memoir relates how Ruth and her husband went to Venice in order to have some time to themselves. However, her husband had a severe stroke there, and Ruth had to attend his bedside and organise the journey home. Full of deep insights and an affirmation of love.

H55B: MILLER, Alex

Journey to the Stone Country

Published 2001, 364pp (fiction)

Themes include the recovery of early connections, sense of identity, sacred sites- both black and white and spiritual connections to the Australian landscape. While the 'politics' is not explicit, the union between a black man and white woman provides a metaphor for complete reconciliation - a hope for the future. Winner of the 2003 Miles Franklin Award.

H57A: MURRAY-SMITH, Joanna

Judgement Rock

Published 2000, 200pp (fiction)

Iris, a Botanist in search of a rare orchid arrives on an island in the Bass Strait. She is seduced by the landscape's strange beauty and by the Lighthouse Keeper. A sailor is shipwrecked adding new tensions and moral dilemmas for the characters. Interesting questions about relationships especially marriages. Offers insights into what it could be like to live on a remote island. Wild and wonderful setting.

F08: ROBERTSON, Geoffrey

The Justice Game

Vintage, 1999, 386pp (non fiction)

The well-known host of Hypotheticals, which we have on tape, is as easy to read as he is to watch. His career is littered with famous trials and equally famous people, and his campaign for equal equality is well known. Full of humour and intelligent observations.

E29H: HANCOCK, Sheila

Just Me

Bloomsbury, 2008, 274pp (non fiction)

Just Me is a book about moving on. It is also about looking back, and looking anew. Honest, insightful and wonderfully down-to-earth, Sheila – whether puzzled in Budapest or spoilt in Thailand, ravished by Venice or persuaded by Berlin – is a woman seizing the future with wit, gusto and curiosity on her own.

EO5: BURNS, Robin

Just Tell Them I Survived: Women in Antarctica

Allen & Unwin, 2001, 232pp (non fiction)

This is a story of women in Antarctica: the good times and the bad, the struggles with isolation and loneliness, the friendships and the fun, and the tactics women have developed to survive the physical and social challenges of this 'last frontier'.

K

H14ab: CROSS, David

Kill All the Judges

ABC Books, 1985, 189pp (fiction)

The Pig and Whistle was a very popular venue for liaisons of one nature or another. The judges of Melbourne had a penchant for liaisons in their youth. It is their past that comes back to haunt the judiciary with hilariously fatal results. This highly amusing book is good fun.

D18E: NITSCHKE, Dr Philip and STEWART, Dr Fiona

Killing Me Softly: Voluntary Euthanasia and the Road to the Peaceful Pill

Penguin, 2005, 355pp (non fiction)

Examination of the current euthanasia debate. Includes some personal background about Philip Nitschke.

E60b: ROBERTS, Barney

A Kind of Cattle

AWM Collins, 1985, 189pp (non fiction)

Awarded the Premier's Literary Award (NSW) Special Award for the International Year of Peace, Barney Roberts describes life as a POW of the Germans during the Second World War. Twenty-one when he was taken prisoner, Barney Roberts chronicles his journey to maturity and awareness under these extreme circumstances. A yarn filled with irony, humour and a wonderful philosophy of life.

E43ec: MATTINGLEY, Christobel

King of the Wilderness: the Life of Deny King

Text Publishing, 2001, 329pp (non fiction)

With his keen blue eyes, husky drawl and quirky humour, Deny King made an indelible impression on everyone who met him. Born in 1909, King made his home at Melaleuca in Tasmania's remote South-West, one of the most spectacular and rugged terrains in the world. He was a tin miner, an environmentalist, a painter and a collector who had species named after him. He built his own airstrip and regularly sailed around some of Australia's most treacherous coast.

E54AB: PHELAN, Nancy

A Kingdom By The Sea

Imprint, 1980, 179pp (non fiction)

Filled with the sparkling water of Sydney Harbour and peopled like an aquarium with the most delightfully odd aunts, parents and celebrities as they appeared to the irreverent eyes of the young, A Kingdom by the Sea is Nancy Phelan's evocation of a childhood spent at The Spit with excursions to Palm Beach, Hunters Hill and Cobbity.

M07: THEROUX, Paul

The Kingdom By the Sea

Hamish Hamilton, 1983, 303pp (non fiction)

Although resident in London, American Theroux writes about England in a highly controversial manner. Surely, he must have searched high and low to find the worst possible hotel in Wales. His generalisations about Britain have incensed many and some claim he is "wildly prejudiced" in his generalisations.

K32A: YOSHIMOTO, Banana

Kitchen

Faber and Faber, 1993, 150pp (fiction)

Juxtaposes two tales about mothers, transsexuality, bereavement, kitchens, love and tragedy in contemporary Japan. Winner of two of Japan's most prestigious literary prizes.

HI IC: HOSSEINI, Khaled

The Kite Runner

Bloomsbury, 2003, 324pp (fiction)

"Hosseini's delicate touch is perhaps not what we might have expected from [Afghanistan] a country we have come to associate with swashbuckling warrior tribesmen and undercover terrorist activities. The novel concentrates instead on the heartland of male friendship, a highly emotional and volatile territory" (Avril Caney, notewriter).

L

J38d: TYLER, Anne

Ladder of Years

Vintage, 1996, 325pp (fiction)

When Cordelia Grinstead disappears, her family cannot remember what she was wearing. She walked away from them on the beach when the family was on holiday. What she finds when she begins a new identity, is that she can't get away from herself. Her husband is devastated as is her family, but they never ever expressed their feelings. Cordelia felt taken for granted.

I4d: DAY, Marele

Lambs of God

Allen & Unwin, 1997, 263pp (fiction)

A young career-conscious priest visits an isolated monastery with the intention of evaluating it for sale and development into a holiday resort. There he finds three nuns closeted from the world. The nuns live an idyllic life structured around daily tasks. The action is built up by a series of small incidents that reduce the priest to an increasingly helpless state. This novel is both a contemporary fairy tale and a psychological thriller.

J34d: SHIELDS, Carol

Larry's Party

Fourth Estate, 1997, 339pp (fiction)

Life is a series of decisions and Larry Weller, a passionate lover of mazes somehow seems to make the wrong ones. Life is like a maze: take a wrong turn and you're lost. Larry is a modern man with all the modern problems including an ex-wife. He really does want to be found. This is a satisfying book that highlights what it is to be a sensitive man of today. This poignant tale is beautifully written and good for discussion.

H55a: MILLER, Patti

The Last One Who Remembers

Published 1997, 255pp (fiction)

Combines fiction, personal history and essay to create the kind of stories that can shape our lives. Written in short story format, but with continuity of character and theme, it tells the story of her great-aunts with warmth and intimacy. Difficult at times but gives insight into the meaning of place and family in our personal world.

I80d: SWIFT, Graham

Last Orders

Picador, 1996, 294pp (fiction)

Four men once close to Jack Dodds, a London butcher, meet to carry out his last wish: to have his ashes scattered into the sea. For reasons best known to herself Jack's widow, Amy, declines to join them. On the surface the tale of a simple if increasingly bizarre day's outing, Last Orders is Graham Swift's most poignant exploration of the complexity and courage of ordinary lives. Winner of the 1996 Booker Prize.

I80b: SWIFT, Graham

Learning to Swim and Other Stories

Picador, 1982, 146pp (fiction)

A selection of short stories which are thought-provoking and moving. Dealing with human interaction and human frailties, this brilliant writer makes you want to read on. What makes people do the things they do?

J29AB: MOORE, Brian

Lies of Silence

Arrow, 1986, 251pp (fiction)

When the IRA ordered Dillon to park his car in the carport of the hotel in Belfast, he knew he was planting a bomb that would kill and maim dozens. But the IRA also told him that if he didn't do it, they would kill his wife. This gripping book will keep you on the edge of your seat and open up a wide arena for discussion.

K03: COETZEE, J.M.

The Life and Times of Michael K

Secker & Warburg, 1983, 250pp (fiction)

Coetzee writes about a simple man, who, by his very simplicity, becomes a hero. Born disabled, this indomitable man remains a memorable character in South African literature. Living in a war-torn country, he survives everything.

E66W: WYNDHAM, Susan

Life in his Hands

Picador, 2008, 295pp (non-fiction)

The remarkable true story of a medical maverick (Charlie Teo – celebrated and controversial neurosurgeon) and a pianist/composer Aaron McMillan who is facing death as a result of a brain tumour. "A fast-moving, warmly sensitive account of a thrilling double act" (Helen Garner).

J26e: MARTEL, Yann

Life of Pi

Canongate, 2002, 319pp (fiction)

After the tragic sinking of a cargo ship, one solitary lifeboat remains. On board is a 16-year-old Indian boy, a hyena, a zebra, an orang-utan and a Bengal tiger. Winner of The Man Booker Prize 2002.

I48D: JAMES, P.D.

The Lighthouse

Faber and Faber, 2005, 323pp (fiction)

Classic English Crime Mystery set on a secluded island off the Cornish coast. This island has a history of piracy and cruelty. Now privately owned, it offers respite to over-stressed men and women in positions of high authority who require privacy and guaranteed security. However, the peace of the island is destroyed when one of the high-profile visitors is murdered.

H27a: GRENVILLE, Kate

Lilian's Story

Penguin, 1986, 211pp (fiction)

This is the story of Lilian Singer, born into a stifling household which totally fails to subdue her. Madness, cruelty and sexuality permeate the household but Lilian's sights are set on education, love and – finally – her own transcendent forms of independence. She becomes an eccentric true to her own self.

E20E: FLANAGAN, Arch and FLANAGAN, Martin

The Line

One Day Hill, 2005, 191pp (non-fiction)

Arch Flanagan has written four separate pieces about his experience of working on the Burma Railway. His son Martin provides additional commentary as he comes to terms with this part of his family's history and the impact it has had on their lives.

H15D: DEAN, Geoffrey

The Literary Lunch

Roaring Forties Press, 2004, 196pp (fiction)

Short stories by a well-respected, prize-winning Tasmanian author. The stories are thought-provoking, conveying the complexities of the human condition. Unpretentious with touches of humour.

J33a: RICCI, Nino

Lives of the Saints

Minerva, 1990, 237pp (fiction)

This traditional tale of tragic inevitability is set in a remote village in the Apennines, after the War, when half the men, including Vittorio's father, have gone to Canada. Vittorio tells of his mother's expulsion from the village for being too proud and bringing bad luck.

J37B: TARTT, Donna

The Little Friend

Published 2003, 576pp (fiction)

Much requested author by groups. A pacey, literary mystery/thriller. A nine-year-old child is found hanged in his family's garden. His murderer is never found. Twelve years later his sister, Harriet, who was six months old when he died, determines to take revenge on the man whom she believes killed him. Tartt has called it "a book about children – but not for children". Not for the gentle reader.

K04S: DE SAINT-EXUPERY, Antoine

The Little Prince

Egmont, (1945) 2002, 101pp (fiction)

The Little Prince lives on an asteroid with three active volcanoes and some invasive Boabab trees. We meet him in the Sahara Desert where he befriends the pilot of a downed light aeroplane. In this enchanting parable, the author weaves a deceptively simple tale about the human condition. A classic.

H36: JINKS, Catherine

Little White Secrets

Published 1997, 352pp (fiction)

David lives in Sydney. Seeking some change in his life he goes as an exchange school teacher to a small fishing town in Canada. The problems of a difficult climate and small community attitudes challenge him. On the surface everything is fine, but underneath there are secrets.

E43b: MANDELA, Nelson

Long Walk to Freedom

Abacus, 1994, 750pp (non fiction)

South Africa's first black president, who personifies the struggle for human rights and racial equality, recounts his life. Mandela is clear, eloquent and inspiring.

E60R: H60C: ROBINSON, Wilf

Looking for Bandy

Wilfred T. Robinson, 2000, 221pp (non fiction)

Based on the author's experiences in Tasmania and the Northern Territory between 1972 and 1976. This was a very spiritual journey for the author and his wife. Wilf felt a strong connectedness with the generations of his ancestors and a sense of shared human spirit between white and aboriginal Australians.

M01a: BRYSON, Bill

The Lost Continent

Abacus, 1989, 293pp (non fiction)

Bryson at his best, wandering through America and re-discovering why he left the continent. Starting at Des Moines, he travels from one small town to another, chatting about the history of America, informing and amusing his readers at every turn.

K07A: GARCIA MARQUEZ, Gabriel

Love in the Time of Cholera

Penguin, 2004, 348pp (fiction)

Time, love, age, memory, death, chaos, passion and the spirit of place. Set on the Caribbean coast of South America between 1860 and 1926. A challenging but fascinating read. Gabriel Garcia Marquez was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982.

J33B: SEBOLD, Alice

The Lovely Bones

Picador, 2002, 328pp (fiction)

Compelling and at times disturbing story of the murder of a 14 year old girl and the effect this event has on her family and friends. The narrator is the murdered girl telling the story from heaven. It is an interesting mix of murder mystery, the nature of grief and family relationships. Not for the faint hearted.

M

K05: FLAUBERT, Gustave

Madame Bovary

Penguin, 1950, 361pp (fiction)

Emma Bovary, bored with marriage, commits adultery and suicides. This book is the crowning achievement in the development of the novel in history. Flaubert takes us into the mind of Emma to evaluate her life.

E43G: McCUTCHEON, Sandy

The Magicians Son: A Search for Identity

Viking, 2005, 312pp (non fiction)

An interesting and well-written story of a much-travelled media personality's life. It is also the story of his search for his identity. McCutcheon was adopted at the age of two and never felt he belonged in his new family. The author keeps the reader in suspense as he searches for his blood family and entertains us with the story of his travels and relationships along the way. Interesting references to his attempts to start at alternative lifestyle on Illusion Farm near Devonport in the late 1970s.

H68D: SALLIS, Eva

Mahjar

Allen & Unwin, 2003, 164pp (fiction)

"These stories are about the differences between Lebanese and Australian culture: between parents and children, new lives and old. With warmth, humour and insight, Sallis's eloquent prose captures the pain as well as the joys of living in a new land."
(<http://www.safecom.org.au/mahjar:htm>)

L02: SACKS, Oliver

The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat

Duckworth, 1986, 233pp (non fiction)

This is a collection of literate yet authoritative case studies by a neurologist who has been on the best seller lists. These are fascinating accounts of aberration, excess and loss of faculties. Sacks' four books have made him famous.

J35a: SINGER, Isaac Bashevis

The Manor

Penguin, 1967, 408pp (fiction)

The book focuses on the world of Calman Jacoby, his daughters and their problematic marriages. Devout and traditionalist, yet passionately proud and ambitious, Calman finds himself caught up in a strange reversal, a rare golden era of Jewish opportunity.

101a: AUSTEN, Jane

Mansfield Park

Penguin, 1814, 457pp (fiction)

Margaret Drabble sees Mansfield Park as Austen's most psychologically penetrating work, in which Austen asks herself the most searching questions about the survival of self in society.

M03K: KOCH, Christopher

The Many-Coloured Land: A Return to Ireland

Published 2002, 246pp (non fiction)

A wonderful combination of memoir; travel, music and Tasmanian convict and Irish immigrant history. Koch and his folksinger friend Brian Mooney journey through Ireland seeking the story of their pasts.

E39: LI, Cunxin

Mao's Last Dancer

Viking, 2003, 445pp (non fiction)

The story of a poor peasant boy's journey from hardship to the world of ballet. Includes his defection to the west and his transition to his new life in Australia. An inspirational story of courage and dignity.

E66D: WINCHESTER, Simon

The Map that Changed the World

Penguin, 2002, 338pp (non fiction)

International bestseller by the author of The Surgeon of Crowthorne. Fascinating story of William Smith's twenty year obsession with mapping the geology of Britain. This map changed the way we see the world. Much requested by book groups. "An exciting tale ... One leaves this book enlightened, moved and entertained" Spectator (Book Jacket)

110E: BROOKS, Geraldine

March

Fourth Estate, HarperCollins, 2005, 346pp (fiction)

Geraldine Brooks' take on the story of the absent father from Little Women. Based on the character and experiences of Louisa May Alcott's father; an idealistic abolitionist, during the early years of the civil war. How can someone relate their war experiences to their loved ones at home? What is freedom?

H8: BROOKSBANK, Anne

Marriage Acts

Penguin, 2000, 305pp (fiction)

When a letter bomb explodes in a leafy Sydney street, it's meant for David McKinnon, a Family Court judge. It shatters his comfortable world and leads to many questions within his own family. While police carry out a formal investigation, David begins his own hunt, desperate to protect his disintegrating family. As he gets closer to his would-be murderer he is forced to sit in judgement on himself.

H46a: MAITLAND, Barry

The Marx Sisters

Published 1994, 314pp (fiction)

Jerusalem Lane is a hangover - a little piece of Dickensian London untouched by development, its inhabitants mainly refugees from the cauldron of pre-war Central Europe. Could elderly Meredith Winterbottom really have been killed for the politics of another age? As Detective Sergeant Kathy Kolla delves into the lane's eccentric melting pot, past and present interlink in unexpected ways.

J13D: ERDRICH, Louise

The Master Butchers Singing Club

Harper Perennial, 2004, 388pp (fiction)

In the aftermath of the Great War, Fidelis leaves his German village and sets out to America with his new wife. They settle in North Dakota and build a business selling smoked sausage using a unique family recipe. Fidelis also starts a singing club for the best voices in town. The writing is haunting and memorable. Rich and colourful characters.

J16c: GOLDEN, Arthur

Memoirs of a Geisha

Vintage, 1997, 434pp (fiction)

This novel gives an insight into something that has always been intriguing to the western mind, the life of a geisha. Sayuri was taken as a young child to train as a geisha and, due to her unusual beauty, she eventually became very successful. Vivid pictures of a vanishing and fascinating world makes this an 'unputdownable' read.

E45: MCRAE-MCMAHON, Dorothy

Memoirs of Moving On: A Life of Faith, Passion and Resilience

Jane Curry Publishing, 2004, 277pp (non fiction)

Daughter, teacher, mother, partner, minister, activist – Dorothy McRae tells the story of her public life as a high-profile, sometimes controversial minister in the Uniting Church and her personal life as a mother in challenging circumstances and her realisation at the age of fifty that she was a lesbian. Very well written and a pleasure to read – a very positive and inspiring with humorous insights into the personal and bigger issues of life.

H43M: KOCH, Christopher

The Memory Room

Vintage, 2008, 423pp (fiction)

Set against beautifully drawn landscapes – at first in Tasmania and then in China and Canberra – The Memory Room is an exploration of obsession, and of the nature of secrecy itself. "Spies, lies, love, betrayal and nostalgia – a heady mix handled with consummate ease by one of Australia's best writers. A marvellous novel!" Alison Pressley, Good Reading Magazine.

E10B: CLIFT, Charmian

Mermaid Singing, Peel Me a Lotus

Flamingo, (1959) 2001, 422pp (non fiction)

Classic books from Charmian Clift combined in one volume. In 1954, Clift, her husband George Johnston and their two small children leave the sophistication of London behind and start a new life in the Greek Islands. Beautifully written with humour and respectful insights into the Greek culture.

I74: RUSHDIE, Salman

Midnight's Children

Picador, 1956, 463pp (fiction)

Rushdie's first famous book is about the coming of the independence of India and about characters that were born at the stroke of midnight on the day India came into her own. The characters are super-human and this myth cum intellectual treatise cum narrative is fascinating. It abounds with ideas and he has a lot of fun with the political scene.

J7a: BERENDT, John

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil

Vintage, 1994, 388pp (fiction)

Critics have praised *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* as a major work of literary non-fiction, weaving together reportage and literature, travelogue and mystery. Based on an actual murder and the subsequent court cases, it is filled with larger than life characters.

J07a: BOHJALIAN, Chris

Midwives

Vintage, 1997, 312pp (fiction)

Connie Danforth is fourteen when her mother, a midwife, is accused of malpractice. Connie narrates the story when she is herself an adult and an obstetrician. Her mother took joy in delivering babies until a home-birth goes horribly wrong.

I87I: VICKERS, Salley

Miss Garnet's Angel

Harper Collins, 2001, 342pp (fiction)

A haunting, multi-layered novel. Julia Garnet goes to Venice after the death of her friend to discover that there is so much more to life than she ever realised. She sees a painting of the archangel Raphael, which becomes the centre of her new discoveries in life. Concurrently, the Biblical journey of Raphael and Tobias unfolds.

K13C: JONES, Lloyd

Mister Pip

Text, 2006, 221 pp (large print) (fiction)

Set on an island in the Pacific undergoing civil unrest. The one remaining white man wears a red nose and pulls his wife around on a trolley. He starts to read *Great Expectations* to the children in the old schoolhouse and also invites parents to come in and teach about island life. However on an island at war; the power of the imagination can be a dangerously provocative thing. Wonderful insights into island life, and conveys the magic and power of superb storytelling. Mostly a gentle read but with a dark edge and some violence.

H26: GARNER, Helen

Monkey Grip

Penguin, (1977) 1996, 245pp (fiction)

Very controversial when first published due to its depictions of sex and heroin addiction. It gave a voice to a generation and segment of society previously ignored "The best account of the last moment of innocence before hippydom turned into yuppie-dom." (Imre Saluszinsky, the Australian Magazine – Book jacket).

H35B: JENNINGS, Kate

Moral Hazard

Picador, 2002, 175pp (fiction)

Cath is caught between the precarious world of high finance on Wall Street and the caring for her husband, who has Alzheimer's disease. How will she survive and what decisions will she make? Insights into the workings of the corporate world. Short substantial story told with humour and irony.

I87h: UNSWORTH, Barry

Morality Play

Penguin, 1995, 188pp (fiction)

It is the late-fourteenth century, a time beset by war and plague. Nicholas Barber, a young and wayward cleric, stumbles across a group of travelling players and compounds his sins by joining them. The town where they perform reveals another drama: a young woman is to be hanged for the murder of a twelve-year-old boy. What better way to increase their takings than to make a new play, to enact the murder of Thomas Wells?

I57W: LE CARRÉ, John

A Most Wanted Man

Hodder and Stoughton, 2008, 340pp (fiction)

A Most Wanted Man is set in old, cold Europe, but there's a warmth and humanity that underscores his work now – it's deeply affecting, and makes his message all the more powerful" (Good Reading, Dec 2008)

I28e: FORSTER, Margaret

Mothers' Boys

Penguin, 1994, 313pp (fiction)

The attack on teenager Joe Kennedy was particularly vicious. Leo, the usually quiet and well-behaved grandson of Sheila Kennedy was found holding the knife used in the attack. Follow the emotional journey Leo's grandmother and Harriet, mother of the victim, take as they face the complexities and responsibilities of motherhood. A very harrowing tale sensitively told with brilliant perceptiveness.

E16: DESSAIX, Robert

A Mother's Disgrace

Harper Collins, 1994 (non fiction)

Intimate and moving account of the search for origins and identity by the respected author, broadcaster, essayist and translator. A story of an unusual childhood and a fascination with Russia.

E08: GUEVARA, (Che) Ernesto

The Motorcycle Diaries

Ocean Press, 2003, 175pp (non fiction)

Insights into the man behind the legend and the journey that influenced his change of vocation from a doctor to an activist. A journey across Latin America in the early 1950s offers insights into his personality and the developing political consciousness. Fresh and lively prose. Starts as an adventure and turns into development of a social consciousness. The movie version was released in 2004.

E52N: NEWPORT, Jerry and NEWPORT, Mary

Mozart and the Whale: An Unexpected Love Story

Allen & Unwin, 265pp (non fiction)

What are the odds of two people meeting, falling in love, marrying, divorcing, both falling into depression and both attempting suicide – only to reunite, remarry and build a happy life together? Jerry and Mary Newport are no ordinary people and this is no ordinary love story. Jerry is a mathematical genius and Mary is a gifted composer and artist. However they also shared deeply troubled pasts and both had been diagnosed with Asperger's. This is a story of the understanding and celebration of differences helping us to understand the nature of relationships in general.

H53: McDONALD, Roger

Mr Darwin's Shooter

Published 1998, 363pp (fiction)

The story of Syms Covington, a young sailor on the HMS Beagle, who becomes Darwin's "shooter". McDonald brings to life the world of Charles Darwin and the philosophical questions of Creationism vs. Evolutionism. Historical fiction at it's best.

I87M:VICKERS, Salley

Mr Golightly's Holiday

Harper Collins, 2003, 356pp (fiction)

"This appears to be a rural tale with lyrical, bucolic descriptions but as the story unfolds a subtly introduced sub-plot appears. This is the Nativity story set in the age of computers." (Good Reading, Feb 2004)

H14E: DAY, Marele

Mrs Cook

Allen & Unwin, 2002, 357pp (fiction)

This is a rich portrayal of the life of a woman whose passion and intellect matched that of her celebrated husband. A lyrical exploration of imagined interior worlds, shaped by historical fact, and a celebration of love and endurance.

H04: ASTLEY, Thea

The Multiple Effects of Rainshadow

Penguin, 1996, 296pp (fiction)

Based on a true event in 1930. The violent actions of a man on an island off Queensland gives rise to speculation. The behaviour of whites towards blacks in the area is far from ideal, and many are made to feel uncomfortable about their own values. When isn't it right to stand up for good and confront evil?

H22: FRANKLIN, Miles

My Brilliant Career

Angus & Robertson, 1901, 230pp (fiction)

This vivid Australian classic was the first of Miles Franklin's novels. It paints the picture of a young girl seeking independence and love in the harsh outback of New South Wales.

H37: JOHNSON, George

My Brother Jack

Published 1964, 348pp (fiction)

An autobiographical novel. A moving and poignant story of the search for a personal and national identity as seen through the lives of two brothers - two distinctly different types of Australians. Excellent social commentary and vivid portrayal of a very formative time in our social history. Winner of the Miles Franklin award.

E01: ALLENDE, Isabel

My Invented Country: a Memoir

Flamingo, 2003, 199pp (non fiction)

Allende brings her magical literary style to a personal tour through her homeland of Chile. Vivid descriptions of her friends, family, local customs and beliefs. A memoir written in a literary style.

K22a: OZ, Amos

My Michael

Random House, 1968, 216pp (fiction)

A love story set in Jerusalem before the Suez crisis about Hannah Gonen's marriage to Michael, and her gradual withdrawal from him into a private world of fantasy and suppressed desires.

E48: MORGAN, Sally

My Place

Freemantle Press, 1987, 358pp (non fiction)

This autobiography is an important part of Australian literature as it explores the life of an Aboriginal woman brought up as white. It is a personal history, told in a readable and interesting way. This very popular book is a classic of its kind.

J30P: PICOULT, Jodi

My Sister's Keeper

Allen & Unwin, 2005, 423pp (fiction)

Anna was deliberately conceived as a bone marrow match for her sick sister Kate – a life and a role that she has never questioned until now. Told from multiple points of view, the book examines what it means to be a good parent, a good sister, a good person. Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life... even if that means infringing upon the rights of another?

K20: NAIPAUL, V.S.

The Mystic Masseur

Penguin, 1957, 219pp (fiction)

Humorous story of how Ganesh Ramumair, a Trinidad native, fails as a school – master/author, but becomes a successful healer or mystic masseur and eventually a very respected and influential politician.

N

E14: CRISP, Quentin

The Naked Civil Servant

Fontana, 1968, 217pp (non fiction)

The award-winning film is based on this unique autobiography. It transformed Crisp from a courageous, humorous homosexual into a wealthy celebrity. He became a cult figure.

K17: LAHIRI, Jhumpa

The Namesake

Harper Perennial, 2003, 291pp (fiction)

A novel by the Pulitzer Prize winning author. Tells the story of the Ganguli family, who move from Calcutta to America. The characters are caught between the traditions of the old country and the culture of the new. Lahiri has won praise for her elegant style, her eye for detail and her well-drawn characters.

E19c: EASTMAN, Berenice

Nan Chauncy: A Writer's Life

The Friends of Chauncy Vale Inc., 2000, 76pp (non fiction)

This biography of one of Australia's most famous children's writers is a joy to read. It covers Nan Chauncy's life from its beginnings in an English Edwardian childhood, through her time in Denmark, to a family rural settlement in Tasmania. All these different lifestyles had their influences upon Nan Chauncy's writing. An easy read. The video "They Found a Cave" is also available.

I48F: ISHIGURO, Kazuo

Never Let Me Go

Faber and Faber, 2005, 263pp (fiction)

Kathy, Ruth and Tommy were pupils at Hailsham – an idyllic establishment situated deep in the English countryside. The children there were tenderly sheltered from the outside world, brought up to believe they were special, and that their personal welfare was crucial. But for what reason were they really there? Set in an alternate Britain in an alternate 1990s.

J26b: MANGUEL, Alberto

News From a Foreign Country Came

Flamingo, 1991, 235pp (fiction)

There is rarely a first novel written that reaches such heights. Not only is the narrative gripping, but the hidden agenda of Manguel is relentless. How can evil and culture co-exist in the same man? He appreciates music, art and is a scholar, but there is also a dark side. Reading this book leaves us paradoxically full of questions and yet gives a greater understanding.

H16: DESSAIX, Robert

Night Letters

Picador, 1996, 276pp (fiction)

An Australian man diagnosed with an incurable disease writes from Venice to a friend. These letters reflect on questions of mortality, search for meaning and acceptance of his condition. There are charming insights into present day and historical Venice. At times, the book is almost a travelogue. Not a morbid read, rather it is life affirming and highly recommended.

B07: BROOKS, Geraldine

Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women

Anchor Books, 1995, 256pp (non fiction)

Well-respected author and journalist Brooks' very readable personal account of her experiences of Muslim culture in the late 1980s. An honest and balanced account of women's lives within that culture. Much requested by book group members.

I68: ORWELL, George

Nineteen Eighty-four

Penguin, 1949, 251pp (fiction)

Orwell's nightmare vision of the future, as foreseen from 1948. Freedom is curtailed to such a point that even having an original thought can be a crime. Contains a high level argument about power and corruption. Compare Orwell's prophecy with today's reality.

H44b: LETTE, Kathy

Nip 'n' Tuck

Picador, 2001, 255pp (fiction)

This raunchy look at plastic surgery is bound to challenge a few accepted ideas! When Lizzie loses her surgeon husband to an actress who runs a plastic surgery clinic, she asks herself whether she too must go under the knife to win him back. Very funny, but not for the faint-hearted! Sexually explicit and may offend.

J25a: MACLEOD, Alistair

No Great Mischief

Vintage, 2000, 262pp (fiction)

Alexander MacDonald narrates the story of his family from the perspective of the 1980s: how they set sail from the Scottish Highlands in 1779 for a new home in rugged Nova Scotia. Their story intersects with the history of the Battle of Culloden and the 1759 battle of Quebec. Atmosphere, humour and adventure.

J29d: MOORE, Brian

No Other Life

Flamingo, 1994, 216pp (fiction)

When Father Paul Michel, a missionary on the desperately poor Caribbean island of Ganae, rescues a little black boy, Jeannot, from abject poverty, he has little idea of the dramatic and perilous events the future holds in store. Jeannot becomes a revolutionary Catholic priest and then is elected president of a land previously used to only to despair and dictatorship.

E21: FROST, Lucy

No Place For a Nervous Lady

Penguin, 1984, 284pp (non fiction)

Australia in the good old days was no place for a nervous lady. This amusing and informative book is a compilation of letters and memoirs of Australian women who braved the outback and lived up to rigid social mores of the times. Corsets in this climate? All that along with a great deal of courage and fortitude helped mould Australian society. Determination in the face of hardship saw them through.

K18A: McCALL SMITH, Alexander

The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency

Abacus, 2003, 250pp (fiction)

A detective story with a difference. Funny, quirky, touches on some fascinating information about black magic and the culture of Botswana. The main character, Precious Ramotswe, has warmth, wit and intuition. Great opportunity to have a closer look at the writer who has taken the world by storm. Majority of groups enjoyed this title for its humour and moral insights.

O

J32d: QUINDLEN, Anna

Object Lessons

Arrow, 1996, 262pp (fiction)

Young Maggie Scanlan begins to sense that, beneath the calm, everyday surface of her peaceful life, everything is going strangely wrong. Her all-powerful grandfather is reduced to a shadow by a stroke, and to Maggie's astonishment this causes her usually unemotional father to burst into tears. Connie, her lushly beautiful mother, whom Maggie could always be sure of finding at home, is now rarely there. And her cousin and her best friend start doing things that leave her confused and frightened about sex and sin.

H31B: HARTNETT, Sonya

Of a Boy

Penguin, 1988pp (fiction)

The year is 1977, and Adrian is nine. He lives with his gran. He loves to draw and he wants a dog; he's afraid of quicksand and self-combustion. Adrian watches his suburban world, but there is much he cannot understand. He does not know why three neighbourhood children might set out to buy ice-cream and never come back home. Winner of the Age Book of the Year Award and Commonwealth Writer's Prize and short listed for the Miles Franklin Award.

K28C: SEPULVEDA, LUIS

The Old Man Who Read Love Stories

Arcadia Books, 1993, 128pp (fiction)

The story of a recluse, Antonio Bolivar, who lives in the Amazon in Ecuador. He reluctantly joins a hunting party to find a jaguar which has started to attack humans in the area. During the expedition he has to confront the creature and his own past. The book offers insights into the nature of life in the Amazon. Very atmospheric.

J45: WOLFF, Tobias

Old School

Bloomsbury, 2005, 195pp (fiction)

Ernest Hemingway's impending visit to a prestigious American school causes trouble for teachers and students alike. What length will the boys go to, what rules will they break in order to win a writing competition and obtain an audience with their hero?

E39b: LIVELY, Penelope

Oleander, Jacaranda

Penguin, 1994, 180pp (non fiction)

It offers potent glimpses of British colonial life...: the snake-charmer in the garden; nine-year-old Penelope spying on de Gaulle at Government House... her deep affection for her nanny... The result is a wise, colourful and touching tale' - The Times (Book jacket)

E03a: BOWDEN, Tim

One Crowded Hour

Collins, 1988, 429pp (non fiction)

The remarkable life of Australian photographer Neil Davis is superbly written by his friend Tim Bowden. The tragic death of Davis marked the end of a brilliant career as a journalist covering conflicts in South-East Asia. The first sentence of his story says it all: I wasn't afraid of being killed... The Neil Davis Tapes are available with this book.

K04a: DUFF, Alan

Once Were Warriors

UQP, 1990, 197pp (fiction)

The hard-hitting story is a frank and uncompromising portrayal of the Maori in New Zealand society. It is a raw and powerful story in which everyone is a victim until the strength and vision of one woman transcends brutality and leads the way to a new life. Be warned, if you do not like strong language, do not consider reading his book. It is written in the vernacular and may offend some with descriptions of violence.

I01E: ATKINSON, Kate

One Good Turn

Doubleday, 2006, 396pp (fiction)

Set during Edinburgh's annual arts festival. People queuing for a lunchtime show witness a road-rage incident that changes the lives of everyone involved. Jackson Brodie, ex-army, ex-police, ex-private detective is an innocent bystander – until he becomes a suspect. Multi layered with different narrative voices and points of view as the various characters are linked in unpredictable ways.

G01 : ARNEIL, Stan

One Man's War

Published 1980, 284pp (non fiction)

The diary of a young Australian soldier who spent three and a half years of the Second World War as a prisoner of the Japanese at Changi, Singapore. It is the only diary of its kind to be published. The overall tone is neither pessimistic nor depressing as the writer refuses to be overcome by the horrifying conditions in which he is forced to live. (Suggestion: Ask for the Search for Meaning to be booked with this title as it includes an interview with Stan Arneil).

I80f: STOUT, Mira

One Thousand Chestnut Trees

Flamingo, 1997, 324pp (fiction)

Anna, a Manhattan artist, travels to the orient to discover what is missing in her life. She sets out with her Korean uncle to find her grandfather's temple hidden amongst one thousand chestnut trees.

J32c: QUINDLEN, Anna

One True Thing

Arrow, 1994, 288pp (fiction)

A young woman is in jail, accused of the mercy killing of her mother. She says she didn't do it; she thinks she knows who did. One True Thing is a breathtaking, brilliantly realised novel about family and personalities.

I14: CHATWIN, Bruce

On the Black Hill

Picador, 1982, 249pp (fiction)

Identical twins live all their long lives in a farmhouse called "The Vision". It is a simple story told clearly, with twins Lewis and Benjamin being linked not only to each other but also to the past and inevitably, the present.

J28a: MUNRO, Alice

Open Secrets

Vintage, 1994, 292pp (fiction)

Ranging from the 1850s through two World Wars to the present, and from Canada to Brisbane, the Balkans to the Somme, these dazzling stories are all rooted in the everyday life of two small towns in Ontario. Each centres on unconventional women who refuse to be contained. Alice Munro conjures up an astonishing sense of the claustrophobia and continuity of these women's lives, shot through with a dark exotic vein of mystery, violence and unfinished business.

K06b: FUENTES, Carlos

The Orange Tree

Picador, 1994, 228pp (fiction)

A collection of Novellas that take the reader from Columbus's arrival in the Caribbean to the annihilation of Hollywood by Acapulco. Fuentes passionately and imaginatively reconstructs the past and more recent histories in a sensitive exploration of cultural conflict.

J03D: ATWOOD, Margaret

Oryx and Crake

Virago, 2003, 436pp (fiction)

Set in a future some two generations hence, with genetic manipulation, profiteering and a deadly virus. "It's not a question of our inventions - all human inventions are merely tools -- but of what might be done with them; for no matter how high the tech, homo sapiens remains at heart what he's been for tens of thousands of years - the same emotions, the same preoccupations." (oryxandcrake.com)

I14O: CLEAVE, Chris

The Other Hand

Sceptre, 2008, 300pp (fiction)

"The story of two very different women - a young refugee from the Nigerian delta and a suburban English housewife - whose lives collided years ago on a beach in Africa. Told in alternating voices, with humanity and humour, the story follows the course of their friendship as they struggle to save themselves and each other from the cruelties of life" (Waterstones.typepad.com). Some strong language and violence.

I87T: TROLLOPE, Joanna

Other People's Children

Black Swan, 1998, 320pp (fiction)

Concerns the emotional and practical dynamics of stepfamilies – how the adults and children deal simultaneously with present and past relationships.

E43F: MCPHEE, Hilary

Other People's Words

Picador, 2001, 312pp (non fiction)

Compelling story of the rise and fall of McPhee Gribble, a small but influential Australian publishing house. Charts the social and cultural history of Australia in the 1960s and '70s. Offers insights into the publishing process. The book is filled with great stories about authors such as Tim Winton, Helen Garner and Bruce Chatwin.

I87O: VICKERS, Salley

The Other Side of You

Fourth Estate, 2006, 292pp (fiction)

Hospital psychiatrist David McBride tries to help his patient Elizabeth Cruikshank deal with a great loss in her life. The interaction between the two force both to look at their past with new insights. Set partly in Rome, The Other Side of You also explores the power of love and art to change us.

H43b: KOCH, Christopher

Out of Ireland

Vintage, 1999, 706pp (fiction)

A leader of the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848, Robert Devereux is an Irishman who is prepared to sacrifice a life of privilege in the fight for his country's freedom. Transported to Van Diemen's Land as a political prisoner, he enters a life that greatly changes him (falling in love with a young Irish convict woman) but the life he has lost will not let him go.

K24P: PETERSON, Per

Out Stealing Horses

Vintage, 2006, 264pp (fiction)

In 1948, fifteen-year-old Trond spends a summer in the country with his father. The unexpected events that come to pass alter his life forever. As an older man, living in an isolated part of Norway, Trond chances upon a character from that fateful summer who stirs up painful memories and forces him to look back at his past. Winner of the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize, Norwegian Book-seller's Prize and Winner of the 2007 International IMPAC Dublin Award.

E19ab: DUFF, Alan

Out of the Mist & Steam: A Memoir

Tandem, 1999, 215pp (non fiction)

The author of Once Were Warriors now tells his own story. His violent and alcoholic mother and his Scots father brought up a talented man who has been to the bottom of the world and back again. Imprisoned in England, he returned to New Zealand to change his life and to try to help others. A man who has offended the sensibilities of many writes this impassioned book. He tells it the way he sees it and to hell with the consequences. His points of view will stimulate lively debate.

E39ab: LUNN, Hugh

Over The Top With Jim

UQP, 1989, 272pp (non fiction)

This wonderfully warm Cold War memoir is full of unforgettable characters and events. It follows the formative years of young Hugh Lunn from the home front to original sin and first love. It charts his over-the-top adventures with the amazing and inventive Jim Egoroff.

P

K01d: ALLENDE, Isabel

Paula

Flamingo, 1995, 329pp (fiction)

Full of portentous dreams, colourful characters and friendly ghosts. A beautiful and heartrending memoir of a mother's agony based on Allende's life and a chronicle of her daughter's devastating illness. One of Paula's autobiographical themes is the telling of stories.

B33: CAREY, Gabrielle & SORENSON, Rosemary

The Penguin Book of Death

Penguin, 1997, 340pp (non fiction)

In spite of the depressing title, this is an excellent book for discussion. Includes selections from a long list of well-known writers, such as Phillip Adams, Anne Deveson, Richard Flanagan and Mungo MacCallum. Provocative and irreverent at times, some of the pieces are sensitive and philosophical.

I10P: BROOKS, Geraldine

People of the Book

Fourth Estate, 2008, 390pp (fiction)

A gripping and moving book about war, art, love and survival based on the real story of the Sarajevo Haggadah. "Armed with penetrating journalistic skills, an analytical mind, a creative imagination and her gift for story-telling, Brooks melds history and fiction on vast canvasses – sometimes almost flawlessly" (Avril Caney Notewriter 2009). Brooks received the 2008 Australian Book of the Year award and the 2008 Literary Fiction Book of the Year Award.

C10a: JUNGER, Sebastian

The Perfect Storm

Published 1997, 226pp (non fiction)

A detailed examination by a talented journalist of an impressive natural phenomenon and, in particular, its effects on the ordinary people who were caught up in it. The core of the book is the lives of the seamen (and women) who met this storm, a once-in-a-hundred-years event. Reads like a novel but, chillingly, this is not so.

K29E: SUSKIND, Patrick

Perfume

Penguin, 1987, 263pp (fiction)

Tells the story of how one man's obsession with finding the perfect scent leads to murder. Set amongst the great perfumers of 18th century Paris. Very original and at times shocking. Not for the gentle reader.

I02P: BARRIE, J.M

Peter Pan

Puffin Classics, (1911) 2008, 207pp (fiction)

"...the book is so full of surprises, and Barrie is so cunning a story-teller that you don't have to be six years old, or ten, or even twenty, to find this a marvellous piece of reading. Like all the best stories, it offers something to everybody". Introduction to the Puffin Classics edition (2002)

D16D: GAITA, Raymond

The Philosopher's Dog

Text Publishing, 2002, 214pp (non fiction)

Stories and philosophical insights about animals. Filled with inspirational stories and reflections on how we respond to animals and the natural world. This book is moving, funny and thought-provoking. However, don't expect too many warm and fuzzy animal stories. GAITA uses this topic as a springboard for discussion of other philosophical issues.

H46D: LOHREY, Amanda

The Philosopher's Doll

Viking, 2004, 306pp (fiction)

What happens when one partner wants to have a child and the other doesn't? Flawed but thought-provoking and readable contemporary novel. In a culture of affluence, what do people need in order to be happy? A novel of ideas rather than characterisation and plot.

I66: MURDOCH, Iris

The Philosopher's Pupil

Penguin, 1983, 558pp (fiction)

About life in an English spa town where hot springs bubble up from deep beneath the earth. The philosopher returns to Ennistone where he exerts a magical influence over many of the locals, but especially his old pupil, a demonic man desperate for redemption. An ingenious plot.

I63L: LIVELY, Penelope

The Photograph

Penguin, 2003, 236pp (fiction)

Glynn finds a sealed envelope with the words 'Don't Open – Destroy' written by his wife Kath. In the envelope there is a photo showing Kath and another man holding hands. What is the truth about Kath? Full of twists and turns.

J35e: SHREVE, Anita

The Pilot's Wife

Abacus, 1999, 293pp (fiction)

The nightmare knock at the door that every pilot's wife dreads arrives for Kathryn Lions. The loss of the 'plane excites media frenzy and rumours are rife. Was it espionage? What was the truth? Kathryn finds that the truth is slow in coming and when she finds it, it is unexpected.

J34A: ROTH, Phillip

The Plot Against America

Vintage, 2005, 391pp (fiction)

A 'what if?' story. What if the aviator and Nazi-sympathiser Charles Lindbergh had become President of the United States? What would life in America have been like for its sizeable Jewish community? Roth investigates this theme through the experiences of one Jewish family.

R6: HARWOOD, Gwen

The Poetry of Gwen Harwood - A Selection (poetry, 45 minute audio tape)

Read by Beverley Dunn, whom Harwood considered the finest interpreter of her work, this is a pleasure to listen to and enjoy. There are 22 poems in all that are diverse and personal. This multi-faceted selection is sent out with the books by Gwen Harwood when possible.

J22: KINGSOLVER, Barbara

The Poisonwood Bible

Faber and Faber, 1998, 614pp (fiction)

This novel blends ecological sensitivity with a political exposé of postcolonial Africa, in particular, indifference to and denial of their postcolonial involvement. It becomes apparent that the African ecology is its own fortress killing both the invaders and its own people.

B16b: GARNER, James

Politically Correct Bedtime Stories

Bath Press, 1994, 79pp (non fiction)

We have all been brought up on all that sexist, racist, sizeist, ethnocentric reading matter; and we most certainly need to be made aware of the dangers (in these sensitive modern times) of expressing any kind of opinion at all. Consider what political correctness is doing to your life and have a good laugh at the same time.

I44C: HARRIS, Robert

Pompeii

Random House, 2003, 432pp (fiction)

Based on events that took place before one of the most famous natural disasters in history, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79.

K18d: MAALOUF, Amin

Ports of Call

Harvill Press, 1999, 197pp (fiction)

Set in the turmoil of the modern Middle East, the story told of Ossyane and Clara, a Jewish-Muslim, is a parallel to the problems of the country. Europe is the meeting place for the couple, neutral territory where there are different pressures. Can this marriage work? What will the future of the area be?

J32b: PROULX, E. Annie

Postcards

Flamingo, 1992, 339pp (fiction)

The story of Loyal Blood, a man who spends a lifetime on the run from a crime. The odyssey begins on a freezing Vermont hillside in 1994 and propels Blood across the American West for forty years. Denied love and unable to settle, he lives a hundred different lives: mining gold, growing beans, hunting fossils, trapping, prospecting for uranium and ranching. His only contact with his past is through a series of postcards he sends home.

A08b: HARWOOD, Gwen

The Present Tense

Imprint, 1995, 135pp (poetry)

In this collection of poems and prose, Harwood's warmth and intelligence are applied to love, memory, old age, death, beauty, loss and poetry. In language that marries aspiration to pragmatism, she constantly harries us to admire what it means to be human: 'Remember, good enough is rotten.' An audio - tape of The Poetry of Gwen Harwood A Selection, read by Beverley Dunn is available on request with the Gwen Harwood titles.

E67W: WEST, Ida

Pride Against Prejudice: Reminiscences of a Tasmanian Aborigine

Montpelier Press, 2004, 125pp (non fiction)

'This book is not simply a personal history. There are stories here that paint pictures of dignity and pride. Aunty Ida tells stories of racism alongside stories about good, respectful people who had been involved with her, and her extended family... Life on the Bass Strait islands, and especially Flinders Island, is painted so well in Aunty Ida's stories... Her dignity and strength continue to influence many people to stretch out and achieve better results in life's calling' Preface to the Second Edition Jim Everett 2004.

B37a: SASSON, Jean

Princess

Bantam, 1992, 299pp (non fiction)

The story of a Saudi Princess as told to Jean Sasson defies credibility. The veil is lifted on the life of Muslim women, be they princess or pauper. Lapidation of a young girl (at the request of her father) arranged marriages and appalling oppression of women are only some of the horrifying incidents that are described

H55C: MILLER, Alex

Prochownik's Dream

Allen & Unwin, 2005, 299pp (fiction)

Toni Powlett has been at a creative standstill since the death of his father. Marina, the wife of his former teacher and mentor, contacts him and becomes the source of his artistic inspiration and energy. This creates new tensions in his relationship with his wife and child.

J22a: KINGSOLVER, Barbara

Prodigal Summer

Faber and Faber, 2000, 444pp (fiction)

Deanna Wolfe, a reclusive wildlife biologist, watches a den of coyotes that have recently migrated into the Appalachia region. A young hunter disturbs her solitary life. Further down the mountain, Lusa finds herself marooned in a strange place where she must declare or lose her attachment to the land. A pair of elderly, feuding neighbours tend their farms and argue about God and pesticides. Over the summer all these characters find connections to each other and to the land. Described as erotic and poetic.

D8: EASTERBOOK, Gregg

The Progress Paradox: How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse

Random House, 2004, 376pp (non fiction)

Easterbrook presents the argument that almost all aspects of Western life have improved in the past century, and yet most men and women feel less happy than in previous generations. He makes a compelling case that optimism, gratitude, and acts of forgiveness not only make modern life more fulfilling but also are actually in our self-interest.

H45A: LETTE, Kathy and CAREY, Gabrielle

Puberty Blues

Picador, 2002, 116pp (fiction)

First published in 1979, made into a film by Bruce Beresford in 1981, Puberty Blues is now a cult classic. Interesting forewords by Kylie Minogue and Germaine Greer in this edition.

Q, R

K28a: SCHLINK, Bernhard

The Reader

Phoenix, 1997, 216pp (fiction)

Michael Berg, as a schoolboy, meets Hanna who is in her thirties and they have a businesslike, although highly erotic affair. When Hanna disappears from his life, he does not expect to see her again. Later, he meets up with Hanna once more when she is on trial for war crimes. Following the trial Michael is faced with the questions that haunt younger generations in Germany.

E51: NAFISI, Azar

Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books

Hodder, 2003, 347pp (non fiction)

"A memoir about teaching Western Literature in revolutionary Iran, with profound and fascinating insights into both." – (Book cover) Azar Nafisi gathered seven young women at her house every Thursday morning to read and discuss forbidden works of Western Literature. The book group members' stories are intertwined with those they were reading, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Lolita*.

E67: WATSON, Don

Recollections of a Bleeding Heart: a Portrait of Paul Keating

Vintage, 2002, 772pp (non fiction)

Based on notes Watson kept through the four turbulent and exhausting years he spent with Keating. A frank, revealing and engrossing portrait of this colourful and perplexing man. A unique reflection on modern politics, government and Australia itself. Entertaining two month read.

I87d: TROLLOPE, Joanna

The Rector's Wife

Black Swan, 1991, 284pp (fiction)

Anna Bouverie, a priest's wife, has served God and the parish for twenty years. When her husband retreats into isolated bitterness, and her daughter is bullied at the local school, Anna suddenly rebels.

E39D: LOUDON, Mary

Relative Stranger: A Sister's Story

Text Publishing, 2006, 337pp (non fiction)

Mary Loudon goes on a journey to find out about the last years of her sister's life. Catherine had not seen her family for 12 years due to the effects of Schizophrenia. A very well written, life affirming and powerful read.

I48a: ISHIGURO, Kazuo

The Remains of the Day

Faber & Faber, 1989, 245pp (fiction)

This book so carefully builds up the tension that you find you can't put it down. An English butler drives to a seaside town and reminisces about the past. Uncertainty begins to creep in and your fingers twitch to turn to the end of the book.

H48c: MALOUF, David

Remembering Babylon

Published 1993, 200pp (fiction)

Tells the tragic and compelling story of Gemmy Fairley, a white man who, after sixteen years with the aborigines, finds his whiteness as unsettling among the hostilities of a pioneer community as the knowledge he brings with him of the aboriginal world.

BI I: DEVESON, Anne

Resilience

Allen & Unwin, 2003 (non fiction)

What is resilience? Why are some people more resilient than others? Can it be learned? A positive book about building on strengths rather than dwelling on weaknesses. Anne Deveson is a well-known documentary filmmaker, author and has had a long involvement in social justice issues.

J35d: SHREVE, Anita

Resistance

Little, Brown and Co., 1995, 222pp (fiction)

This novel is set in Belgium in WWII. An American bomber crashes near a small village and the pilot is rescued by a young boy who calls on Claire Daussois for help. He knows she has connections with the Resistance. Ted Brice stays with Claire in her remote farmhouse for a month. It is a month that will change their lives forever.

I04B: BOYD, William

Restless

Bloomsbury, 2006, 325pp (fiction)

It is 1939, Eva is a beautiful 28 year-old Russian émigré living in Paris. As war breaks out she is recruited for the British Secret Service. Since the war, Eva has carefully rebuilt her life as a typically English wife and mother. But once a spy, always a spy. Now she must complete one final assignment, and this time Eva can't do it alone: she needs her daughter's help.

H69S: SILVEY, Craig

Rhubarb

Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 2004, 331pp (fiction)

Contemporary Australian novel featuring the lives of a young 'gutsy' blind girl, her seeing eye dog Warren, and Ewan, a reclusive maker and player of cellos. One of the main themes is the "baggage" we carry with us and how we cope with traumatic experiences. Intense story with humorous touches. *One copy of the picture book about Warren the dog: The World According to Warren H69S can be booked to accompany this title.

H81b: WINTON, Tim

The Riders

Pan, 1994, 377pp (fiction)

Fred Scully can't wait to see his wife and daughter. He's got a new life for them all worked out. He's sweated on this reunion. The doors at the airport hiss open. Scully's life falls apart . . .

D15: MACKAY, Hugh

Right & Wrong: How to Decide for Yourself

Hodder, 2004, 244pp (non fiction)

As our lives become more complicated, we face a growing number of moral choices. Happiness and peace of mind depend upon knowing we have made the right choices – but how can we decide what is right and wrong. In an accessible engaging conversational style, Mackay suggests some personal disciplines and strategies. Covers a wide range of topics including personal, business, and consumer; social and political choices.

J27M: MCCARTHY, Cormac

The Road

Picador, 2006, 241pp (fiction)

A father and his young son walk alone through a devastated America. Their destination is the coast, although they don't know what (if anything) awaits them there. How do two people keep going in the face of total devastation? This is a story of how human values can change, when catastrophe strikes. You may never again take for granted the comforts of home.

E11ab: CONWAY, Jill Ker

The Road From Coorain

Mandarin, 1989, 238pp (non fiction)

Jill was seven before she saw another girl. At eight, she was herding sheep on the drought-haunted plains of her parents' thirty thousand acres. When the dream turned to dust after five rainless years the family moved to Sydney. This account of a family in the outback and its move to the towns is well written and gripping.

I85T: TREMAIN, Rose

The Road Home

Chatto & Windus, 2007, 365pp (fiction)

Lev, travels from Eastern Europe to London in order to find work. He starts to work in the kitchens of restaurants and learns the value of creating "wicked" meals. This new love for cooking will eventually change the lives of his family and friends back in his home village.

E21G: GAITA, Raimond

Romulus My Father

Text Publishing, 1998, 208pp (non fiction)

Romulus Gaita fled his home in his native Yugoslavia at the age of thirteen, and came to Australia with his young wife Christine and their four-year-old son soon as after the end of World War II.

I95: WOOLF, Virginia

A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas

Oxford World Classics, 1998 (fiction)

A woman who wants to write, Woolf says, needs a fixed income and a room of her own. This work combines the sober delights of a treatise with the vitality and humour of fiction.

E40: LINDQUIST, Ulla-Carin

Rowing without Oars

John Murray (Publishers), 2006, 195pp (non fiction)

Until 2003, Ulla-Carin Lindquist had balanced a successful career with the competing demands of her four children. Then suddenly, on her birthday, she was diagnosed with a terminal illness, and her world was turned upside down. She had a year to live. During this last year of her life she started writing. This is an unforgettable story about love, motherhood and finding the strength to finally let go. Inspiring and uplifting. Also includes insights into every day life in Sweden.

E43N: MAZARI, Najaf & HILLMAN, Robert

The Rugmaker of Mazar-E-Sharif

Insight Publications, 2008, 262pp (non fiction)

At the age of twelve Mazari left school and apprenticed himself to a master rugmaker. Thus began his love affair with rugs. This is the story of his extraordinary journey – from his early life as a shepherd boy in the mountains of Northern Afghanistan to his forced exile after being captured and tortured by the Taliban, to incarceration in an Australian detention centre, and finally to freedom and a return to his love of rugmaking. A poignant and powerful, yet often humorous story, that explores the resilience of the human spirit. A story of joy rather than of sorrow.

S

E19F: DUNCAN, Susan

Salvation Creek

Bantam, 2006, 402pp (non fiction)

At 44 Susan Duncan appeared to have it all as a successful editor of two top selling women's magazines. When her husband and her brother die within three days of each other, Susan walks away from her career and finds a new life and starts her own fight for survival against breast cancer. She eventually settles on the shores of Pittwater North of Sydney in a community that depends on boats for transport and has its own range of quirky characters, including the dogs. This is a story of courage told with humour and honesty. Audio available.

H40b: KOVAL, Ramona

Samovar

Minerva, 1996, 163pp (fiction)

With her life now in turmoil, burdened by a moody psychiatrist and disapproving daughters, Leah realises the only way forward is back, tackling a long trail of unfinished business.

E62B: TOMALIN, Claire

Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self

Penguin Books, 2003, 499pp (non fiction)

(Set includes copies of Samuel Pepys: The Diaries of Samuel Pepys: A Selection)

"Sex, drink, plague, fire, music, marital conflict, the fall of kings, corruption and courage in public life, wars, navies, public executions, incarceration in the Tower: Samuel Pepys' life is full of irresistible material" (Book cover). Winner of the 2002 Whitbread Book Of the Year.

I74a: RUSHDIE, Salman

The Satanic Verses

Viking, 1989, 547pp (fiction)

This controversial book is a conundrum without peer. It abounds with ideas, religious and intellectual. It is not an easy read, but it is provocative and lively reading, and there are hours of discussion in this long book. Try it and see what the fuss has been about.

I64M: McEwan, Ian

Saturday

Vintage, 2005, 280pp (fiction)

A day in the life of Henry Perowne, a neurosurgeon and contented family man. He meets Baxter, an aggressive young man. His life changes in that instant. Explores the unexpected ramifications of actions. Fascinating insights into the inner life of a man in this profession.

I87g: WALSH, Jill Paton

A School for Lovers

Black Swan, 1989, 201pp (fiction)

Against the idyllic background of a labyrinthine country house in need of restoration, two friends are dared by their manipulative tutor to try to seduce the other's lover. As the two young women in question restore the paintings and revive the gardens of the mansion, they are pursued unobserved.

I88a: WALTERS, Minette

The Scold's Bridle

Allen & Unwin, 1994, 326pp (fiction)

Mathilda has been dead for days. Pills have been spilled on the floor. Obscuring the old woman's face is a rusted metal cage - a scold's bridle grotesquely laced with nettles and daisies. But even this obscurity - designed to silence a nag - arouses no pity in those who knew Mathilda best. But along with all the clues as to one possible killer among many - Mathilda's detailed, shocking diaries have also disappeared.

EO7b: CHICK, Suzanne

Searching for Charmian

Picador, 1995, 365pp (non fiction)

Aware that she had been adopted, Suzanne at the age of forty-eight, sets out to find her birth mother. She discovers that Charmian Cliff, a famous novelist and essayist, was in fact her mother. Although focussing mainly on Suzanne and Charmian, we meet other people from both their worlds.

G10G: GRENVILLE, Kate

Searching for the Secret River

Text Publishing, 2006, 221pp (fiction)

Kate Grenville describes her quest to find her convict ancestor and to understand his life. This is the history behind her award winning novel *The Secret River*. It also asks important questions about the history of Australia and provides insights into the creative motivations of a writer.

I87S: TROLLOPE, Joanna

Second Honeymoon

Black Swan, 2006, 383pp (large print) (fiction)

Ben is leaving home at last. His mother Edie is distraught. Her husband, on the other hand, is rather hoping to get his wife back after decades of family life. Things don't go according to plan as their other children's lives become more complicated.

H83A: WOOLFE, Sue

The Secret Cure

Picador, 2003, 429pp (fiction)

A contemporary story of obsession, love and hidden secrets of the past set against the backdrop of a scientific lab and DNA research. A highlight is the narration of one of the main characters, a man who is mute and entering the real world for the first time.

J19: KIDD, Sue Monk

The Secret Life of Bees

Headline, 2004, 375pp (fiction)

Set in South Carolina in the 1960s when segregation was still prevalent. Lily, a white 14-year-old girl, and Rosaleen, an older black woman, try to escape from racial tensions and Lily's harsh father. They find sanctuary in the home of three eccentric sisters - beekeepers. It is a time for healing and for finding answers to the mystery surrounding Lily's mother. The characters are very colourful and vivid. A life-affirming story.

H27C: GRENVILLE, Kate

The Secret River

Text Publishing, 2006, 334pp (fiction)

Historical novel set in the early settlement of NSW. William Thornhill, transported from the slums of London for the term of his natural life, eventually 'takes up land' with his family on the Hawkesbury River. A powerful story with vivid descriptions of everyday colony life. Inspired by the author's own family history. Winner of numerous literary awards.

E60C: ROBERTS, Jason

A Sense of the World: How a Blind Man Became History's Greatest Traveller

Simon & Schuster, 2006, 383pp (non fiction)

James Holman (1786-1857) was known simply as the 'Blind Traveller' – a solitary, sightless adventurer who, astonishingly, fought the slave trade in Africa, survived a frozen captivity in Siberia, hunted rogue elephants in Ceylon and helped chart the Australian outback. Rich with humour and unforgettable characters and insights into how we use all our senses to navigate through life.

K23b: PEREZ-REVERTE, Arturo

The Seville Communion

Harville Press, 1998, 340pp (fiction)

The hero of this novel is a handsome and wealthy priest. Put him together with an unhappily married woman who finds him irresistible and the chemistry starts to fizz. Mix this with a fiendish plot that involves a hacker breaking in to the Vatican's computer system and you are hooked. Will keep you guessing to the end.

I28f: FORSTER, Margaret

Shadow Baby

Chatto & Windus, 1996, 350pp (fiction)

Born in Carlisle in 1887 and brought up in a children's home, Evie seems a quiet, undemanding child. Shona, born almost seventy years later, is headstrong and striking. She grows up in comfort and security in Scotland, the only child of doting parents. But there are, she discovers, unanswered questions about her past.

K27B: RUIZ ZAFON, Carlos

The Shadow of the Wind

Text, 2004, 521pp (fiction)

Set in the early post civil war years in Barcelona. A young man embarks on a quest to find the truth about a book's mysterious author only to find that events in his life start to parallel the authors. A love story, literary thriller, historical novel with twists and turns. Includes a mix of typical crime writing and flashes of literary brilliance. The author described the book as a coming of age story with a Dickens flavour.

I50b: JOHNSTON, Jennifer

Shadows on Our Skin

Penguin, 1977, 191pp (fiction)

At home in Derry young Joe Logan is tormented by the demands of his father; once a hero, now a weak and wasted man. At school Joe dreams away the days, waiting for better times to come. Befriended by Kathleen, he finds a new companionship and understanding. Then his older brother returns home from London with a gun and a pocketful of secrets.

E19D: DREWE, Robert

The Shark Net

Penguin, 2000, 358pp (non fiction)

Funny and moving coming of age story with a bite – a true crime thriller. Drewe blends his memories of growing up with the case of murders in suburban Perth.

J32a: PROULX, E. Annie

The Shipping News

Fourth Estate, 1994, 337pp (fiction)

Quoye is a hapless, hopeless hack journalist working in New York. When his no-good wife is killed in a road accident, Quoye heads for Newfoundland, the land of his forefathers, with an aunt his two daughters in tow. An Atlantic drama unfolds.

J62C: LEWYCKA, Marina

A Short History of Tractors in Ukrainian

Viking, 2005, 326pp (fiction)

A recently widowed 84-year-old Ukrainian man plans to remarry a glamorous blonde fifty years his junior. His two daughters join forces to get this woman out of his life. A novel about families, healing wounds, war experiences and the legacy of Europe's history over the last fifty years. Touches on some important issues in an easy-to-read and sometimes humorous way.

I18b: CRACE, Jim

Signals of Distress

Penguin, 1994, 275pp (fiction)

The Belle of Wilmington, an American emigration barque, is grounded by storms on a sand-bar in the west of England. While she waits to be refloated, the isolated community of Wherrytown offers what hospitality it can to the crew. But the Americans prove a disturbing presence, not least Otto, the slave-cook on The Belle. When Aymer Smith, the virginal soap-manufacturer, arrives with his unwelcome news, tragedy and farce are unavoidable.

M03K: KENNEDY, Cate

Sing and Don't Cry: a Mexican Journal

Transit Lounge Publishing, 2005, 300pp (non fiction)

Australian writer Cate Kennedy worked as a volunteer in a credit cooperative in Mexico. Through the struggles of the impoverished Mexican peasants, her eyes are opened to what is important in life. Warm, funny and at times confronting. Beautifully written.

D07b: DE BONO Edward

Six Thinking Hats

Published 1987, 207pp (non fiction)

Well-known lateral thinker Edward de Bono provokes us yet again into thinking from different standpoints about aspects of life. This book is fun to read and discuss.

E68: XINRAN

Sky Burial: An Epic Love Story of Tibet

Vintage, 2005, 164pp (non-fiction)

Based on the true story of a Chinese doctor, Shu Wen. Shu goes searching for her husband who is missing in Tibet, presumed dead. For 30 years, she lives with communities of Nomads. Fascinating insights into the cultures of different Tibetan communities and their interactions with the Chinese coming into their land. Reads like a novel. Very spiritual and enriching read.

J40V: VONNEGUT, Kurt

Slaughterhouse-Five

Dial Press Trade, (1969) 2005, 275pp (fiction)

One of the world's great antiwar books. An American classic. Centering on the infamous firebombing of Dresden, Billy Pilgrim's odyssey through time reflects the mythic journey of our own fractured lives as we search for meaning in what we fear most (Bookcover).

J34a: SHIELDS, Carol

Small Ceremonies

Allen & Unwin, 1976, 179pp (fiction)

Small Ceremonies is about a novelist, Judith Gill. Along with her everyday life, which she shares with her not quite everyday husband and son, Judith has to wrestle with her feelings about her work and whether it has been plagiarised. Good, intelligent writing makes this book a pleasure.

I62B: LEVY, Andrea

Small Island

Hodder Headline, 2004, 533pp (fiction)

Imagine it is 1948 and you have just arrived in London from Jamaica.

Your husband doesn't meet you, you catch a taxi to his address to find a dilapidated boarding house and your new home is a small dingy dusty room. This is the story of a couple from Jamaica and the English couple who run the boarding house. It is set in Jamaica, London and India. Although it is a story of war and displacement it is uplifting and full of humour. Winner of the Orange Prize for Fiction and Whitbread Novel Award in 2004.

D13: KINGSOLVER, Barbara

Small Wonder

Faber and Faber, 2002, 267pp (non fiction)

Essays written by this much loved author as a personal response to September 11th. Kingsolver writes about her personal life and also tackles bigger philosophical and political issues. The main message of the essays is that big issues need to be understood in terms of personal experience. A very positive read.

K02c: BEHR, Mark

The Smell of Apples

Abacus, 1995, 200pp (fiction)

An indictment of apartheid's twisted logic made breathtakingly savage through its very subtlety, The Smell of Apples is an exceptional debut placing Mark Behr at the very forefront of South African literature.

J17c: GUTERSON, David

Snow Falling on Cedars

Bloomsbury, 1995, 344pp (fiction)

A Japanese-American fisherman stands trial, charged with murder. It is 1954, and the shadow of WWII, hangs over the courtroom.

Ishmael Chambers, who lost an arm in the war and now runs the local newspaper, is among the journalists covering the trial that brings him close, once again, to Hatsue, the wife of the accused man and Ishmael's never-forgotten boyhood love.

J34F: SEE, Lisa

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan

Bloomsbury, 2005, 340pp (fiction)

Lily is the daughter of a humble farmer, and to her family she is just another expensive mouth to feed. Then the local matchmaker delivers startling news: if Lily's feet are bound properly, they will be flawless. In nineteenth-century China, this is extraordinary good luck. Lily now has the power to make a good marriage and change the fortunes of her family. To prepare for her new life, she must undergo the agonies of foot binding, learn nu shu, the famed secret women's writing, and make a very special friend named Snow Flower.

H68B: SHAKESPEARE, Nicholas

Snowleg

Harvill Press, 2004, 386pp (large print) (fiction)

In the 1980s, a young Englishman visits East Germany in search of information about the life of the father he has never known. During this visit, he falls in love with an East German girl who is starting to question the way her society is governed. In her world, not only is every move recorded, but also a person's scent may be secretly bottled, labelled and used to track people. Twenty years later, after Germany is reunified, he returns to try to find her.

H9: CANEY, Avril

Soft Edges Unsafe Margins

Ginninderra Press, 2003, 106pp (fiction)

Collection of short Stories. "Avril Caney's stories are refreshingly lively and entertaining, leaving the reader asking for more. We recognise ourselves, our own quirks and oddities in her vividly drawn characters as they become aware of possibilities beyond their normal horizons and reach out to new experiences" (Megan Schaffner).

I55: LAWRENCE, D.H.

Sons and Lovers

Penguin, 1930, 511pp (fiction)

It tells, in largely biographical terms, of Paul's struggles to be himself against the dominating love of his mother and the stifling need to be loved by his first woman, Miriam.

H25a: GILLING, Tom

The Sooterkin

Text Publishing, 1999, 212pp (fiction)

Hobart, 1821, and an unusual baby is delivered of Sarah Dyer. How did this amazing event occur? What is to be done with this strange offspring? Is this a link to the origins of humankind? Whilst two men, Mr. Scully and the Reverend Mr. Kidney argue about the pup's future, a stranger comes to town with plan. Not for the gentle reader.

D08: GAARDER, Jostein

Sophie's World

Published 1995, 394pp (non fiction)

Looking in her mailbox one morning, a fourteen-year-old Norwegian schoolgirl called Sophie Amundsen finds a surprising piece of paper. On it are written two questions: "Who are you?" and "Where did the world come from?" An extraordinary tour through the history of western philosophy from the pre-Socratics to Sartre.

H21c: FLANAGAN, Richard

The Sound of One Hand Clapping

Picador, 1997, 423pp (fiction)

An intense, descriptive and confronting novel that explores a father and daughter's complex relationship. It conveys and captures life in Tasmania during the 1950s and 1960s, and the experiences of migrants at this time. Audio version also available.

H26G: GARNER, Helen

The Spare Room

Text Publishing, 2008, 195pp (fiction)

"Two feisty women clash head-on in a small Melbourne suburban house over a period of three weeks. But this is no ordinary confrontation. Flamboyant Nicola refuses to accept that she is dying from cancer; while a pragmatic Helen strives to persuade her to die quietly and with dignity. In Garner's terse, hard-hitting prose, the pages boil over with compressed rage, grief, passion and guilt, and then simmer with tenderness. You will ache for them both while your group may jump up and down over the dominant issue of alternative cancer treatments". (Avril Caney, Note writer, 2008).

E22A: FUNDER, Anna

Stasiland

Text Publishing, 2002, 288pp (non fiction)

Part travelogue, part documentary. The author went back to East Germany seven years after the fall of the Berlin Wall to interview those whose lives had been affected by the secret police (Stasi). "Unforgettable stories drive home the human cost of an awful political system. Informed judgements and historical background are communicated with deceptive ease – Stasiland is compelling reading" (Sydney Morning Herald)

B15D: DE BOTTON, Alain

Status Anxiety (non fiction)

'This is a book about an almost universal anxiety that rarely gets mentioned directly; an anxiety about what others think of us; about whether we're judged a success or a failure, a winner or a loser.' www.alaindebotton.com. Entertaining and thought provoking.

J34c: SHIELDS, Carol

The Stone Diaries

Fourth Estate, 1993, 360pp (fiction)

The story of Daisy Goodwill, from her birth on a kitchen floor in Manitoba, Canada, to her death in a Florida nursing home nearly ninety years later. Her ordinary life is made extraordinary in the telling. An exceptional book.

H39: JOLLEY, Elizabeth

The Sugar Mother

Freemantle Arts, 1988, 210pp (fiction)

Explores the way the many little impacts of distance, separation and change can gather force and take one to where one never thought to go. A story of self-deception and of hopes, perhaps secret hopes.

K21N: NÉMIROVSKY, Irène

Suite Francaise

Chatto & Windus, 2006, 403pp (fiction)

Starts in France in June 1940. The novel is set in two parts. The first part depicts the lives of a group of Parisians as they flee the Nazi invasion. The second part follows the inhabitants of a small rural community. Wonderful characters and insightful depictions of the domestic lives and personal trials of the ordinary citizens of France. The novel was actually written in 1941 but published 65 years after the tragic death of the author.

I27c: ELLIS, Alice Thomas

The Summerhouse - A Trilogy

Penguin, 1987, 338pp (fiction)

Margaret and Syl are getting married. Alas for Margaret! She views her impending union with the odious Syl in the same way a ship must view a shipwreck. Alas for Lili, the high-spirited temptress who is willing to do anything to prevent this disastrous misalliance, even if that means sacrificing herself.

E66b: WINCHESTER, Simon

The Surgeon of Crowthorne

Penguin, 1999, 207pp (non fiction)

Simon Winchester has taken the making of the Oxford English Dictionary and turned it into a page-turner: William Minor was such a prolific volunteer contributor to the dictionary that the editor, James Murray, felt driven to meet him. He was astonished to find that this erudite man was incarcerated in an asylum for the criminally insane. This book is a pleasure to read.

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KO7: GELMAN, Rita Golden

Tales of a Female Nomad

Bantam, 297pp (fiction)

For years, Rita felt that she was living someone else's life: going to parties, dining with celebrities. When her marriage failed, she took the opportunity to travel and discover the world anew. She is still travelling fifteen years later. A book for anyone who has ever dreamt of escaping the everyday.

HI 5c: DOWRICK, Stephanie

Tasting Salt

Viking, 1997, 342pp (fiction)

Cordelia, seventy-four years old and recently widowed, is looking back on her life and facing the challenges of the future. This book provides insights into the complexities of growing older; living alone; family ties and God.

K18G: McCALL SMITH, Alexander

Tears of the Giraffe

Abacus, 2000, 233pp (fiction)

Following on from The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency follows the further adventures of Precious Ramatswe, Botswana's only female private detective. It is going to take all her intuition and eminent sensibility for Precious to crack her hardest case yet: the decade-old disappearance of an American on the edge of the Kalahari.

E06A: CAPP, Fiona

That Oceanic Feeling

Allen & Unwin, 2003, 286pp (non fiction)

Approaching forty, Fiona returns to her passion for surfing. This passion takes her to the waters of Victoria, Byron Bay, Hawaii, Cornwall and France. This book explores the power of the natural world and reflection in our lives. Filled with interesting historical and literary tidbits about the sea and different cultural perspectives. Winner of the 2004 Nita B. Kibble Award for Life Writing and the Australians Studying abroad Travel Writing Award.

J32E: PROULX, Annie

That Old Ace in the Hole

Fourth Estate, 2002, 361pp (fiction)

"Proulx always keeps us laughing through the book, and does not allow the conservation message to weigh down the enjoyable experience of keeping up with Bob Dollar. . . . There is also humour in the figures of speech and the sound of the words the locals use that infuses the text. It is a gentle teasing ridicule of the characters which at the same time increases the reader's fondness for them" (From Notes by Donna Hartley).

HI 1E: CAREY, Peter

Theft: A Love Story

Vintage, 2006, 269pp (fiction)

Prepare to be delighted, shocked, amused and occasionally deeply moved by Carey's masterful and hilariously capricious romp through the art world. To quote from the Guardian review, this is a 'book of grand passion, bad breath and high mischief'. Winner of the 2007 NSW Premier's Award and the 2006 Victorian Premier's Award; short-listed for the 2007 Miles Franklin Award.

I63f: LODGE, David

Therapy

Penguin, 1995, 320pp (fiction)

To all appearances, Laurence Passmore is sitting pretty. He can well afford the ministrations of his therapists, and he can afford the charity account he runs to counterbalance these indulgences. What his money can't buy, and his therapists can't deliver, is contentment.

E02a: BENNETT, Jackie & FORGAN Rosemary

There's Something About a Convent Girl

Virago, 1991, 217pp (non fiction)

Convent educated girls talk about their school years, what they felt being taught by nuns and what their fears and frustrations were. Maeve Binchy and Germaine Greer, to name just two, amuse and stun us with their recollections.

M04: MCGIRR, Michael

The Things You Get For Free

Picador, 2000, 296pp (non fiction)

In this humorous warm family memoir and travelogue, a young Jesuit priest from Australia and his mum tour Europe. They experience the best and worst of Europe. This book is more than just a travel comedy. It is also an investigation into the past of the Catholic Church and the Jesuits.

K18b: McCANN, Colum

This Side of Brightness

Phoenix, 1998, 248pp (fiction)

Weaves fiction with historical fact. Two characters dominate this story: a homeless man with a shameful past, and his grandfather, a black man who came north early in the century to work as a 'sandhog' digging the tunnels for the subway in Manhattan. A story of racism, politics, love and friendship spanning four generations.

G16: REYNOLDS, Henry

This Whispering in our Hearts

Allen & Unwin, 1998, 294pp (non fiction)

Provides us with the oft-neglected perspective of the minority of European settlers who followed their consciences, often at great personal costs, to fight for the better treatment of indigenous Australians. The humanitarian and moral questions outlined are still relevant to current debates and across a wide range of issues.

H11D: HOSSEINI, Khaled

A Thousand Splendid Suns

Bloomsbury, 2007, 372pp (fiction)

At the heart of the story is the friendship of two women thrown together by unexpected events. It is set against the backdrop of political upheavals in Afghanistan.

B21b: HOLBOROW, Barbara

Those Tracks on My Face

William Heinemann, 1997, 191pp (non fiction)

Holborow, well-known activist for children's rights, tells of her experiences while serving for twelve years as a Children's Court Magistrate. Sometimes harrowing, the book is leavened with humorous tales and situations. Provides insight into the best and worst of humanity.

H26C: GOLDSWORTHY, Peter

Three Dog Night

Penguin, 2003, 342pp (fiction)

A psychiatrist brings his wife from London to live in Adelaide. He introduces her to an old friend and relationships start to disintegrate. This critically acclaimed novel explores the fragility of love and friendship and the human capacity for self-deception.

M03F: FLANNERY, Tim

Throwim Way Leg

Text Publishing, 1998, 326pp (non fiction)

This title by the well-known and respected scientist and explorer will appeal to anyone interested in nature, adventure, travel and Papua New Guinea. It is a great mixture of geography, history, anthropology and politics. Very readable.

H31A: HARTNETT, Sonya

Thursday's Child

Penguin, 2000, 224pp (fiction)

A story of a family's life during The Great Depression in rural Australia as seen through a child's eyes. Hartnett is a very original writer, so expect some interesting twists and turns. Although nominated for a Children's Book Council Award, it is a very adult story and quite an interesting choice for youth.

K31:TURNER HOSPITAL,Janette

The Tiger in the Tiger Pit

UQP, 1983, 256pp (fiction)

The Carpenter family are at odds with each other; commitment and reality. Emily and her brother; their eccentric brother and tyrannical father all contribute to a humdinger of a novel. Interweaves time and place with fine skill.

E10A: CLENDINNEN, Inga

Tiger's Eye

Text Publishing, 2000, 289 pp (non fiction)

Inga Clendinnen is an expert on Aztec and Mayan culture. On another topic, her book Reading the Holocaust was named Best Book of the Year by the New York Times. Tiger's Eye is a most unusual memoir where she follows the wanderings of her mind over her past life while she was critically ill with Active Auto-Immune Hepatitis.

J28N: NIFFENEGGER, Audrey

The Time Traveler's Wife

Vintage Books, 2005, 520pp (fiction)

This is the extraordinary love story of Clare and Henry who met when Clare was six and Henry was thirty-six, and were married when Clare was twenty-two and Henry thirty. Impossible but true, because Henry suffers from a rare condition where his genetic clock periodically resets and he finds himself pulled suddenly into his past or future. In the face of this force they can neither prevent or control, Henry and Clare's struggle to lead normal lives is both intensely moving and entirely unforgettable.

H11F: CARROLL, Steven

The Time We Have Taken

Harper Perennial, 2008, 377pp (fiction)

"... this quietly celebratory novel is affectionately concerned with the significance of lives lived among the details of time and place in suburban Australia during the closing years of the 20th century. The characters are drawn with a poignant intimacy and the narrative moves with a kind of poetic majesty", The Age Book of the Year judges 2007. Winner of the 2008 Miles Franklin Literary Award and Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Novel for the South-East Asia and South Pacific Region.

H03: ANDERSON, Jessica

Tirra Lirra by the River

Penguin, 1978, 141pp (fiction)

A woman returns to live in her childhood home in Brisbane after living in London for forty years recounts her life as she remembers it and draws a painful picture of her emptiness in old age.

I96 :WOOLF, Virginia

To the Lighthouse

Granada, 1927, 192pp (fiction)

"This is a book which engages the reader at an emotional level first and foremost, and the private experience of reading it and entering into it is both profound and moving, and very well worth the trouble" (G. Southgate, Notewriter, 2007).

J23b: LEE, Harper

To Kill A Mockingbird

Mandarin, 1960, 309pp (fiction)

Set in the deep South, a black man is accused of raping a poor white girl. Atticus Finch, lawyer and father of Jem and Scout, is asked to defend him. Told by Scout, through the eyes of a child, the social mores of the tiny Southern town is held up for inspection along with a strong narrative. A truly great book.

G08D: DOOGUE, Geraldine and KIRKWOOD, Peter

Tomorrow's Islam

ABC Books, 2005, 344pp (non fiction)

"[Doogue and Kirkwood] put the hard questions about terrorism, democracy and the treatment of women in Muslim nations to an international group of progressive yet devout Muslim thinkers. Their answers are both enlightening and provocative." (Book cover). Offers perspectives on the Australian scene.

E22: GILDINER, Catherine

Too Close to the Falls: A Memoir

Flamingo, London, 2002, 350pp (non fiction)

Very entertaining, fun and poignant read. Set in the 1950's in a small town close to Niagara Falls. Follow the unusual story of Cathy from childhood to adolescence – she starts to work in her father's pharmacy at the age of four because of her excess energy. Cathy vividly brings to life the eccentric people around her. Includes encounters with Marilyn Monroe and an Indian chief.

E17: DAVIDSON, Robyn

Tracks

Jonathan Cape, 1980, 254pp (non fiction)

Davidson taught herself to tame and train camels, and then travelled with four of them and one dog across 1,700 miles of desert from Alice Springs to the Coast of Western Australia. Tracks is the name she gave the book about her odyssey. It is an exploration of the desert and of herself.

H32: HAZZARD, Shirley

The Transit of Venus

Virago, (1980) 2004, 337pp (fiction)

Two Australian sisters travel to post-war England to seek their fortunes. Caro, gallant and adventurous finds love brings passion, sorrow, betrayal and finally hope. The milder Grace seeks fulfilment in an apparently happy marriage. "A wonderfully mysterious book... Both the plot and characters are many layered. Unforgettably rich." Anne Tyler

I41: GREENE, Graham

Travels With My Aunt

Penguin, 1969, 265pp (fiction)

A prematurely retired bank manager, interested only in dahlias, meets an extraordinary "Aunt" who, by exposing him to a chain of events, forces him to completely reassess his idea of life. Well worth reading.

H80W: WHITE, Patrick

The Tree of Man

Vintage, (1955) 1994, 480 pp (fiction)

An inter-generational story of life in rural Australia. Stan Parker carves himself a farm out of the Australian bush. Here the Parker clan grows and is beset by the hardships of life and nature. White raises the question of how meaning can be found in a meaningless world. This is the book that brought Patrick White to international attention.

H11c: CAREY, Peter

True History of the Kelly Gang

UQP, 2000, 401pp (fiction)

Styled as Ned Kelly writing to his daughter about the events of his life. The novel is a mixture of fact and fiction. Carey tries to find the man behind the myth, and offer insights into the society that shaped Kelly.

M3C: HOLDFORTH, Lucinda

True Pleasures: A Memoir of Women in Paris

Vintage, 2004, 226pp (non fiction)

Meet the famous women of Paris: from Colette to Nancy Mitford; Marie Antoinette to Coco Chanel; Napoleon's Josephine to Edith Wharton. The author takes us on a tour of the streets of Paris evoking the historical atmosphere and mood of Paris and the highs and lows of well-known women throughout its history.

H81A: WINTON, Tim

The Turning

Picador, 2004, 317pp (fiction)

Interconnected short stories. Here are the turnings of all kinds – changes of heart, surprises, slow awakenings, and sudden detours – where people struggle against the weight of the past and challenge the lives they've made for themselves.

C08: HOBAN, Russell

Turtle Diary

Published 1975, 200pp (non fiction)

Two people emotionally and philosophically striving to break the barriers between people and animals find themselves involved in a struggle to free three sea turtles at the London Zoo. Perceptive, imaginative, and will provoke discussion in all aspects of freedom.

M02B: DESSAIX, Robert

Twilight of Love: Travels with Turgenev

Pan Macmillan, 2004, 275pp (non fiction)

Memoir; literary biography and travel - Follow Robert on a journey through Germany, France and Russia, examination of the life of Russian novelist Turgenev. Love, loneliness and belonging; atmospheric, charming and beautiful.

K04c: DE LOO, Tessa

The Twins

Arcadia Books, 2000, 392pp (non fiction)

Two elderly women, one Dutch and one German, meet by chance at the famous health resort of Spa. They recognise in each other their twin sister they believed to be lost. They begin to tell each other their life stories - to bridge a gulf of almost seventy years. Lotte, who sheltered Jews in hiding during the war, is initially suspicious of her newly-found twin sister.

I86: TREVOR, William

Two Lives

Penguin, 1991, 375pp (fiction)

Two rich and moving short stories. Both are about women who triumph in one way or another. This Irish writer is sophisticated and sensitive and this book will provoke much discussion.

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K16a: KUNDERA, Milan

The Unbearable Lightness of Being

Faber, 1985, 314pp (fiction)

A political novel and a love story all in one, it tells of three people in Czechoslovakia whose lives are enmeshed. Each one deals with the political upheavals in their own way, each has a burden and each resolves this problem differently. Fascinating read.

I06B: BENNETT, Alan

The Uncommon Reader

Faber and Faber, 2007, 125pp (fiction)

The Queen of England discovers a passion for reading; a passion so great that her public duties begin to suffer. Her equerries conspire to bring the Queen's literary odyssey to a close. The Uncommon Reader offers the perfect argument for reading.

F10: SAUL, John Ralston

The Unconscious Civilization

Penguin Books, 1997, 205pp (non fiction)

Essays. Saul writes from a historical and philosophical perspective about the dominance of special interest groups and economics in Western society. Our society, Saul argues, is only superficially based on the individual and democracy. Increasingly it is conformist and corporatist.

E38a: LESSING, Doris

Under My Skin

Harper Collins, 1994, 419pp (non fiction)

This is the first volume of Doris Lessing's autobiography. It begins with her childhood in Africa and ends on her arrival in London in 1949 with the typescript of her first novel, *The Grass is Singing*, in her suitcase. Far more than an autobiography, it is challenging, evocative of childhood and absorbing.

M03e: MAYES, Frances

Under the Tuscan Sun

Broadway, 1996, 280pp (non fiction)

Anyone who has the fantasy of buying and restoring an old house in romantic Italy will just love this book. Frances Mayes is ideally placed to take us on a journey through some of the culture and history of Tuscany; she is a poet, gourmet cook and travel writer and also teaches creative writing at San Francisco State University. An ideal read for the armchair traveller.

E57B: PILKINGTON, Doris/ GARIMARA, Nugi

Under the Wintamarra Tree

Published 2002, 208pp (non fiction)

This is Pilkington's life story, which follows on from her mother's Molly's story in *Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence*. The author experienced similar hardships to Molly at the Moore River Native Settlement. At eighteen, she moved to Perth to train to be a nurse's aide. After marriage and children, she decided to find her mother and father and to reclaim her Mardu heritage. This is a story of hardship, endurance and healing. Please note this title has no notes and is to be selected in conjunction with *Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence*.

H45L: LEGGE, Kate

The Unexpected Elements of Love

Viking, 2006, 250pp (fiction)

Contemporary Australian novel by award winning journalist Kate Legge. The novel centres on two interconnected families facing different pressures: a hyperactive child, a difficult marriage, infertility, dementia and global warming! Issues relating to dementia and ADHD told with humour and sensitivity.

I1: ADAM, Paul

Unholy Trinity

Little, Brown & Co., 1999, 345pp (fiction)

An easy read with all the elements of a page-turner. Set in Rome, the murder of a priest starts a chain of events for Andy Chapman, a foreign correspondent, and Elena Fiorini, a magistrate who handles the case. Not known to each other before, they find themselves drawn together by the drive to solve the murder. Old links with the Catholic Church and the Fascists in WWII are exposed. Powerful forces are determined to stop the two.

H21E: FLANAGAN, Richard

The Unknown Terrorist

Picador, 2006, 325pp (fiction)

What would you do if you turned on the television and saw you were the most wanted terrorist in Australia? Confronting, bleak and thought provoking. Who can you really trust in contemporary Australian society? Some explicit sex scenes. A pacey, accessible read.

J34E: SHIELDS, Carol

Unless

Fourth Estate, 2002, 213pp (fiction)

A powerful book which combines the ordinariness of everyday life with a deeper search for meaning and hope. Reta has always enjoyed the useful monotony of happiness: a loving family, good friends, growing success as a writer of light fiction. This placid existence starts fraying when her daughter Nora "drops out".

M04M: MACKINNON, A.J.

The Unlikely Voyage of Jack de Crow

Black Inc, 2008, 351pp (non fiction)

An epic voyage, undertaken with courage and recounted with flair and humour. The author travels in a dinghy from North Wales to the Black Sea through twelve countries. Along the way he experiences the kindness of strangers, gets very lost, and perfects the art of slow travel.

E57C: PUNG, Alice

Unpolished Gem

Black Inc, 2006, 282pp (non fiction)

A loving and irreverent portrait of a Chinese-Cambodian family living in Melbourne. Alice – a young lawyer and writer tells of her childhood experiences and the challenges of growing up in two cultures. "Unpolished Gem offers a vivid and ironic sense of both worlds. It combines the story of Pung's life growing up in suburban Footscray with the inherited stories of the women in her family - stories of madness, survival and heartbreak" (blackincbooks.com) Fresh and interesting writing with unforgettable family members. A story told with humour and honesty.

E32: JAMES, Clive

Unreliable Memoirs

St Edmundsbury, 1980, 171pp (non fiction)

An Australian-born theatre critic and satirist working in London turns his attention to his boyhood in Sydney. This is a very witty and enjoyable autobiography.

V

K14: KNOX, Elizabeth

The Vintner's Luck

Vintage, 1999, 241pp (fiction)

Burgundy, 1808. One night, Sobran Jodeau, a young vintner, meets an angel in his vineyard: a gorgeous creature with a sense of humour and an inquiring mind. They meet every year on the anniversary of the date. Meanwhile, village life and history marches on bringing with it a multiplicity of changes. This novel brings together a close look at the human condition and elements of fairy-tale. An unusual book that stays with you long after it is finished. May offend.

E52: NICOLSON, Nigel

Virginia Woolf

Phoenix, 2000, 165pp (non fiction)

Nigel Nicolson is the son of Vita Sackville-West, who was Virginia Woolf's most intimate friend, and for a short time her lover. An affectionate but not uncritical portrait of this remarkable woman. Very accessible. Includes photographs.

K18L: LIEBENBERG, Lauren

The Voluptuous Delights of Peanut Butter and Jam

Virago, 2008, 245pp (fiction)

Two sisters live on a remote farm in the east of Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia, in the late 1970's. Beneath the dripping vines of the Vumba rainforest, and under the tutelage of their heretical grandfather, theirs is a seductive childhood laced with African paganism, mangled Catholicism and the lore of the Brothers Grimm until their orphaned cousin arrives. A dark and delightful novel filled with vivid descriptions of the landscape and rituals set against the backdrop of civil war and the death throes of a colony.

W

M04a: MURPHY, Dervla

The Waiting Land

Century, 1967, 213pp (non fiction)

This popular writer travels through Tibet, that timeless land that holds a fascination for so many. She meets the Dalai Lama and in her own special way, gives the reader an intimate picture of Tibet, a personal and interesting tale.

E38ab: LESSING, Doris

Walking in the Shade

Harper Collins, 1997, 368pp (non fiction)

The second volume of Lessing's autobiography is thought provoking and amusing. It begins in 1949 when she arrives in London. She is idealistic and politically active. Written with a searing honesty, she talks wryly about her communist phase, her love affairs, and her initiation into the English class system and her problems as a single mother. This is not just autobiography, but also an historical chronicle of society at the time.

M03W: KEVIN, Tony

Walking the Camino: A Modern Pilgrimage to Santiago

Scribe, 2007, 301pp (non fiction)

In May 2006, armed only with a small rucksack and a staff, Tony Kevin, an overweight, sedentary, 63-year-old former diplomat, set off on an eight-week trek across Spain. This book beautifully captures the flavour of what it was like to walk the Camino.

H21W: FLANAGAN, Richard

Wanting

Knopf, 2008, 256pp (fiction)

"...Wanting is set in Tasmania and uses the parallel lives of 19th century governor and polar explorer John Franklin, Charles Dickens and Mathinna, an Aboriginal girl, to explore desire and the costs of trying to use reason to control it" (Radio National The Book Show 12 Nov 2008). This is not a work of historical fiction, but the author does write about the lives of these historical figures, and the storyline is based on some facts. Could generate debate about where to draw the line between fact and fiction.

J14J: JAMES, Henry

Washington Square

Penguin Classics, (1880) 2003, 223pp (fiction)

Family drama played out in a well-to-do district of New York City in the 1880s. Catherine Sloper is plain and rather boring, but she has a rich father. The latter quality attracts Morris Townsend. They become betrothed, but Catherine's father threatens disinheritance. The stage is now set for drama. A masterpiece: entertaining, subtle and full of suspense. It offers an insight into a world gone by.

J17G: GRUEN, Sara

Water for Elephants

Allen & Unwin, 2006, 335pp (fiction)

Jacob Jankowski, now in his nineties, recalls his days working in a circus during the Great Depression of the early 1930's in America. Fascinating account of the internal politics of a circus. Filled with interesting characters. Bleak at times but contains romance, drama, humour, passion and escape! Warning: contain cruelty to animals and humans.

I80a: SWIFT, Graham

Waterland

Picador, 1983, 310pp (fiction)

This is a clever novel, ambitious in its depth. Swift has mapped his Waterland like a new Wessex. The tale he tells is at once a history of England, a Fenland documentary, and a fictional autobiography. The strangeness and weird effects of "a landscape, which of all landscapes, most approximated to nothing", is superbly done. This is a beautiful, serious and intelligent novel.

E03b: BOWDEN, Tim

The Way My Father Tells It

ABC Books, 1990, 276pp (non fiction)

A whimsical wander down memory lane with Tim Bowden and his father. Tim Bowden is already popular, and his biography of his father will reinforce this feeling. Put it at the top of your list if you like to reminisce and look at personal social history.

J35b: SHREVE, Anita

The Weight of Water

Little, Brown and Co., 1997, 246pp (fiction)

Researching an old murder committed in 1873, Jean, a photo-journalist travels to the Isles of Shoals to see the location for herself. The debate about the guilt of the man hanged for the crime has lasted for more than 100 years. Isolation and claustrophobia wreak their havoc.

H25b: GOYDER, Julie

We'll be Married in Fremantle

Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2001, 216pp (non fiction)

An old man with Alzheimer's disease falls in love with a nurse, whom he seems to confuse with his fiancé of long ago. A sharing of stories enriches both their lives. This heart-warming non-fiction weaves biography, autobiography and anecdote.

H40: JOLLEY, Elizabeth

The Well

Penguin, 1986, 176pp (fiction)

The well at the bottom of the garden holds a dark secret. A lonely spinster living with her father not only brings home the groceries from the store, but a girl. A fascinating story unfolds.

J35S: SHRIVER, Lionel

We Need to Talk about Kevin

Counterpoint, 2005, 400pp (fiction)

Can someone be born evil? One afternoon, shortly before his 16th birthday, Kevin murders seven of his fellow high school students, a cafeteria worker and a teacher. What makes a person commit such a crime? Nature or nurture? Very well written in an honest and direct style, this fast-paced and compelling narrative explores issues concerning relationships within a family. Can a mother actually dislike her own child?

C13A: SUZUKI, David (ed.)

When the Wild Comes Leaping Up: Personal encounters with nature

Allen & Unwin, 2002, 235pp (non fiction)

A powerful collection of original essays by outstanding international writers based on their personal experiences of nature. Each writer describes a personal encounter with the natural world that moved him or her and led to a new level of understanding or awareness.

I48ab: ISHIGURO, Kazuo

When We Were Orphans

Faber & Faber, 2000, 312pp (fiction)

Ishiguro sets the reader thinking about life, love and everything else. Told through the eyes of the self-professed 'most famous detective in England', the final case is his own. Orphaned in Shanghai, he tries to find out what happened to his parents and his childhood Japanese friend.

E11b: CONRAD, Peter

Where I Fell to Earth

Hogarth Press, 1990, 252pp (non fiction)

Conrad's search for a home after leaving Tasmania. Eventually, he finds four places: an Oxford college, a hermit's cottage in the heart of London, a house in Lisbon and an apartment in New York. Moving between different worlds and cultures, he explores the way we order experience, and finds in the impulse to do so both the source of our art and a clue to our survival. We advise you read Down Home first.

E60: ROBERTS, Barney

Where's Morning Gone?

Penguin, 1987, 182pp (non fiction)

This is an autobiographical account of the author's childhood in Tasmania. Childhood is brought back to the reader; wandering through the pages of the past, visiting a world that eludes most adults.

H67: ROSE, Heather

White Heart

Published 1999, 312pp (fiction)

Farley Willow and her brother Ambrose grew up on the remote shores of Tasmania with their remarkable grandfather. When Papa dies everything changes. Ambrose becomes a modern-day mountain man, living alone and searching for a Tasmanian Tiger. Farley juggles love, work and single motherhood in the city. She eventually ends up in New Mexico and the world of native American sun dancers.

I77: SMITH, Zadie

White Teeth

Penguin, 2000, 542pp (fiction)

Set in contemporary multicultural London tells the story of three cultures and three families over three generations. A funny, life affirming story dealing with love, war and friendship.

K10A: ADIGA, Arvin

The White Tiger

Atlantic Books, 2008, 321pp (fiction)

Winner of the Man Booker Prize 2008. The White Tiger is described as a 'compelling, angry and darkly humorous' novel about a man's journey from Indian village life to entrepreneurial success. One reviewer said it was an 'unadorned portrait' of India seen 'from the bottom of the heap'. A pacey, entertaining read.

G10: MANNE, Robert (ed.)

Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History

Black Inc., 2003 385pp (non fiction)

Package includes 1 copy of Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History and notes covering the debate and controversy surrounding its publication. Critique of the book and history of the dispossession of Tasmanian aborigines. Contributors include Henry Reynolds, Cassandra Pybus and Lyndall Ryan.

K19a: MURAKAMI, Haruki

A Wild Sheep Chase

Penguin, 1982, 299pp (fiction)

Described as a cross between Woody Allen and Kafka, this lively novel is international in flavour and the sheep chase keeps you engrossed. It is bizarre and logical at the same time. Unusual but worthwhile.

E07a: CHANG, Jung

Wild Swans

Flamingo, 1991, 676pp (non fiction)

This is a very personal and readable book that spans three generations of Chinese women. This would be best as a two-month read.

H35: JACOBSON, Michael

Windmill Hill

Hodder Headline, 2002, 364pp (fiction)

Friendships between men is a strong theme. A grandson kidnaps his grandfather from a nursing home and they head to Queenstown (Tas) to plant a garden. This becomes a healing experience for both of them.

M06A: ROTHWELL, Nicholas

Wings of the Kite-Hawk: A journey into the heart of Australia

Picador, 2003, 327pp (non fiction)

Follow in the footsteps of famous explorers eg Sturt, Strehlow, Giles and more recent people who journeyed into the remote central Australian region. Conveys the essence of the landscape and of the people who explored the area and their descendents who still live there. Poetic. Challenging. The conclusion of the book is a particularly excellent read.

I21: DRABBLE, Margaret

The Witch of Exmoor

Viking, 1996, 275pp (fiction)

A midsummer's evening in Hampshire, deep in the country, and the Palmer family are coming to the end of an enjoyable meal. They play a dinner-party game: what kind of society would you accept if you didn't know your place in it beforehand? But the abstract question of justice, like all their family conversations, is brought back to the more pressing problem of their famous and eccentric mother, Frieda. She had abandoned them and her old life in favour of an existence alone on Exmoor.

E25: GUSMÃO, Kirsty Sword

A Woman of Independence

Pan MacMillan, 2003, 320pp (non fiction)

How does a Melbourne girl end up becoming the first lady of East Timor? A Woman of Independence is the memoir of Kirsty Sword Gusmão that deals with the period from 1990 to 2002. It recounts her involvement with the East Timorese struggle for independence and her relationship with Xanana Gusmão. Books such as A Woman of Independence present the reader with a challenge: what is it that you are doing in the world?

I44: HARDY, Thomas

The Woodlanders

Pan, 1887, 367pp (fiction)

One of Hardy's greater novels, set in Wessex and Dorset. Unlike his later novels, there is contentment and even gaiety in The Woodlanders, but muted pessimism on grave moral and social moments is expressed. This is a book of brilliantly restrained power.

I15: COLLINS, Wilkie

The Woman in White

OUP, 1859, 648pp (fiction)

Probably still the greatest mystery thriller in the language. This very Victorian novel cost Thackeray a night's sleep and Gladstone a theatre party. Once past the first hurdle you will not be able to rest until you know whether evil has been defeated and good triumphs.

I09: BRONTË, Emily

Wuthering Heights

Penguin, 1847, 367pp (fiction)

Set in the desolate Yorkshire moors, it tells the story of Heathcliff and Cathy, and the age-old clash between passion on the one hand and orderly discipline on the other.

X, Y, Z

110b: BROOKS, Geraldine

Year of Wonders

Griffin Press, 2001, 308pp (fiction)

Through housemaid Anna's eyes, we witness the story of the plague year, 1666, when her fellow villagers are convinced by a visionary young minister to quarantine themselves within the village. But as death reaches into every household, faith frays, and Anna becomes an unlikely heroine and healer.