

Book Recommendations

from the 07-08 EERC Board

Nanci Strickland

Broken for You, Stephanie Kallos

The setting is Seattle, so it has a familiar Northwest feel. The story is about relationships, how people need support and give support and that sometimes it really does take a village to raise a child – and to nurture adults, too. Love, grief, healing and acceptance all come into play in this book. [Sandy Coffin recommends this, too!]

From *AudioFile*: Fate, redemption, and hope are the forces at work in *Broken for You*. A lonely, elderly Seattle woman living in her stately, old mansion with only ghosts and antiques for company initiates a complicated chain of events when she decides to take in a boarder. This is just the beginning of what grows to be an ad hoc family. The setting is Seattle, so it has a familiar Northwest feel. The story is about relationships, how people need support and give support and that sometimes it really does take a village to raise a child – and to nurture adults, too. Love, grief, healing and acceptance all come into play in this book.

Three Cups of Tea, Greg Mortensen and David Relin

From *Publishers Weekly*: Some failures lead to phenomenal successes, and this American nurse's unsuccessful attempt to climb K2, the world's second tallest mountain, is one of them. Dangerously ill when he finished his climb in 1993, Mortenson was sheltered for seven weeks by the small Pakistani village of Korphe; in return, he promised to build the impoverished town's first school, a project that grew into the Central Asia Institute, which has since constructed more than 50 schools across rural Pakistan and Afghanistan. Coauthor Relin recounts Mortenson's efforts in fascinating detail, presenting compelling portraits of the village elders, con artists, philanthropists, mujahideen, Taliban officials, ambitious school girls and upright Muslims Mortenson met along the way. As the book moves into the post-9/11 world, Mortenson and Relin argue that the United States must fight Islamic extremism in the region through collaborative efforts to alleviate poverty and improve access to education, especially for girls. Captivating and suspenseful, with engrossing accounts of both hostilities and unlikely friendships, this book will win many readers' hearts.

Judy Davies

The Last Lecture, Randy Pausch

In the same vein as *Tuesday Mornings with Morrie*, this story is about a young professor who is dying of cancer. He is leaving behind his wife and three children and it is to them he gives this last "lecture." An inspirational book.

Born on a Blue Day: Inside the Extraordinary Mind of an Autistic Savant, Daniel Tammet

A view of the world as seen by the author, a savant with autism.

From *Publishers Weekly*: This unique first-person account offers a window into the mind of a high-functioning, 27-year-old British autistic savant with Asperger's syndrome. Tammet's ability to think abstractly, deviate from routine, and empathize, interact and communicate with others is impaired, yet he's capable of incredible feats of memorization and mental calculation. Besides being able to effortlessly multiply and divide huge sums in his head with the speed and accuracy of a computer, Tammet, the subject of the 2005 documentary *Brainman*, learned Icelandic in a single week and recited the number pi up to the 22,514th digit. He also experiences synesthesia, an unusual neurological syndrome that enables him to experience numbers and words as "shapes, colors, textures and motions." Tammet traces his life from a frustrating, withdrawn childhood and adolescence to his adult achievements, which include teaching in Lithuania, achieving financial independence with an educational Web site and sustaining a long-term romantic relationship.

Gayla Clark

Bowerman and the Men of Oregon: The Story of Oregon's Legendary Coach and Nike's Cofounder, Kenny Moore.

A very timely and interesting nonfiction. If you didn't have time to read it during "Readin' in the Rain," try it this summer. Lots of UO track and field lore, plus Olympic and Prefontaine facts I didn't know. Some interesting Oregon pioneer history is included. Read it!

Can't Wait to Get to Heaven, Fannie Flagg

From *Publishers Weekly*: Returning to Elmwood Springs, Miss. (the setting of two previous novels), Flagg focuses on a handful of days following octogenarian Elner Shimfissle's fatal fall from a tree. As listeners check in on various residents in town to see how they're reacting to the news and remembering how their lives were touched by the old woman, Flagg alternates bite-size chapters detailing Elner's journey to the afterlife. An uplifting delight.

"Hard writing makes easy reading."
Wallace Stegner

Barbara McKillip

Women's Voices from the Oregon Trail, Susan G. Butruille

Diary entries capture the essence of the hardships and hopes of the pioneer women who traveled the 2,000 mile trail to Oregon in the 1840s and 50s. Includes a retracing of the trail as it was in the early 1990s showing where to find markers, landmarks, and historical sites that honor these pioneer women.

Learning to Drive and Other Life Stories, Katha Pollitt

A collection of insightful essays, drawn from the noted political columnist's own life, including her struggle to learn to drive at the age of 52.

Can't Wait to Get to Heaven, Fannie Flagg

A humorous novel that ponders the meaning of life and the profound effects one person can have on the lives of others.

Chosen by a Horse: How a Broken Horse Fixed a Broken Heart, Susan Richards

After her mother died and her father deserted her, the author spent her childhood with uncaring, abusive relatives. Not surprisingly, as an adult, she didn't let anyone get close to her. But after she adopted a sweet, gentle horse who, although horribly abused, still had a loving and trusting nature, she decided that perhaps she, too, could reach out to others.

Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog, John Grogan

A humorous recounting of the author's life with a wildly, uncontrollable 97-lb. Labrador who might have gotten kicked out of obedience school, but who excelled at what really mattered: love and loyalty.

“Dog. A kind of additional or subsidiary Deity designed to catch the overflow and surplus of the world's worship.”
Ambrose Bierce

Karen Antikajian

The Pact: A Love Story, Jodi Picoult

Teenage suicide is the provocative topic that Picoult plumbs, with mixed results, in her fifth novel. Popular high-school swimming star Chris Harte and talented artist Em Gold bonded as infants; their parents have been next-door neighbors and best friends for 18 years. When they fall in love, everyone is ecstatic. Everyone, it turns out, except for Em, who finds that sex with Chris feels almost incestuous. Her emotional turmoil, compounded by pregnancy, which she keeps secret, leads to depression, despair and a desire for suicide, and she insists that Chris prove his love by pulling the trigger.

The Miracle at Speedy Motors, Alexander McCall Smith

This the latest installment of this infinitely enjoyable and best-selling series. Precious Ramotswe is doing what she does best--helping people with their problems and enjoying the simple pleasures of life. [Sandy Coffin loves all of this series – enjoyable easy reads!]

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

Jacob Jankowski says: "I am ninety. Or ninety-three. One or the other." At the beginning of *Water for Elephants*, he is living out his days in a nursing home, hating every second of it. His life wasn't always like this, however, because Jacob ran away and joined the circus when he was twenty-one. *Water for Elephants* is the story of Jacob's life with this circus.

The Stylist, Cai Emmons (a Eugene author)

The daughter of a famous travelogue writer raised by her independent, feminist mother, Hayden Risley is living a tightly shuttered life as a runaway Harvard dropout turned hairstylist in Hoboken, New Jersey. When the similarly private Emory Bellew shows up as the new girl in the salon, a tentative friendship is formed between the two misfits. Emmons' potent novel features magnetic characters and complex and compelling secrets. [Esther Hampton recommends this, too!]

Bowerman and the Men of Oregon, Kenny Moore

No man has affected more runners in more ways than Bill Bowerman. During his 24-year tenure as track coach at the University of Oregon, he won four national team titles and his athletes set 13 world and 22 American records. He also ignited the jogging boom, invented the waffle-sole running shoe that helped establish Nike, and coached the US track and field team at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games.

With the full cooperation of the Bowerman family and Nike, plus years of taped interviews with friends, relatives, students, and competitors, two-time Olympic marathoner Kenny Moore - himself one of Bowerman's champion athletes - brilliantly re-creates the legendary track coach's life.

Loving Frank, Nancy Horan

This novel is a fictionalization of the life of Mamah Borthwick Cheney, best known as the woman who wrecked Frank Lloyd Wright's first marriage. Despite the title, this is not a romance, but a portrayal of an independent, educated woman at odds with the restrictions of the early 20th century. Frank and Mamah, both married and with children, met when Mamah's husband, Edwin, commissioned Frank to design a house. Their affair became the stuff of headlines when they left their families to live and travel together.

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“The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who'll get me a book I ain't read.” Abe Lincoln

The Omnivore's Dilemma, Michael Pollan

Michael Pollan writes about how our food is grown -- what it is, in fact, that we are eating. The book is really three in one: The first section discusses industrial farming; the second, organic food, both as big business and on a relatively small farm; and the third, what it is like to hunt and gather food for oneself. And each section culminates in a meal – a cheeseburger and fries from McDonald's; roast chicken, vegetables and a salad from Whole Foods; and grilled chicken, corn and a chocolate soufflé (made with fresh eggs) from a sustainable farm; and, finally, mushrooms and pork, foraged from the wild.

Marley & Me, John Grogan

Labrador retrievers are generally considered even-tempered, calm and reliable; and then there's Marley, the subject of this delightful tribute to one Lab who doesn't fit the mold. Grogan, a columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer, and his wife, Jenny, were newly married and living in West Palm Beach when they decided that owning a dog would give them a foretaste of the parenthood they anticipated. Marley was a sweet, affectionate puppy who grew into a lovably naughty, hyperactive dog. Dog lovers will love this account of Grogan's much loved canine. A laugh-out-loud story!

Nat Teich

True Enough: Learning to Live in a Post-Fact Society, Farhad Manjoo

A short, easy reading survey of research and examples from psychology and media studies to show how people select sources that only offer evidence for their opinions, while ignoring or rejecting equally relevant evidence for opposing views.

Shirley Murata

Peony in Love, Lisa See

From *Publisher's Weekly*: Set in 17th-century China, See's fifth novel is a coming-of-age story, a ghost story, a family saga and a work of musical and social history. As Peony, the 15-year-old daughter of the wealthy Chen family, approaches an arranged marriage, she commits an unthinkable breach of etiquette when she accidentally comes upon a man who has entered the family garden. Unusually for a girl of her time, Peony has been educated and revels in studying *The Peony Pavilion*, a real opera published in 1598, as the repercussions of the meeting unfold. The novel's plot mirrors that of the opera, and eternal themes abound: an intelligent girl chafing against the restrictions of expected behavior; fiction's educative powers; the rocky path of love between lovers and in families. It figures into the plot that generations of young Chinese women, known as the lovesick maidens, became obsessed with *The Peony Pavilion*, and, in a

Werther-like passion, many starved themselves to death. See offers meticulous depiction of women's roles in Qing and Ming dynasty China (including horrifying foot-binding scenes) and vivid descriptions of daily Qing life, festivals and rituals. Peony's vibrant voice, perfectly pitched between the novel's historical and passionate depths, carries her story beautifully—in life and afterlife.

Snowflower and the Secret Fan, Lisa See

From *Publishers Weekly*: See's engrossing novel set in remote 19th-century China details the deeply affecting story of lifelong, intimate friends (*laotong*, or "old sames") Lily and Snow Flower, their imprisonment by rigid codes of conduct for women and their betrayal by pride and love. While granting immediacy to Lily's voice, See adroitly transmits historical background in graceful prose. Her in-depth research into women's ceremonies and duties in China's rural interior brings fascinating revelations about arranged marriages, women's inferior status in both their natal and married homes, and the Confucian proverbs and myriad superstitions that informed daily life. Beginning with a detailed and heartbreaking description of Lily and her sisters' foot binding ("Only through pain will you have beauty. Only through suffering will you have peace"), the story widens to a vivid portrait of family and village life. Most impressive is See's incorporation of *nu shu*, a secret written phonetic code among women—here between Lily and Snow Flower—that dates back 1,000 years in the southwestern Hunan province ("My writing is soaked with the tears of my heart./ An invisible rebellion that no man can see"). As both a suspenseful and poignant story and an absorbing historical chronicle, this novel has bestseller potential and should become a reading group favorite as well.

Sandy Coffin

Water for Elephants, Sara Gruen

Romance, animals, and fascinating insights into a bygone era – this book has it all! I loved it and you probably will too. [Esther Hampton also recommends this book!]

From *Publisher's Weekly*: The novel, told in flashback by nonagenarian Jacob Jankowski, recounts the wild and wonderful period he spent with the Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth, a traveling circus he joined during the Great Depression. When 23-year-old Jankowski learns that his parents have been killed in a car crash, leaving him penniless, he drops out of Cornell veterinary school and parlays his expertise with animals into a job with the circus, where he cares for a menagerie of exotic creatures... He also falls in love with Marlena, one of the show's star performers—a romance complicated by Marlena's husband, the unbalanced, sadistic circus boss who beats both his wife and the animals Jankowski cares for.

Abundance, A Novel of Marie Antoinette, Sarah Jeter Nasland

Even though you know the ultimate outcome, you won't want to put this book down before you finish. The courtly language slowed the pace a bit for me, but author brought the times alive.

From *The Washington Post*: We'll start with dessert: Marie Antoinette never said, "Let them eat cake." Historians suggest several competing sources for that damning line, but everyone agrees that she wasn't it. As rumors about the young queen go, though, that's hardly the worst. When she came to France from Austria in 1770 at age 14, already married in absentia to the Dauphin, the populace loved her and the streets were strewn with flowers. But within a few years, radical pamphlets in Paris were portraying her in acts of reckless extravagance and outrageous debauchery. By the end, republicans even accused her of conducting a ménage à trois with her son. Amid the fiery chaos of the French Revolution, the veracity of these scurrilous claims made no difference. On Oct. 16, 1793, she was beheaded, using Dr. Guillotin's "humane" new contraption.

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"To buy books would be a good thing if we also could buy the time to read them." Arthur Schopenhauer

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Merle's Door: Lessons from a Freethinking Dog, Ted Kerasote

This is a wonderful story of a dog and his human. I forgave the author for anthropomorphizing – those of us who love our dogs all do it. By the end of the book, I loved his dog, too – and sobbed (literally) at the end.

From *Publishers Weekly*: Humorous, jubilant and touching by turns, this story of the relationship between man and dog is informed by the author's grasp of animal research and his attachment to Merle, a stray dog he adopted. A Labrador mix, Merle first appeared while the author was on a camping trip. Kerasote (*Out There: In the Wild in a Wired Age*), an award-winning nature writer, decided to take his canine friend home to rural Wyoming. This chronicle of their 13 years together is interspersed with studies by animal behaviorists that strengthened Kerasote's desire to see Merle as a responsible individual rather than a submissive pet. Merle set his own eating schedule (though not without early mishap), refused to hunt birds (although not elks) and, according to the author, possessed a range of emotions and sentiments similar to those of humans. Kerasote tends to anthropomorphize Merle's every look and movement, but this narrative is entertaining and Kerasote's strong love for Merle and enthusiasm for life in the wild will win over many readers. Kerasote's joyous relationship with Merle is balanced by a bittersweet account of a close relationship the author had with Alison, a neighbor and fellow dog owner. Kerasote's last weeks with the dying Merle are beautifully rendered.

Esther Hampton

The Color of Water, James McBride

From Amazon.com: Order this book ... and please don't be put off by its pallid subtitle, *A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother*, which doesn't begin to do justice to the utterly unique and moving story contained within. *The Color of Water* tells the remarkable story of Ruth McBride Jordan, the two good men she married, and the 12 good children she raised. Jordan, born Rachel Shilsky, a Polish Jew, immigrated to America soon after birth; as an adult she moved to New York City, leaving her family and faith behind in Virginia. Jordan met and married a black man, making her isolation even more profound. The book is a success story, a testament to one woman's true heart, solid values, and indomitable will. Ruth Jordan battled not only racism but also poverty to raise her children and, despite being sorely tested, never wavered. In telling her story--along with her son's--*The Color of Water* addresses racial identity with compassion, insight, and realism. It is, in a word, inspiring, and you will finish it with unalloyed admiration for a flawed but remarkable individual. And, perhaps, a little more faith in us all.

Revenge of the Middle Aged Woman, Elizabeth Buchan

This book is just plain fun!

From *Publishers Weekly*: Living wisely is the best revenge for a London book review editor who loses both husband and job to her conniving assistant in this sophisticated and satisfying novel. Rose Lloyd is in her late 40s and has been happily married for 25 years when Minty, her "glossy free-ranging" young assistant, brusquely shoulders her aside. Husband Nathan, who is a deputy editor at the same newspaper, is decent and remorseful, but determined to start a new life, and Rose must pick up the pieces-which she does with commendable energy and resolve. Sidestepping the conventional wife-gets-even plot, Buchan opts for a more believable examination of one intelligent woman's midlife coming-of-age. With wry insight, Rose reflects on her affair with former lover Hal, a roving travel author, and her later happy life with Nathan and their children, Poppy and Sam, who are now embarking on their own marital journeys. Readers will appreciate the way Rose gets through the grief with admirable zest-"For anyone's information, the healing quotient of getting without difficulty into a black lace body embroidered with tiny butterflies is high"-and discovers "If becoming older meant loss... then it also gave back something unexpected."

"Reading a book is like re-writing it for yourself. You bring to a novel, anything you read, all your experience of the world. You bring your history and you read it in your own terms." Angela Carter

Recommendations from Woody Dwinell

Librarian, Springfield Public Library

Uburu, Paula. *AMERICAN EVE* (Biography)

From *Amazon.com*: "By centering her book on the ever-fascinating figure of Evelyn Nesbit—the stunningly beautiful chorine whose sexual charisma still burns through the Victorian photographs that adorn the book—Uruburu has produced not only a tour de force of historical crime writing and an illuminating social history but a rollicking piece of storytelling: a work that brings to life an entire glittering era while maintaining a breathless narrative pace." --Harold Schecter, author of *The Devil's Gentleman: Privilege, Poison, and the Trial That Ushered in the Twentieth Century*

Roach, Mary. *BONK: The Curious Coupling of Science and Sex* (Nonfiction)

From *Amazon.com*: The study of sexual physiology—what happens, and why, and how to make it happen better—has been a paying career or a diverting sideline for scientists as far-ranging as Leonardo da Vinci and James Watson. The research has taken place behind the closed doors of laboratories, brothels, MRI centers, pig farms, sex-toy R&D labs, and Alfred Kinsey's attic. Mary Roach, "the funniest science writer in the country" (Burkhard Bilger of *The New Yorker*), devoted the past two years to stepping behind those doors. Can a person think herself to orgasm? Can a dead man get an erection? Is vaginal orgasm a myth? Why doesn't Viagra help women—or, for that matter, pandas? In *Bonk*, Roach shows us how and why sexual arousal and orgasm, two of the most complex, delightful, and amazing scientific phenomena on earth, can be so hard to achieve and what science is doing to slowly make the bedroom a more satisfying place.

Notaro, Laurie. *WE THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE PRETTIER: True Tales of the Dorkiest Girl Alive* (Manic essays)

From *The Miami Herald*: Hilarious...(Notaro) is Dave Barry with ovaries, filing bizarre and frequently humiliating reports on Life on the Goofy Side.

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The library is the temple of learning,
and learning has liberated more people
than all the wars in history.

Carl Rowan

Carlson, Ron. *FIVE SKIES* (Novel)

From *Publishers Weekly*: Two stoics and a teenage misanthrope are brought together in Idaho's Rocky Mountains to build a ramp to nowhere in Carlson's first novel in 25 years, a tour de force of grief, atonement and the cost of loyalty. Darwin Gallegos, spiritually bereft after the sudden death of his wife, is hired for one last job at Rio Difficulto, the sprawling ranch where he had lived and worked for years. The job: construct a motorcycle ramp that will launch a daredevil across a gorge (the event is to be taped and bring in a pile of money). Darwin hires for the job drifters Arthur Key, a large and quiet man hiding from his recent past, and Ronnie Panelli, a wiry teenager on the lam from minor criminal mischief. As the men work from late spring through summer, their wounds come slowly to light: the seething fury that took root in Darwin after his wife died; Arthur's career as the go-to Hollywood stunt engineer that he abandoned after betraying his guileless brother; and Ronnie's short lifetime of failure, atoned for as he learns the carpentry trade. Carlson writes with uncommon precision, and this return to long-form fiction after four well-received story collections is stunning.

Erickson, Steve. *THE SEA CAME IN AT MIDNIGHT* (Challenging novel)

From *Amazon.com*: God invented millennia for writers like Steve Erickson. Erickson's previous books have buried L.A.'s freeways in sand, set bonfires in Paris streets, and hitched along for the 1996 presidential campaign. In terms of madness, doom, and sheer human folly, what could possibly be left? Plenty, as it turns out. As *The Sea Came in at Midnight* opens, 17-year-old Kristin works in a Japanese "memory hotel," where despite her so-so looks she's in high demand. As an American, "Kristin represents the Western annihilation of ancient Japanese memory and therefore its master and possessor, a red bomb in one hand, a red bottle of soda pop in the other." After one of her best clients expires in the booth, she finally tells him her own story--which turns out to be quite a tale, involving escape from a millennial suicide cult and nude solitary confinement at the behest of a man known only as the Occupant. Add in the novel's other threads, which span 40 years and include a dream cartographer, a chaos-based calendar, time capsules, and both real and faked snuff films, and you have a heady mixture indeed. Fans of Erickson's unsettling, dreamlike style are legion, and they won't be disappointed in his latest take on the End Time, *Blade Runner*-style. But in a way, the millennium is beside the point; with a plot like this one, a mere flipping of digits seems so much apocalyptic icing on the cake. Combining a lyrical surrealism with a jittery, jump-cut technique, Erickson writes like the 21st-century heir of Pynchon and DeLillo.

Mina, Denise. *SLIP OF THE KNIFE* (Mystery)

From *Publisher's Weekly*: Set in 1990, Mina's superb third thriller to feature Paddy Meehan (after 2006's Edgar-finalist *The Dead Hour*) finds the Glaswegian journalist embroiled in the most politically charged and personal story of her career. When the corpse of Meehan's ex-lover, journalist Terry Hewitt, turns up in the countryside near Port Glasgow, everything points to an IRA execution. After Meehan discovers that Terry willed her his notes and a house in the country, she decides to investigate his murder. Distracted by the imminent parole of Callum Ogilvy—the young cousin of her ex-fiancé convicted for his role in a child's murder in *Field of Blood* (2005)—Meehan soon realizes that everyone from the Scottish police to the IRA is intent on keeping the motive for Terry's death a secret. When Terry's colleague is killed and her own young son is threatened, Meehan knows she must uncover the men responsible before she becomes their next victim. This gripping read, with its intricate plotting and realistic regional dialogue, will leave even the most astute reader guessing until the end.

Bayard, Pierre. *HOW TO TALK ABOUT BOOKS YOU HAVEN'T READ* (Nonfiction)

From *The Wall Street Journal*: How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read is an amusing disquisition on what is required to establish cultural literacy in a comfortable way. Lightly laced with irony, the book nonetheless raises such serious questions as: What are our true motives for reading? Is there an objective way to read a book? What do we retain from the books we've read?" Joseph Epstein

Carter, Laton. *LEAVING* (Poetry by a Eugene author)

From *Powell's Books Online*: Whether charting the moments before or after work, the unspoken emotions accompanying separation and reunion, or the necessity of a grocery store as a "last place" for people to engage publicly, Laton Carter's poems attend to the parts of our lives that are easiest to ignore, like solitary highway drivers passing in their cars and the unspoken link binding people together. In poem after poem, the speaker relentlessly pulls the reader to spaces, both physical and emotional—fearful of the inability to bridge the gap between ideas, places, and individuals, yet unable to avoid trying. Mining the territory of responsibility and longing, these poems remind us that the minutiae and variation in our private lives combine to serve up a larger public identity. An impressively mature first collection of poems, *Leaving* is a bold book that eschews the superfluous, leaving only that which is most essential and meaningful.

Amis, Martin. *THE SECOND PLANE: September 11: Terror and Boredom* (Essays)

From *Publishers Weekly*: These chronologically ordered essays and stories on the September 11 attacks proceed from initial bewilderment to coruscating contempt for radical Islam. Novelist Amis (*House of Meetings*) rejects all religious belief as without reason and without dignity and condemns Islamism as an especially baleful variant. Amis attacks Islamism's tenets as [a]nti-Semitic, anti-liberal, anti-individualist, anti-democratic and characterizes its adherents, from founding ideologue Sayyid Qutb to the ordinary suicide bomber, as sexually frustrated misogynists entranced by a cult of death. He also takes swipes at Bush and the Iraq war, which he describes as botched and tragically counterproductive, if well intentioned, but scorns those who draw a moral equivalence between Western misdeeds and the jihadist agenda. Amis's concerns are cultural and aesthetic as well as existential: terrorism threatens a reign of boredom in the guise of tedious airport security protocols, pedantic conspiracy theories and the dogma-shackled dependent mind fostered by Islamist theocracy. As much as Amis's opinions are scathing, blunt and occasionally strident, his prose is subtle, elegant and witty—and certainly never boring.

Acito, Marc. *ATTACK OF THE THEATER PEOPLE* (Novel)

From the publisher: It is 1986, and aspiring actor Edward Zanni has been kicked out of drama school for being "too jazz hands for Juilliard." Mortified, Edward heads out into the urban jungle of eighties New York City and finally lands a job as a "party motivator" who gets thirteen-year-olds to dance at bar mitzvahs and charms businesspeople as a "stealth guest" at corporate events. When he accidentally gets caught up in insider trading with a handsome stockbroker named Chad, only the help of his crew from *How I Paid for College* can rescue him from a stretch in Club Fed.

