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**NEW THIS WEEK**

**What We See When We Read**

The collection of fragmented images on a page of a book we are reading—a graceful ear there, a stray curl, a hat positioned just so—and other clues and signifiers helps us to create an image of a character. Actually, our sense that we intimately know a literary character has little to do with our ability to concretely picture them. In this remarkable work of nonfiction, book jacket art designer Peter Mendelsund combines his design skills with his first career, as a classically trained pianist, and his first love, literature, into what is sure to be one of the most provocative and unusual investigations into how we understand the act of reading. $17.95, paperback.

**The Library Book**

Bestselling author Orlean chronicles the disastrous 1986 LA Public Library fire (over a million books damaged and destroyed) and its aftermath to showcase the larger, crucial role that libraries play in our lives. She delves into the evolution of libraries across the country and around the world, from their humble beginnings as a charitable initiative to their current status as a cornerstone of national identity, and brings each department of the library to vivid life through on-the-ground reporting. She also examines the case of Harry Peak, the blond-haired actor long suspected of setting fire to the LAPL more than thirty years ago. $16.99, paperback.
Is a book the same book—or a reader the same reader—the second time around? The 17 authors in this witty and poignant collection of essays all agree on the answer: never. *Rereadings* reveals at least as much about the reader as about the book: each essay is a miniature memoir that focuses on that most interesting of topics, the protean nature of love. And as every bibliophile knows, no love is more life-changing than the love of a book. $15, paperback.

Anne Fadiman is (by her own admission) the sort of person who learned about sex from her father’s copy of *Fanny Hill*, whose husband buys her 19 pounds of dusty books for her birthday, and who once found herself poring over her roommate’s 1974 Toyota Corolla manual because it was the only written material in the apartment that she had not read at least twice. This witty collection of essays recounts a lifelong love affair with books and language. For Fadiman, as for many passionate readers, the books she loves have become chapters in her own life story. $14, paperback.
A cabinet of curiosities, a time machine, a treasure trove—we love bookshops because they possess a unique kind of magic. UK literary critic Henry Hitchings asks 15 writers from around the world to reveal their favorite bookshops. Each conjuring a specific time and place, these inquisitive, enchanting pieces are a collective celebration of bookshops for anyone who has ever fallen under their spell. Contributors include Michael Dirda, Daniel Kehlmann, Yiyun Li, Pankaj Mishra, Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor, Elif Shafak, Iain Sinclair, Ali Smith, and Juan Gabriel Vásquez. $16.95, paperback.

The history of the book is the history of millions of written, printed, and illustrated texts, their manufacture, distribution, and reception, from clay tablets to scrolls, from inscribed codices to printed books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, and digital texts. The larger question is of the effect of textual production, distribution, and reception, of how books themselves made history. In 14 original essays, this beautifully illustrated survey reveals the history of books in all their various forms, from the ancient world to the digital present. Leading international scholars offer an original and richly illustrated narrative that is global in scope. $39.95, hardcover.

This unique encyclopedia spanning the history of the written word, from 3,000 BC to the modern day, shows the evolution of human knowledge and the changing ways in which books are made. Discover some of the most influential books including the Mahabharata, Shakespeare’s First Folio, Darwin’s groundbreaking On the Origin of Species, The Diary of Anne Frank, and Penguin’s first ever paperbacks. This lavishly illustrated, coffee table-worthy book is wrapped in a textured jacket with gold foil, making it a great gift for those with an interest in literature, art, and design. $30, hardcover.
From the earliest book in medieval England to the incomparable Book of Kells to the oldest manuscript of the Canterbury Tales, these encounters tell a narrative of intellectual culture and art over the course of a millennium. The author introduces us to kings, queens, saints, scribes, artists, librarians, thieves, and collectors. Part travel book, part detective story, part conversation with the reader, this history allows us to experience some of the greatest works of art in our culture and gives us a different perspective on history and the cultivation of wisdom. $25, paperback.

**Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts: Twelve Journeys into the Medieval World**

**100 Books That Changed the World**

Beautifully illustrated in full color, this sweeping chronological survey highlights the most important books from around the globe from the earliest illuminated manuscripts all the way to the digital age. Included are such well-known classics as the *Odyssey*, the Torah, Shakespeare’s First Folio, *Moby Dick*, and Darwin’s *On the Origins of Species*, but an array of other works, some well-known and others less so, are featured as well, including those by Sun Tzu, Copernicus, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thoreau, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Proust, and Kafka as well as more recent works by J.K. Rowling, Art Spiegelman, and Naomi Klein. $29.95, hardcover.

**How to Read a Book**

FIRST, FIND A TREE—A BLACK TUPELO OR DAWN REDWOOD WILL DO—AND PLANT YOURSELF. IT’S OKAY IF YOU PREFER A STOOP. LIKE LANSTON HUGHES.

With these words, an adventure begins into the world of reading. Newbery Medalist Kwame Alexander’s evocative poetry and Caldecott Honoree Melissa Sweet’s lush artwork come together to take you on a sensory journey between the pages of a book. For ages 4-8. $17.99, hardcover.

**Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain**

Human beings were never born to read, writes Tufts University cognitive neuroscientist and child development expert Maryanne Wolf. Reading is a human invention that reflects how the brain rearranges itself to learn something new. In this ambitious, provocative book, Wolf chronicles the remarkable journey of the reading brain not only over the past 5,000 years since writing began but also over the course of a single child’s life, showing in the process why children with dyslexia have reading difficulties and singular gifts. $16.99, paperback.
Ian McEwan once said, “When women stop reading, the novel will be dead.” This book explains why women are the main buyers and readers of fiction today, and how they draw on it to tell the stories of their lives. And female readers, as parents, teachers, and librarians, are the glue for a literate society. This book, written by a scholar of women’s writing, draws on more than 500 interviews with women readers and writers, describing how, where, and when women read fiction and why stories influence the way female readers understand their own life stories. $18.95, hardcover.

This first-ever history of the legendary bohemian bookstore in Paris, published by the bookshop itself, interweaves essays and poetry from dozens of writers associated with the shop—Allen Ginsberg, Anaïs Nin, Ethan Hawke, Robert Stone and Jeanette Winterson, among others—with hundreds of never-before-seen archival pieces. It includes photographs of James Baldwin, William Burroughs and Langston Hughes; a foreword by British novelist Jeanette Winterson; and an epilogue by Sylvia Whitman, the daughter of the store’s founder, George Whitman. $34.95, hardcover.

Covering fiction, poetry, science and science fiction, memoir, travel writing, biography, children’s books, history, and more, this fun resource ranges across cultures and through time to offer an eclectic collection of works that each deserve to come with the recommendation, “You have to read this.” Rather than your typical list of “great works,” this is a celebration of the mosaic of our literary heritage, and inevitably you will stumble upon a completely unknown author and work and feel the tingle of discovery. Suggestions include the best editions to read, other books by the author, “if you like this, you’ll like that” recommendations, and more. 948 book-filled pages. $35, hardcover.

The so-called “book towns” of the world are dedicated havens of literature and the ultimate dream of book lovers everywhere. Book Towns takes readers on a richly illustrated tour of the 40 semi-officially recognized literary towns around the world, and outlines the history and development of each community, and offers practical travel advice. Many “book towns” have emerged in areas of marked attraction such as Ureña in Spain or Fjaerland in Norway, where bookshops have been set up in buildings, including former ferry waiting rooms and banks. While the UK has the best-known examples at Hay, Wigtown, and Sedbergh, the book has a broad international appeal, featuring locations such as Jimbochu in Japan, College Street in Calcutta, and major unofficial “book cities” such as Buenos Aires. $22.99, hardcover.
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Confessions of a Bookseller

Just published, the follow-up to the bestselling *Diary of a Bookseller* and a memoir every bit as warm and welcoming as a visit to your very favorite bookstore. Inside a stone-faced Georgian townhouse on the Wigtown highroad, jammed with more than 100,000 books and one portly shop cat, Shaun Bythell manages the ups and downs of Scotland’s largest used bookshop with a sharp eye and even sharper wit. $25.95, hardcover.

Bookworm: A Memoir

Imported from England! When Lucy Mangan was little, stories were everything. They opened up different worlds and cast new light on this one. She was whisked away to Narnia, Kirrin Island, and Wonderland. She ventured down rabbit holes and womble burrows into midnight gardens and chocolate factories. In *Bookworm*, Lucy brings the favorite characters of a British childhood back to life and disinters a few forgotten treasures, poignantly, wittily using them to tell her own story, that of a born and unrepentant bookworm. $17.95, paperback.

The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu: And Their Race to Save the World’s Most Precious Manuscripts

In the 1980s, a young adventurer and collector for a government library, Abdel Kader Haidara, journeyed across the Sahara Desert and along the Niger River finding and salvaging tens of thousands of ancient Islamic and secular manuscripts that had fallen into obscurity. Here is the incredible story of how Haidara, a mild-mannered archivist and historian from the legendary city of Timbuktu, later became one of the world’s greatest and most brazen smugglers. In his quest to outwit Al Qaeda and preserve Mali’s—and the world’s—literary patrimony, a victory of art and literature over extremism. $17, paperback.

The Library: A Catalogue of Wonders

Libraries are much more than mere collections of volumes. The best are magical, fabled places whose fame has become part of the cultural wealth they are designed to preserve. To research this book, Stuart Kells traveled around the world with his young family like modern-day “library tourists.” Kells discovered that stories about libraries are stories about people, containing every possible human drama. *The Library* is a celebration of books as objects, a celebration of the anthropology and physicality of books and bookish space, and an account of the human side of these hallowed spaces by a leading and passionate bibliophile. $16.95, paperback.
Before Jennifer Egan, Louise Erdrich, Luis Alberto Urrea, and Jonathan Lethem became revered authors, they were readers. In this ebullient book, America’s favorite librarian Nancy Pearl and noted-playwright Jeff Schwager interview a diverse range of America’s most notable and influential writers about the books that shaped them and inspired them to leave their own literary mark. Illustrated with beautiful line drawings, this is a revelatory exploration of the home studies, libraries, and bookstores of today’s favorite authors. It is a love letter to books and a celebration of wordsmiths. $27.99, hardcover.

Paper is one of the simplest and most essential pieces of human technology. For the past two millennia, the ability to produce it in ever more efficient ways has supported the proliferation of literacy, media, religion, education, commerce, and art; it has formed the foundation of civilizations, promoting revolutions and restoring stability. By tracing paper’s evolution from antiquity to the present, with an emphasis on the contributions made in Asia and the Middle East, author Mark Kurlansky challenges common assumptions about technology’s influence, affirming that paper is here to stay. $16.95, paperback.

This spirited and witty guide to the world of disheveled used bookstores by author (and Atlanta resident) Murray Browne describes his personal obsession with bookstores that has “grown into a real (albeit quirky) passion for thinking about the many ways books affect our lives—how and where we shop for them, the people we know who read them, and the small passages that stick in our heads for years only to reappear at the oddest moments.” His ruminations and explorations offer a lifeline to readers who love to browse, in the eternal quest for the perfect read. $12.95, paperback.

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