Just in time to save you from the mid-week doldrums. These titles are available in the library today!

A republic no more

From Barnes and Noble: “After the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was asked, “Well, Doctor, what have we got—a Republic or a Monarchy?” Franklin’s response: “A Republic—if you can keep it.” This book argues: we couldn’t keep it…Corruption today is so widespread that our government is not so much a republic, but rather a special interest democracy. Participate, yes, but the contours of public policy depend not so much on the common good, but rather the push-and-pull of the various interest groups encamped in Washington, DC.”

H is for hawk

From NYT Book Review: “If birds are made of air, as the nature writer Sy Montgomery says, then writing a great bird book is a little like dusting for the fingerprints of a ghost. It calls for poetry and science, conjuring and evidence. In her breathtaking new book, H Is for Hawk...Helen Macdonald renders an indelible impression of a raptor’s fierce essence—and her own—with words that mimic feathers, so impossibly pretty we don’t notice their astonishing engineering...Although “animal as emotional healer” is a familiar motif, Macdonald's journey clears its own path—messy, muddy and raw.”

The antibiotic era
From Barnes and Noble: “In The Antibiotic Era, physician-historian Scott H. Podolsky narrates the far-reaching history of antibiotics, focusing particularly on reform efforts that attempted to fundamentally change how antibiotics are developed and prescribed. This sweeping chronicle reveals the struggles faced by crusading reformers from the 1940s onward as they advocated for a rational therapeutics at the crowded intersection of bugs and drugs, patients and doctors, industry and medical academia, and government and the media.”

The age of acquiescence

From Publishers Weekly: “Nowadays Americans just say yes to inequality and exploitation, argues this spirited history of anticapitalist sentiment in the United States. Historian Fraser (Every Man a Speculator) starts with an absorbing, vigorous account of class politics during the late 19th-century Gilded Age, a time of mass strikes, revolutionary agitation, utopian socialist yearnings and fierce denunciations of robber barons among workers, and violent repression and apocalyptic alarm among elites. He then contrasts that era with the post-Reagan “second Gilded Age,” when ordinary people have seen incomes erode, work hours lengthen, economic security dwindle, and corporations run riot, yet have uttered, he argues, hardly a peep of protest...this is an excellent, very readable recreation of an authentically American form of working-class militancy and its eclipse.”

From Selma to Montgomery

From Barnes and Noble: “On March 7, 1965, a peaceful voting rights demonstration in Selma, Alabama, was met with an unprovoked attack of shocking violence that riveted the attention of the nation. In the days and weeks following "Bloody Sunday," the demonstrators would not be deterred, and thousands of others joined their cause, culminating in the successful march from Selma to Montgomery...In five concise chapters bolstered by primary documents including civil rights legislation, speeches, and news coverage, Combs introduces the Civil Rights Movement to undergraduates through the courageous actions of the freedom marchers.”

Combatting human trafficking
From Barnes and Noble: “A centuries-old crime, human trafficking occurs not only in undeveloped countries, but also in some surprising locations. Right here in the United States, individuals are recruited, transported, and held by unlawful means—either through deception or under threat of violence. Approaching the topic from a law enforcement perspective, *Combating Human Trafficking: A Multidisciplinary Approach* provides an unprecedented look at the investigation of this phenomenon in America.”

The brain’s way of healing

From Publishers Weekly: “Doidge (The Brain That Changes Itself) explores the idea of “using the body to treat the brain” by surveying specialists and patients who’ve personally experienced the power of neuroplasticity—the brain’s ability to reorganize itself and heal in cases of injury or deprivation...Each new therapy gives reason for hope, but, Doidge asserts, the “true marvel is less the techniques themselves than the way that... the brain has evolved neuroplastic abilities and a mind that can direct its own unique restorative process of growth.”

Girl in a band

From Publishers Weekly: “In this intriguing memoir, Sonic Youth founding member Kim Gordon describes a life in art and music that led her through the undergrounds of Los Angeles and New York City, a journey framed by the dissolution of her 27-year marriage to bandmate Thurston Moore...The strength of Gordon’s prose lies in her evocation of places—the dappled light of L.A. canyons, the clamor and steaming heat of Hong Kong, the N.Y.C. loft scene. The descent of her older brother, Keller, into schizophrenia shadows the first half of the book; Moore’s adultery the second. Although Gordon includes expected list of celebrities she met throughout life, her unique sensibility never fades.”

To repair the world

From Publishers Weekly: “Farmer, Harvard professor and founder of Partners in Health, offers an anthology of 19 speeches on global health initiatives delivered between 2001 and 2012. Since his med school days in the 1980s, Farmer has been committed to building a viable health care system in Haiti...Divided into four sections, the book opens with the
subject of social injustice in medical care, explores the future of medicine and "instruments of mass salvation" following natural disasters, and closes on the issue of human suffering. Addressing "insignificant others" along with newly-minted public servants, he urges today's graduates to become "accom-pagnateurs"—a Creole term he uses to describe a committed doctor. While Farmer admits to sermonizing, readers will emerge with a heightened sense of the responsibilities and sacrifices required of future public servants."

Oxford dictionary of quotations

From Barnes and Noble: “The new, fifth edition of The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations offers over 20,000 quotations (over 2,000 of them new to this edition) from more than 3,000 sources. This classic has been brought fully up-to-date while maintaining its core of classical Greek and Latin literature. The strength of the Oxford is its special categories: separate sections covering such things as famous misquotations, film lines, last words, and advertising slogans. Special attention is given to the sacred texts of the world, such as the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads, the Koran, and the Bible.”

The politics of gun control

From Barnes and Noble: “The new edition of this classic text covers the latest developments in American gun policy, including shooting incidents plaguing the American landscape—especially Sandy Hook; the Aurora, Colorado, theater shootings; and the tragic death of Trayvon Martin—placing them in context with similar recent events. These incidents sparked a wave of gun control legislation at local, state, and national levels, some of which was successful, some doomed, and all controversial.”

Scotland's choices

From Barnes and Noble: “Scotland's voters are promised a referendum on independence in autumn 2014. If they reject independence, the proposed changes from the Calman Commission's review on Scottish Devolution will most likely be put in place. But what will happen after the referendum? How will Westminster and the rest of the UK respond? What would a Calman regime entail? Is it even clear what independence will mean? What about the oil? What will the currency be? What will happen to the Old Age Pension pot if the UK splits?”
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