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**The birth of the pill**

From Publishers Weekly: “Former Wall Street Journal reporter Eig (Luckiest Man) blends the story of the “only product in American history so powerful that it needed no name” with the lives of the four-larger-than-life characters who dreamed, funded, researched, and tested it. Eig recapitulates much of what’s known about the discovery of oral contraceptives and adds a wealth of unfamiliar material...The twists and turns of producing a birth control pill in the mid-20th century mirrored astonishing changes in the cultural landscapes: Eig notes how, in July 1959, the publication of Lady Chatterley’s Lover and G.D. Searle’s request for FDA approval of Enovid presaged a “tidal wave that would sweep away the nation’s culture of restraint.” Eig’s fascinating narrative of medical innovation paired so perfectly with social revolution befits a remarkable chapter of human history.”

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From Barnes and Noble: “China’s Communist Party seized power in 1949 after a long period of guerrilla insurgency followed by full-scale war, but the Chinese revolution was just beginning. China Under Mao narrates the rise and fall of the Maoist revolutionary state from 1949 to 1976—an epoch of startling accomplishments and disastrous failures, steered by many forces but dominated above all by Mao Zedong.”

**Magic and witchcraft in the West**

From Barnes and Noble: “This book presents twenty chapters by experts in their fields, providing a thorough and interdisciplinary overview of the theory and practice of magic in the West. Its chronological scope extends from the Ancient Near East to twenty-first-century North America; its objects of analysis range from Persian curse tablets to U.S. neo-paganism. For comparative purposes, the volume includes chapters on developments in the Jewish and Muslim worlds, evaluated not simply for what they contributed at various points to European notions of magic, but also as models of alternative development in ancient Mediterranean legacy.”
Hell and good company: the Spanish Civil War and the world it made

From Publishers Weekly: “Historian Rhodes (who won a Pulitzer Prize for 1986’s The Making of the Atomic Bomb) combines numerous memoirs to provide a ground-level view of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The struggle between Republicans and Franco-led Nationalists was brutal: “fully half a million died directly, or from hunger and disease, or immediately afterward in Franco’s hundred thousand vindictive executions.”... Aside from some medical innovations, such as new concepts of battlefield triage, Rhodes never specifies how the war changed the world, but he does offer a vivid look at how the desperate struggle appeared to participants.”

Make it stick: the science of successful learning

From Barnes and Noble: “Many common study habits and practice routines turn out to be counterproductive. Underlining and highlighting, rereading, cramming, and single-minded repetition of new skills create the illusion of mastery, but gains fade quickly. More complex and durable learning come from self-testing, introducing certain difficulties in practice, waiting to re-study new material until a little forgetting has set in, and interleaving the practice of one skill or topic with another. Speaking most urgently to students, teachers, trainers, and athletes, Make It Stick will appeal to all those interested in the challenge of lifelong learning and self-improvement.”

Why grow up?

From Publishers Weekly: “...Neiman (Moral Clarity), director of the Einstein Forum in Potsdam, tackles questions that are widely relevant: How do different kinds of experience help and hinder "our understanding of the way the world is, and the way it should be?" And "how do we prepare a child for a world that is not the way it should be?" Along the way, she offers piercing critiques of consumerist culture, illustrating how luxury creates "false needs that make us dependent," and of American society, in which citizens are distracted from the real issues by a bewildering array of choices about relative trivialities. Neiman’s sense of humor ("Yes, even Kant could write straightforward sentences") is a plus, but her greatest strength is her ability to distill centuries of thought to their essence, provoking her readers along the way. Neiman convincingly makes the case that growing up is not tantamount to "inevitable decline," and that the hard work to make maturity fulfilling is worth the effort.”
Invisibles: the power of anonymous work in an age of relentless self-promotion

From Publishers Weekly: “Building upon his 2012 Atlantic article “What Do Fact-Checkers and Anesthesiologists Have in Common,” in his nonfiction debut, journalist Zweig presents an entertaining, good-natured exploration of the mindsets and psyches of “invisibles”—people whose passions have required years of training and experience, but who happily toil in obscurity for the love of the work itself, rather than fame. As Zweig notes, it’s this very single-mindedness in the quest for excellence—and the emphasis on getting the job done—that research suggests correlates with both happiness and business success...The author’s genuine respect for his subjects shines through and keeps these stories lively.”

Japan and the shackles of the past

From Publishers Weekly: “In this accessible, all-encompassing portrait, Murphy (Japan’s Policy Trap), chair of the M.B.A. program in international business at the University of Tsukuba, Tokyo, demystifies the nation that ended the 20th century with “some of the most dazzling business successes of all time.”... While the review of recent Japanese scandals—such as the TEPCO coverup at Fukushima—and of the scars of WWII is painfully familiar, Murphy sheds much light on Japan’s current dependence upon the U.S. for maintenance of its political system and its future prospects, closing with an in-depth analysis of the current administration.”

There’s a stat for that!

From Barnes and Noble: “Bruce Frey’s There’s a Stat for That! is a brief, straightforward, and to-the-point guide to deciding which statistical analysis to use and when to use it. Designed for consultants, researchers, students, and those who already have the resources to tell them how to perform the analyses, this text explains why a particular statistical approach is the right one to use. The book affirms that regardless of the group design, once the variables are chosen and the measurement strategy is worked out, one can rest assured that there is a stat for that!”

The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop

From Barnes and Noble: “It has been more than thirty-five years since the first recordings of hip-hop music were made. This Companion, written by renowned scholars and industry professionals reflects the
passion and scholarly activity occurring in the new generation of hip-hop studies. It covers a
diverse range of case studies from Nerdcore hip-hop to instrumental hip-hop to the role of
rappers in the Obama campaign and from countries including Senegal, Japan, Germany, Cuba,
and the UK...this collection incorporates methods in studying hip-hop flow, as well as the music
analysis of hip-hop and methods from linguistics, political science, gender and film studies to
provide exciting new perspectives on this rapidly developing field.”

The Cambridge companion to Modern Arab culture

From Barnes and Noble: “Dwight F. Reynolds brings together a collection of essays by leading international
scholars to provide a comprehensive and accessible survey of modern Arab culture, from the early nineteenth to
the twenty-first century. The chapters survey key issues necessary to any understanding of the modern Arab
World: the role of the various forms of the Arabic language in modern culture and identity; the remarkable
intellectual transformation undergone during the ‘Nahda’ or ‘Arab Renaissance’ of the late nineteenth and early
twentieth century, the significant role played by ethnic and religious minorities, and the role of law and
constitutions.”

Command and control: nuclear weapons, the Damascus accident and the illusion of safety

From Kirkus Reviews: “The chilling, concise history of America’s precarious nuclear arsenal. Investigative
journalist Schlosser’s (Reefer Madness: Sex, Drugs, and Cheap Labor in the American Black Market, 2003, etc.)
vivid and unsettling treatise spans across a 70-year span of the development and control of nuclear weaponry.
At the core of the author’s scrutiny is the suspensefully narrated back story of the Arkansas-based Titan II
military missile silo...With this cautionary text, Schlosser, who pinged processed food and the underground
economy onto America’s cultural radar, succeeds in increasing awareness for more stringent precautions and
less of the casual mismanagement of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, he respectfully memorializes those Cold
War heroes (and countless others, like nuclear weapon safety lobbyist Bob Peurifoy) who’ve prevented nuclear
holocausts from being written into the annals of American history. An exhaustive, unnerving examination of the
illusory safety of atomic arms.”

Getting real about race

From Barnes and Noble: “Stephanie Mc Clure and Cherise A. Harris’s Second Thoughts on Race in the United
States: Hoodies, Model Minorities, and Real Americans is an edited collection of short essays that address the
most common misconceptions about race held by students (and by many in the United States, in general)—it is
a "one-stop shopping" reader on the racial topics most often pondered by students and derived from their interests and concerns. There is no existing reader that summarizes the research across a range of topics in a consistent, easily accessible format and considers the evidence against particular racial myths in the language that students themselves use.”

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"A library is a house of hope. It's a place where we all, whatever our situation, can feed our ideas and develop our dreams." –Doug Wilhelm