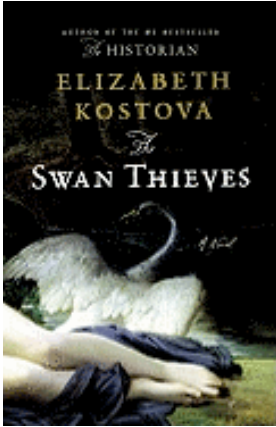


Grown-Ups Summer Reading 2010

F K86s Kostova, Elizabeth. *The Swan Thieves*, 2010.



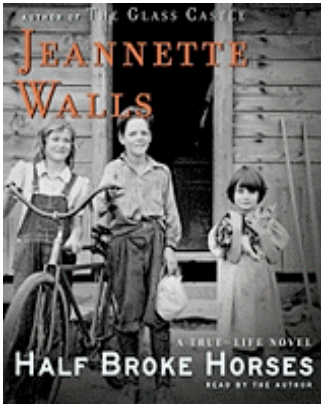
Kostova's is the author of *The Historian*. Her new book, set partly in Washington, tells a rather simple story, and its characters, don't change radically over time. All are painters. The troubled and troubling figure around which the novel expands is Robert Oliver, a charismatic and hugely talented contemporary American painter in his early 40s with a style reminiscent of the impressionists. Robert suffers from the all-too-human miseries of artistic obsession. He has recently been arrested for trying to attack a painting called "Leda" in the 19th-century collection at the National Gallery of Art, and lands in a psychiatric facility called Goldengrove in Rockville. There he's assigned to a doctor named Andrew Marlow, himself a painter. After a brief interview with Marlow, Robert refuses to speak for the 11 months he remains at Goldengrove, expressing himself only by compulsively sketching and painting the same mysterious figure: a beautiful young woman in period Victorian clothing. Baffled and fascinated, Marlow embarks on a quest to understand the origins of Robert's fixation, traveling to North Carolina, New York and as far as France and Mexico to interview the people who might shed light on the painter's silent mania. All of Kostova's characters have lots of interesting, intelligent things to say about the actual sensation that accompanies the work of painting -- the scratch of sketch, the glop of color, the smell of linseed. Check it out if you're an art lover.

F E59g Enright, Anne. *The Gathering*, 2009.



Enright is considered one of Ireland's finest novelists. The blessing and the curse of family bonds have been addressed by some of our best writers, perhaps never so movingly as by William Kennedy in his Albany cycle of novels. Now Irish novelist Enright, whose intense lyrical style recalls Kennedy's, gives full voice to another tale of familial agony: Veronica's grief in the wake of her wayward brother Liam's suicide. Past and present merge as Veronica recalls their childhood growing up in Dublin in a family of 14, with never enough money or enough attention from their overburdened parents. She's convinced it all went wrong when Liam was sexually abused by a family friend, and her recollections of that day alternate with sunnier ones of their endless roughhousing and joking. When Liam drowned himself, with a tide of "blood, sea water and whiskey" running in his veins, he took Veronica's sense of purpose with him. Inconsolable, and suffering from insomnia, she spends her evenings driving and writing, trying to come to terms with the fact that "someone you love is dead, and the world is full of people you don't." Enright's hypnotic prose turns her desperation into something fierce and beautiful. Now as the nine surviving Hegarty children gather for the wake, Veronica "the questioning one" is going to try and unmask the perpetrator of Liam's tragedy.

F W215 Walls, Jeanette. *Half-Broke Horses: A True-Life Novel*, 2010.



Leslie Eckmann recommended this book to me. What a tale about a woman brought up in the West when it was really wild. In her best-selling memoir, *The Glass Castle* (2005), Walls chronicled her painfully enlightening childhood. She now loops back to tell the even more gripping tale of her maternal grandmother, the formidable horse-training, poker-playing rancher and teacher Lily Casey Smith. Because she patched the story together from reminiscences, used her imagination to fill in the gaps, and decided to have Lily narrate so we could all experience her sharp-shooter's directness, Walls wisely calls this a novel. Fact, fiction, either way, every tall-tale episode in Lily's rough-and-tumble life is hugely entertaining and provocative, while Walls prose is as crystal clear and reviving as the water Lily cherishes in the high desert. Flash floods, tornadoes, blizzards, drought, con men, bigots, scum, and fools, unflappable Lily courageously faces them all. And why not? She was the smartest and toughest in her otherwise inept West Texas family. As she travels across the plains winning rodeos, selling moonshine, marrying her soul mate, raising two kids, running a ranch, and teaching in remote one-room schoolhouses Lily, proud, uncompromising, pistol-packing, and whip-smart, finds a lesson in every setback and showdown. Walls does her grandmother proud in this historically revealing and triumphant novel of a fearless, progressive woman who will not be corralled.

369.29 P484 Petersen, Melody. *Our Daily Meds: How the Pharmaceutical Companies Transformed Themselves Into Slick Marketing Machines and Hooked the Nation on Prescription Drugs*. 2008.



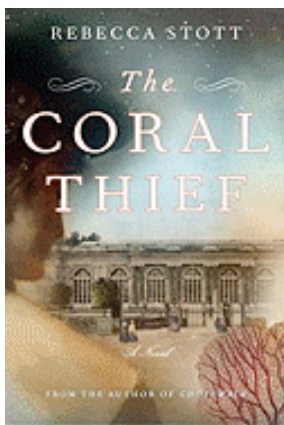
Librarians are trained to never give legal or medical advice but to provide the print and online means for their patrons to access it. If you read one non-fiction book this summer, make it this one for you own health and perhaps the health of loved ones. Melody Petersen covered the pharmaceutical beat for *The New York Times* for four years. In 1997, her investigative reporting won a Gerald Loeb Award, one of the highest honors in business journalism. Her excellent research shows that in the last thirty years, the big pharmaceutical companies have transformed themselves into marketing machines selling dangerous medicines as if they were Coca-Cola or Cadillacs. They pitch drugs with video games and soft cuddly toys for children; promote them in churches and subways, at NASCAR races and state fairs. They've become experts at promoting fear of disease, just so they can sell us hope. There is no doubt that pharmaceutical drugs can save lives. But the relentless marketing that has enriched corporate executives and sent stock prices soaring has not come without consequences. Prescription pills, taken as directed by physicians, are estimated to kill one American every five minutes. This figure doesn't reflect the damage done as the overmedicated take to the roads. Petersen connects the dots to show how corporate salesmanship has triumphed over science inside the biggest pharmaceutical companies and, in turn, how this promotion driven industry has taken over the practice of medicine and is changing American life. She shows how an industry with the promise to help so many is leaving a legacy of needless harm and potentially life-changing consequences for everyone, not just the 65 percent of Americans who unscrew a prescription cap every day.

973.9 E28b Eagan, Timothy. *The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire That Saved America*, 2009.



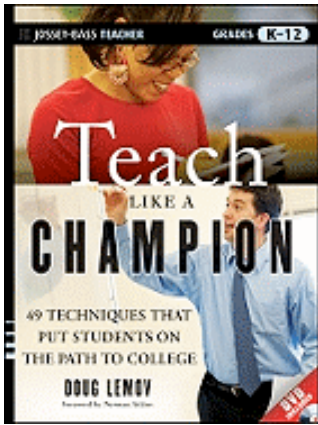
New York Times columnist and National Book Award winner Eagan (*The Worst Hard Times: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl*, 2005, etc.) dissects the national park's s worst-ever forest fire and its aftermath. Erupting over two August days in the tinder-dry Bitterroot Mountains along the Idaho-Montana border, it consumed three million woodland acres, wiped out several railroad-junction towns and killed nearly 100 people, most of them temporary fire fighters and the U.S. Forest Service rangers who had hired them. Egan focuses his probing tale on two men, Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, who had met two decades before, finding they had wealthy families and a deep love of the outdoors in common. In the author's accounting, the idea of conservation, as now generally accepted, was essentially launched from the relationship between Roosevelt and Pinchot. Roosevelt proved crucial in many endeavors. He set aside, as Egan writes, "an area roughly the size of France" as public-domain national forest in the West and appointed Pinchot as founding director of the Forest Service, which was then an agency with no authority that faced nearly total public antipathy, including that of the powerful timber and railroad barons. The "Big Burn," however, during which undermanned ranks of rangers were dying in the last line of defense, drastically changed public sentiment.

F S888 Stott, Rebecca. *The Coral Thief*, 2010.



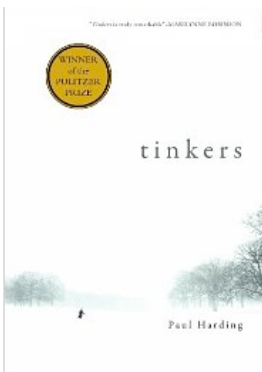
Just as she did in her critically lauded debut, *Ghostwalk* (2007), Stott again skillfully combines an intriguing love story, complex scientific concepts, and a beautifully realized historical setting. Daniel Connor, a recent medical-school graduate from Edinburgh, is headed to Paris just a few weeks after Napoleon fell to the Allies at Waterloo. He is set to study anatomy at the vaunted Jardin des Plantes, but his identification and a valuable coral specimen are stolen from him by a beautiful fellow stagecoach passenger. Devastated by his loss, he systematically patrols the streets of Paris in search of the thief. When he finally finds her, his life is irrevocably changed as she introduces him to a band of philosopher thieves who have some radically new ideas about evolution. They, however, are being hunted in turn by a formidable police chief (based on real-life criminal turned cop, Vidocq). As the coral thief seduces Daniel both physically and intellectually, he is drawn into a daring scheme to steal a famous diamond. Stott effortlessly captures both the chaos of Paris changing social hierarchy and the exhilaration of intellectuals who have freed themselves from the tyranny of dogma. Riveting on all fronts, from its suspenseful plot to its elegant presentation of evolutionary theory.

PRO 371.3 L558 Lemoy, Doug. *Teach Like a Champion 49 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College* (with 25 DVD clips) Jossey Bass, 2010.



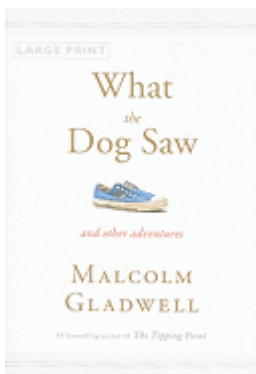
If you read one education book over the summer, choose this one. It's a comprehensive resource filled with the techniques that have proven that it is possible to close the achievement gap. In this book, author Doug Lemoy offers the essential tools of the teaching craft so that you can unlock the talent and skill waiting in your students, no matter how many previous classrooms, schools, or teachers have been unsuccessful. This must-have resource is filled with concrete, specific, and actionable classroom teaching techniques that you can start using in your classroom tomorrow. *TLAC* has been mentioned several times in *New York Times* articles as a breakthrough book that is both visionary and comprehensive. Don't have time to read it? Check out the accompanying DVD replete with 25 video clips of teachers demonstrating the techniques in the classroom. Although they are done with charter school students, you will quickly see the universality of their methods.

Harding, Paul. *Tinkers*. (Winner of the 2010 Pulitzer Prize)



This compact, adamantine debut dips in and out of the consciousness of a New England patriarch named George Washington Crosby as he lies dying on a hospital bed in his living room, 'right where they put the dining room table, fitted with its two extra leaves for holiday dinners'... George Washington Crosby repairs clocks for a living and on his deathbed revisits his turbulent childhood as the oldest son of an epileptic smalltime traveling salesman. The descriptions of the father's epilepsy and the cold halo of chemical electricity that encircled him immediately before he was struck by a full seizure are stunning, and the household's sadness permeates the narrative as George returns to more melancholy scenes. The real star is Harding's language, which dazzles whether he's describing the workings of clocks, sensory images of nature, the many engaging side characters who populate the book, or even a short passage on how to build a bird nest. This is an especially gorgeous example of novelistic craftsmanship.

814.6 G543w Gladwell, Malcolm. *What the Dog Saw and Other Adventures*, 2009.



Gladwell is a staff writer for the *New Yorker*, in whose pages he has published many thought-provoking and just-plain-offbeat essays. This collection brings some of those together, including a profile of Ron Popeil, the television pitchman; an analysis of the downfall of Enron, with special emphasis on the easy availability of information; an intriguing look at criminal profiling; an exploration of why there are so few brands of ketchup on the market; an account of a case of plagiarism in which Gladwell was one of the victims; a chronicle of the development of hair dye and its social ramifications; and a consideration of the phenomenon of dog whispering (this essay gives the book its title). As in his best-selling books, Gladwell displays an easygoing writing style and a sharp critical mind. This is the kind of essay collection you can read from cover to cover or, just as satisfactorily, dip into a bit at a time. It's a librarian's delight since many people define

us as “walking encyclopedias of superficial information.”

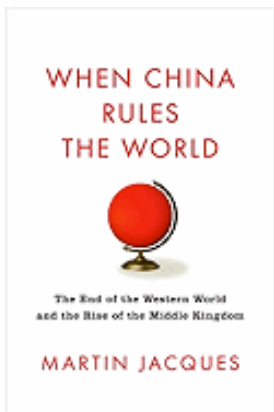
F B554a *Best African American Fiction, 2009.*



Here's another book that you can dip into or out of at leisure. There hasn't been an anthology of such talented African-American literary figures since Marita Golden's "Gumbo", and the result is a masterful bouquet of literary flowers, some grand, some subtle, but none shrinking. Striking among the collection is Cell One, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's ("Half of a Yellow Sun") cautionary tale of what happens when success and ambition outpace discipline and firm-handedness in child-rearing in Nigeria. The son of a professor and his accommodating wife, Nnamabia is titillated by thug life, and it isn't until he's arrested and observes the blatant disrespect toward a sick elder that he remembers the good sense his parents instilled long ago. In "This Kind of Red", Helen Lee ("Water Marked") tells of a battered woman who copes by counting everything from crayons to the minutes she has to kill her abusive husband. Mat Johnson ("Drop") offers an excerpt from "The Great Negro Plot", his novel infused with the history of slavery

and indentured servitude in colonial New York. With something for every reader's taste, this is a collection not to be missed.

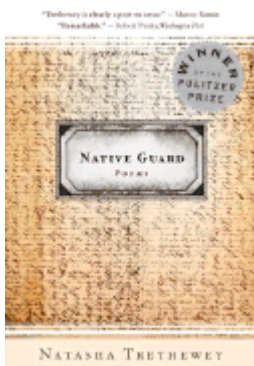
330.951 J19 **Jacques, Martin.** *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order, 2009.*



You have to keep in mind that British journalist Jacques is a Marxist, but he has valuable experience reporting from China and Japan. In this rather lengthy book, he explores the increasing influence of a strengthening China on international relations. Citing economic statistics in abundance, Jacques depicts China's booming economy in relative ascendance over those of Europe, Japan, and the U.S. The author argues, however, that China's civilization rather than its GDP will be the crucial impact on the international system, which he sees as Western-created, U.S.-dominated, and—given Jacques' certainty that the U.S. is a declining power—destined to be modified by China. Essentially, Jacques refutes that Western theories of modernization and democratization apply to China and predicts a Chinese style of modernity characterized by a revival of a Chinese historical sense of civilizational superiority. Delivering a tour d'horizon of China's relations with foreign countries, Jacques envisions their future

development as comparable to a comeback of imperial China's tributary system. Jacques' views our discussion starters for trend-spotting students and faculty of the world scene.

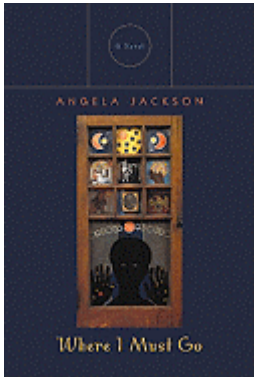
811.6 T805 **Trethewey, Natasha.** *Native Guard, (2007 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry)*



Trethewey's exacting and resonant poetry is rooted in the shadow side of American history. In her first two collections, she empathically dramatizes the lives of women of color. Here she enters the arena of war and unveils a harrowing betrayal. In commanding, bayonet-sharp lyrics, Trethewey matches states of mind with states of nature and rigorously distills fact and feeling into loaded phrases and philosophical metaphors as she tells the terrible story of the Native Guard. Newly freed from slavery, the men were mustered in 1862 in Louisiana to become the first Union Army regiment of black soldiers. But the courageous black troops who fell in combat were left unburied, and the black soldiers who continued fighting with valor and conviction were fired upon by their white comrades. Moving from grim historical events to personal history, Trethewey tells the story of a white man and a black woman who marry, even though their union is illegal in

their home state of Mississippi. There a daughter is born, a poet in the making, profoundly attuned to the tragedies of racial strife.

F J12 Jackson, Angela. *Where I Must Go*, 2010.



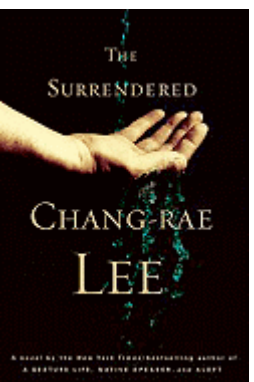
Justifiably proud of her admission to elite Eden University, but apprehensive about the myriad ways her working-class family will embarrass her or tug on loyalties of race and class, Magdalena Grace sets off for her freshman year. It is 1968, and she and her two roommates are part of a contingent of black students newly enrolled at the midwestern university, all struggling with the same divided loyalties. They cling to each other in solidarity as racial tensions escalate, traveling to the nearby big city for cultural fortification. But Magdalena finds that her connections to the city, as well as her family's deeper roots in the South, are challenged by generational and geographical differences. On campus, she navigates shifting politics among an array of students and faculty, whites and blacks. A campus protest by black students and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the ensuing riots help crystallize her emotions. Through lyrical writing and finely drawn characters, acclaimed poet Jackson captures the pain and joy of self-discovery in late adolescence, as well as struggles of race and class identity, against the backdrop of racial tensions on a college campus in the 1960s.

F G892 Grushin, Olga. *The Line*, 2010.



There's some truth behind this fictional book. During Soviet times, Moscow residents were famous for getting on the "cheese line" in a well-known grocery store and moving back and forth to do the rest of their shopping. The eponymous line in Grushin's novel is a conceit that showcases the hopes and dreams of a slice of Soviet society after "the Change," the repressive period following the Revolution of 1917. In Grushin's line, one of many thousands that stretched across the Soviet Union over the decades, citizens stand and wait for some initially unspecified goods to be put up for sale by the state. It finally turns out that the kiosk will be selling tickets for a concert to be conducted by a supposedly returning expatriate composer (in real life, a line like this actually formed for a concert by Igor Stravinsky). With only one ticket allowed per person, three members of a family of four take turns waiting for an entire year. Their motives are mixed and shifting, and in the end astonishing secrets are revealed. The miracle of this book is that its young author, who was born in Moscow but writes in English, has managed to transform the drab and dreary lives of beleaguered Soviet citizens into a tale of consummate beauty. Like a diamond with countless facets, this work is utterly brilliant.

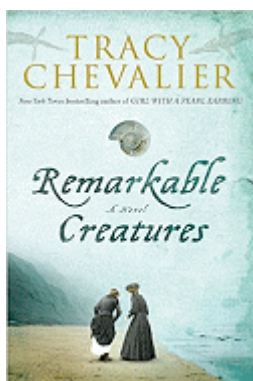
F L477 Lee, Chang Rae. *The Surrendered*, 2010.



Life was too fearsome, learns Hector, an American of problematic good looks and miraculous physical invincibility, who unwillingly abets in the deaths of his loved ones. Hector's suffering turns mythic when he enlists to fight in Korea, then stays to work at an orphanage, where his fate becomes entwined with that of young June, who arrives alone and starving after trying valiantly to save her younger siblings. Seeking sanctuary, both damaged souls instead are tormented by love for Sylvie, the director's beautiful wife, herself severely marked by the murders of her Good Samaritan parents by the Japanese in Manchuria. With his signature empathy and artistry, Lee links emotionally complex events at the orphanage with equally nuanced and devastating encounters three decades later, when June, a flinty New York antiques dealer dying of cancer, reunites with Hector, a brooding janitor. Profoundly committed to authenticity, and in command of a remarkable gift for multidimensional metaphors, Lee dramatizes the guilt and mystery of survival in scenes of scalding

horror and breathtaking beauty. With the war chronicle that engendered the Red Cross, *The Memory of Solferino* (1862), by Nobel Peace Prize winner J. H. Dunant, as his polestar, Lee has created a masterpiece of moral and psychological imagination unsparing in its illumination of the consequences of bloodshed and war.

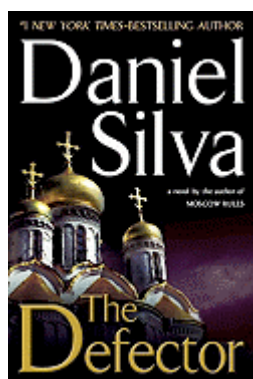
F C527r Chevalier, Tracey. *Remarkable Creatures*, 2010.



In early 1800s England, unmarried women of the upper classes were often relegated to the fringes of society, where they could find a polite way to spend their days; those of the lower classes had even fewer options. This work, based on a true story, portrays two women from these diverse backgrounds who share a fascination with fossils. Mary Anning is an impoverished girl with a gift for finding prehistoric skeletons along the coast, which also interest genteel spinster Elizabeth Philpot. She recognizes Mary's talent as she also understands the enormous implications of the specimens uncovered, for this was before Darwin, when the concept of extinction was unknown, and it was blasphemous to consider that some of God's creatures may have been flawed. Over time, both women strive for scientific credibility, love, and financial stability, with varying degrees of success. Chevalier succeeds in superbly creating a unique setting, as she did in *The Girl with a*

Pearl Earring, capturing the atmosphere of a chilly, blustery coast and an oppressive social hierarchy in real Dickensian fashion.

F S586d Silva, Daniel. *The Defector*, 2009.



Silva's thrillers bring readers the best of all spy worlds. The action roars along, touching down in both glamorous settings and godforsaken outposts. However, unlike conventional spy novels, which tend to throw so many locations at readers that the overall effect is like glancing at an airports postings of arrivals and departures, Silva keeps a steady center with his intriguing hero, Gabriel Allon. Allon, whose parents survived the Holocaust, is an artist and specialist in restoring Renaissance paintings. He is also a spy and trained assassin for Israel's Special Operations Unit, distinguished for carrying out the most secretive, perilous, and exacting missions. Allon is conflicted over what he does, but driven to do it nonetheless. This is the ninth in the series and the sequel to last year's *Moscow Rules*, which explored the murky world of Russian arms dealing. This time Ivan Kharkov, an oligarch and arms dealer, seeks revenge for Allon's costly discoveries. The

first step in his revenge plan, according to Israeli intelligence, is the kidnapping of a Russian defector in London. From there Silva takes the reader on a hair-raising ride through Italy and Moscow. Great suspense, action and yes, even art history.

