

Algonquin

BOOK

CLUB

CATALOG



2012 Selections

S O MANY BOOKS, SO LITTLE TIME. It's a common dilemma—especially when you realize that U.S. publishers produce more than 300,000 new titles every year! How do you choose what to read next?

Perhaps we can help. For almost thirty years Algonquin Books has championed talented writers whose works have been embraced by book clubs across the country. The feedback we receive from readers and reviewers culminates each year in the selection of twenty-five titles whose power to provoke discussion makes them ideal choices for book clubs.

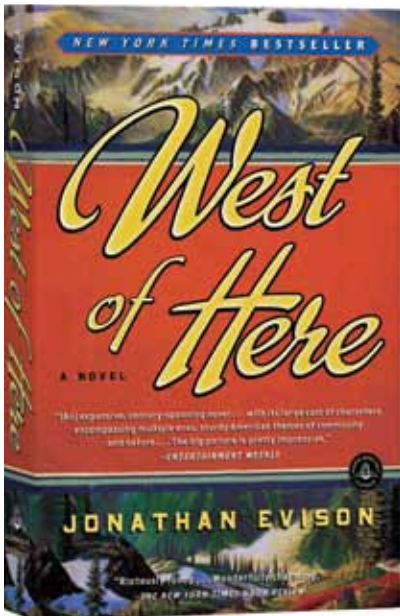
You'll discover new voices like Heidi Durrow, author of the Bellwether Prize-winning novel *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*, and recognize acclaimed writers who have graced our lists for decades, including Julia Alvarez, author of *In the Time of the Butterflies*. You'll find bestselling novels—*Big Fish* and *Water for Elephants*—along with intriguing memoirs—*The End of the World as We Know It* and *My Father's Paradise*. Every book has additional material (either bound-in or online) to enrich your reading experience. And for further enhancement, each is paired with a perfect wine, courtesy of the staff of *Wine Trials 2012*.

While there are many choices on the bookstore shelves these days, we hope you'll discover the rewards of reading Algonquin: Books for a Well-Read Life. Thanks for turning our pages and for visiting algonquinbookclub.com.

THE ALGONQUIN STAFF



“[A] booming, bighearted epic.” — *Vanity Fair*



Suggested topics for discussion:

- Fiction based on historical fact
- Contemporary American society
- Western settlement

WEST OF HERE

Jonathan Evison

On the eve of Washington’s statehood, in 1889, the outpost of Port Bonita is about to boom, fueled by a ragtag band of disparate men and women unified only in their visions of a more prosperous future. An accountant by the name of Ethan Thornburgh has just arrived to reclaim the woman he loves and start a family. Ethan’s obsession with a brighter future impels the damming of the mighty Elwha River to harness its power and put Port Bonita on the map. More than a century later, his great-great-grandson, a middle manager at a fish-packing plant, is destined to oversee the undoing of that vision, as the great Thornburgh Dam is marked for demolition, having blocked the very lifeline that could have sustained the town.

West of Here is a grand and playful odyssey, a multilayered saga of destiny and greed, adventure and passion, that chronicles the life of a small town, turning America’s history into myth, and myth into a nation’s shared experience.

Fiction • \$15.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-082-4
HighBridge Audio \$39.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-61573-116-9



“Riotously funny . . .
Wonderfully charming.”
— *The New York Times*
Book Review

“Big and unforgettable . . . A sprawling tragicomic novel about identity—national and personal—that’s as entertaining as it is insightful.”
— *The Miami Herald*

Wine Pairing — Head west to Washington State, where you’ll find **Château Ste. Michelle Pinot Gris**, an Alsatian-style wine with zippy acidity and bright citrus flavors.

The Bestseller behind the Blockbuster Movie and Soon-to-Be Broadway Musical



Suggested topics for discussion:

- Father-son relationships
- Myth and storytelling
- Death and dying

BIG FISH

Daniel Wallace

In his prime, Edward Bloom was an extraordinary man. He could outrun anybody. He never missed a day of school. He saved lives and tamed giants. Animals loved him, people loved him, women loved him. He knew more jokes than any man alive. At least that's what he told his son, William. But now Edward Bloom is dying, and William wants desperately to know the truth about his elusive father—this indefatigable teller of tall tales—before it's too late. So, using the few facts he knows, William re-creates Edward's life in a series of legends and myths—hilarious and wrenching, tender and outrageous—through which he begins to understand his father's great feats, and his great failings.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-164-7

“Refreshing, original . . . Wallace mixes the mundane and the mythical. His chapters have the transformative quality of fable and fairy tale.”
—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

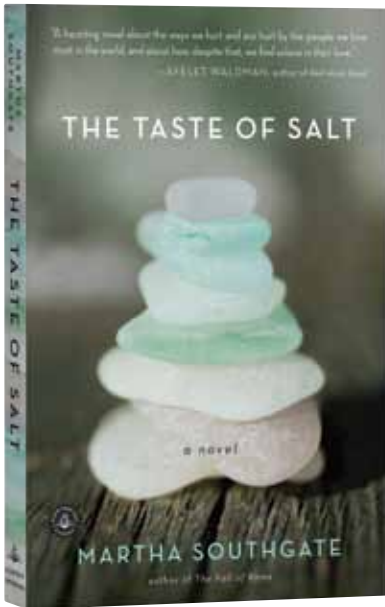
“A comic novel about death, about the mysteries of parents and the redemptive power of storytelling.” —*USA Today*



Wine Pairing — A story this big deserves a wine with a special punch. **Fish Eye Pinot Grigio** might remind you of something you've been served on a domestic flight, but it's a surprisingly good wine. And it's cheap.

“Searing, gorgeous, brilliant and profoundly human.”

—*San Francisco Chronicle*



THE TASTE OF SALT

Martha Southgate

Josie Henderson is most at home in and around water, and as a senior-level black female scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, she is practically alone in her field. But in building this impressive life for herself, she has tried to shed the one thing she cannot: her family roots back in Cleveland. When Tick, her brother and childhood ally against their alcoholic father, arrives on her doorstep fresh from rehab and teetering on the edge of a relapse, Josie must finally face her family’s past—and her own patterns of addiction. Southgate skillfully charts the lives of the Hendersons from Josie’s parents’ first charmed meeting to Josie’s dawning comprehension that the ways of the heart are more complex than anything studied under a microscope.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-925-2

Suggested topics for discussion:

- **Addiction**
- **Racism and prejudice**
- **Family dynamics**

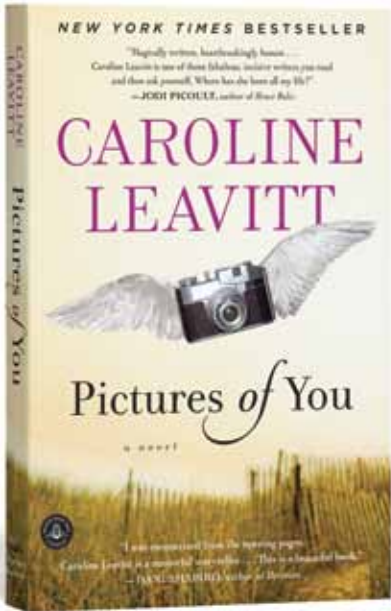
“A heartbreaking and fascinating character study . . . In a virtuoso balancing act, Southgate tells [a] poignant story.” —*Essence*

“A compassionate, complex, and concentrated novel, tenderly powerful, that explores family bonds that last long after the family is dispersed.” —*Booklist*



Wine Pairing—Let France’s **Aimé Roquesante Rosé** take you away to the water—it’s the best complement to a fresh seaside meal we can think of.

A Kirkus Reviews Best Book of 2011, for Fiction about Love and Family



PICTURES OF YOU

Caroline Leavitt

Two women running away from their marriages collide on a foggy highway, killing one of them. The survivor, Isabelle, is left to pick up the pieces, not only of her own life, but of the lives of the devastated husband and fragile son that the other woman, April, has left behind. Together, they try to solve the mystery of where April was running to, and why. As these three lives intersect, the book asks, How well do we really know those we love—and how do we open our hearts to forgive the unforgivable?

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-631-2
HighBridge Audio \$34.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-61573-655-3

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Parenting
- Love and guilt
- Forgiveness

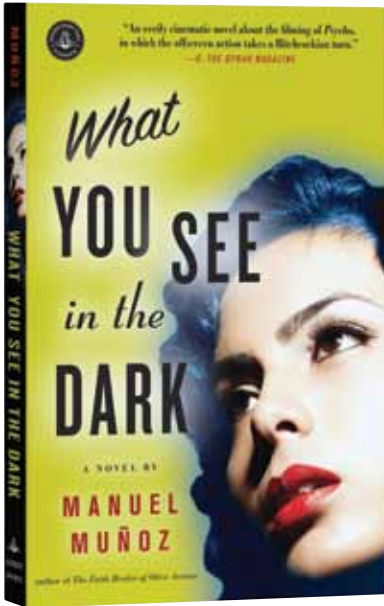
“The author’s sure, steady hand at the wheel makes the reading experience so engaging, its characters so irresistible, that *Pictures of You* is a novel I suspect I’ll return to again and again.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

“A beautiful book—about the mistakes we make and how we redeem ourselves [in] the wake of a tragedy . . . Leavitt is an undiscovered jewel.”
—JODI PICOULT, *Newsweek*



Wine Pairing—The heavy themes of this book call for a warming wine, like Argentina’s **Toca Diamonte Malbec**, whose strong fruit flavors and hints of herbs pack a powerful punch.

“An eerily cinematic novel.” —*O: The Oprah Magazine*



WHAT YOU SEE IN THE DARK

Manuel Muñoz

The long-awaited first novel by the award-winning author of two impressive story collections explores the dark side of desire in a working-class California town in the late 1950s. Set in Bakersfield at the precise time that a great director and his leading lady arrive to scout locations for a film about madness and murder at a roadside motel, Muñoz’s novel about the power of small, ordinary moments to yield extraordinary events unfolds in much the same way as Alfred Hitchcock’s iconic film *Psycho*: frame by frame, each tiny moment adding to the suspense. Maureen Corrigan, book critic for NPR’s *Fresh Air*, called it “one of the cleverest suspense conceits I’ve encountered in a long time.” Part love story, part thriller, *What You See in the Dark* is a stunning new work of fiction by a writer of remarkable talent.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-140-1

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Famous people portrayed in fiction
- Cinema and narrative
- Noir fiction



“‘Haunting’ is only the beginning of what [Muñoz’s] fine debut novel accomplishes. [It] strikes emotional chords so deep and with such precision, it almost makes you believe you’ve discovered a new art form.”

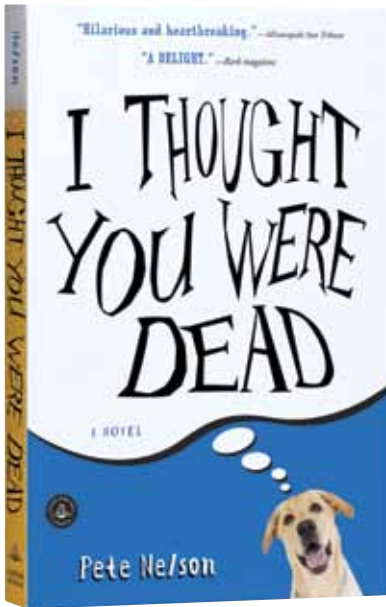
—*The Austin Chronicle*

“A stellar first novel . . . with a subtlety worthy of Hitchcock himself.”

—*Publishers Weekly*,
starred review

Wine Pairing—The best partner for this haunting, mysterious book is **Concannon Petite Sirah**, an equally complex and dark red wine from California.

“Hilarious and heartbreaking.” —*Minneapolis Star Tribune*



I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD

Pete Nelson

For Paul Gustavson, a hack writer for the wildly popular For Morons series, life is a succession of obstacles, a minefield of mistakes to stumble through. His wife has left him, his father's had a debilitating stroke, his girlfriend is dating another man, and his overachieving brother invested his parents' money in stocks that tanked. Still, Paul has his friends at Bay State Bar, a steady line of cocktails, and Stella. Beautiful Stella. With long sleek legs, kind eyes, lustrous blond hair. Stella, who gives him better counsel than any human ever could and knows him better than he knows himself. In *I Thought You Were Dead*, Pete Nelson has crafted a story about a man trying to fix his past in order to save his future—with sound advice from his best friend.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-048-0
HighBridge Audio \$29.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-61573-090-2

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Human-animal relationships
- Addictive behavior
- Family dynamics

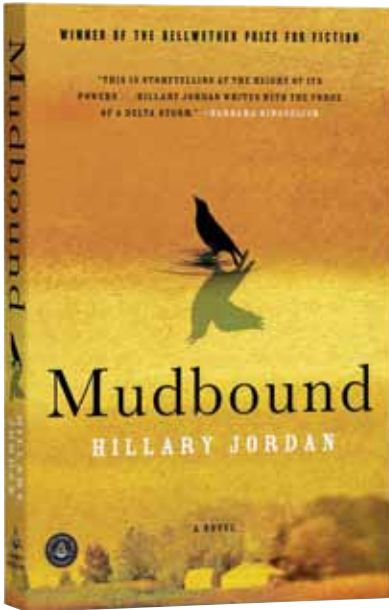
“Stella the dog is always charming. And there’s a dignity and gravity to Paul’s affection for her . . . Their friendship [is] one of the best ever put down on paper.”
—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

“Airy and almost miraculous . . . It’s very wise about the way devotion—between animals and people, between people and people—can keep us going.”
—*The Palm Beach Post*



Wine Pairing—**Dancing Bull Cabernet Sauvignon**, with its dense, vegetal flavors, is a four-legged critter that you can rely on.

Winner of the Bellwether Prize for Fiction Addressing Social Injustice



MUDBOUND

Hillary Jordan

In this award-winning portrait of two families caught up in the blind hatred of a small Southern town, prejudice takes many forms—some subtle, some ruthless. *Mudbound* is the saga of the McAllan family, who struggle to survive on a remote ramshackle farm, and the Jacksons, their black sharecroppers. When two sons return from World War II to work the land, the unlikely friendship of these brothers-in-arms—one white, one black—arouses the passions of their neighbors. Striving for love and honor in a brutal time and place, the members of both families become players in a tragedy on the grandest scale and find redemption where they least expect it.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-677-0

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Racism and prejudice
- Infidelity
- Wartime heroism

“This is storytelling at the height of its powers . . . Hillary Jordan writes with the force of a Delta storm.” —BARBARA KINGSOLVER

“Packed with drama . . . Pick it up, then pass it on.”
—*People*, Critics Choice,
★★★★



Wine Pairing—The sweetness of **Peter Mertes Landshut Riesling** easily cuts through the sadness of this eloquent novel. The balance of zippy acidity and honeyed fruit is just right.



Suggested topics for discussion:

- Biracial identity
- Surviving tragedy
- Self-discovery

THE GIRL WHO FELL FROM THE SKY

Heidi W. Durrow

Rachel, the daughter of a Danish mother and a black G.I., becomes the sole survivor of a family tragedy. Forced to move to a new city, with her strict African American grandmother as her guardian, Rachel is thrust for the first time into a mostly black community, where her light brown skin, blue eyes, and beauty bring a constant stream of attention her way. It's there, as she grows up and tries to swallow her grief, that she comes to understand how the mystery and heartbreak of her mother might be connected to her own uncertain identity.

This searing and heart-wrenching portrait of a young biracial girl dealing with society's ideas of race and class is the winner of the Bellwether Prize for fiction addressing issues of social injustice.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-015-2
HighBridge Audio \$29.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-59887-923-0

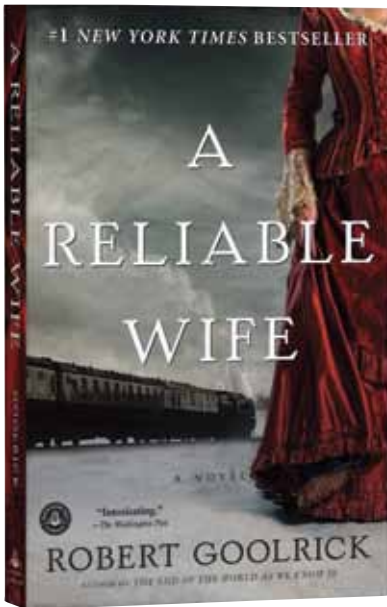
"An auspicious debut . . . [Durrow] has crafted a modern story about identity and survival."

—*The Washington Post*

"Durrow has written a story that is quite literally breathtaking." —*Elle*



Wine Pairing—**Makulu Iswithi** is made with the Pinotage grape, a cross between Pinot Noir and Cinsault, which is well known in South Africa. Known for its red fruit and herbal flavors, it's becoming more popular in the United States.



A RELIABLE WIFE

Robert Goolrick

He placed a notice in a Chicago paper, an advertisement for “a reliable wife.” She responded, saying that she was “a simple, honest woman.” She was, of course, anything but honest, and the only simple thing about her was her single-minded determination to marry this man and then kill him, slowly and carefully, leaving her a wealthy widow, able to take care of the one she truly loved.

What Catherine Land did not realize was that the enigmatic and lonely Ralph Truitt had a plan of his own. And what neither anticipated was that they would fall so completely in love. Filled with unforgettable characters and shimmering with color and atmosphere, *A Reliable Wife* is an enthralling tale of love and madness, of longing and murder.

Fiction • \$14.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-977-1

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Power and control
- Good and evil
- Crimes of passion

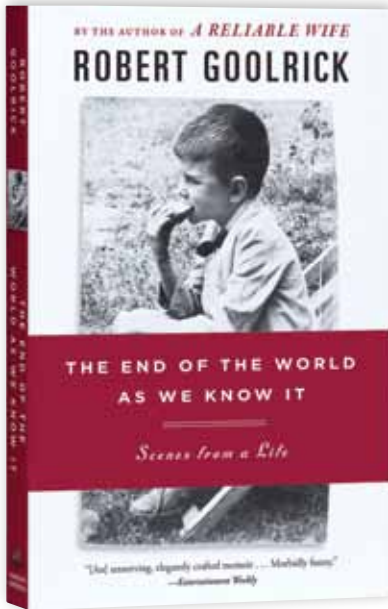
“A thrilling, juicy read . . .
The writing is beautiful
and the story is captivating.
It’s a real page-turner.”
—JOHN SEARLES,
Today show

“A killer debut novel . . .
Suspenseful and erotic . . .
A chillingly engrossing
plot . . . Good to the
riveting end.” —*USA Today*



Wine Pairing—Such a complicated story of love calls for a decidedly simpler wine. **Flip Flop Pinot Noir** keeps things subtle with fresh fruit and cherry, making it an eminently drinkable bottle.

From the Author of the Runaway Bestseller *A Reliable Wife*



THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

Robert Goolrick

In the Goolrick home there was a law: never talk about the family in the outside world. To all appearances, they lived an idyllic life: two respected, charming parents; three bright, smiling children; a lovely home on a quiet street. But behind the facade were secrets and deeds so dark and so painful that for one little boy, life would never be the same. It is through the eyes of that boy—a grown man now, looking back with the insight of time and distance—that this seemingly serene world comes irrevocably undone. With devastating honesty and razor-sharp wit, Goolrick looks back at the parents who created his world and then destroyed it. As *People* raved, “Goolrick’s memory of the details of his childhood is impressive, as is the deep sense of sorrow . . . the story evokes. A courageous and successful work.”

Memoir • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-602-2

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Societal pressures
- Addiction
- Family secrets

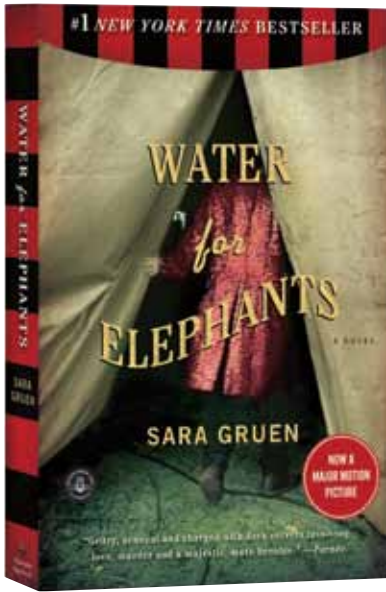
“An unnerving, elegantly crafted memoir . . . Morbidly funny.”
—*Entertainment Weekly*

“A devastatingly shrewd no-nonsense description of mid-20th-century Southern mores and manners that can rank with the work of Walker Percy or Peter Taylor.” —*Newsweek*



Wine Pairing—Appearances aren’t everything. Just look at Bulgaria’s **VINI Cabernet Sauvignon**—it’s a delicious and herbal wine from a region many would least expect to make good wine.

Over 4.5 million copies sold
Over 4 years on the *New York Times* bestseller list



WATER FOR ELEPHANTS

Sara Gruen

This big-top adventure has cast its spell on readers everywhere, turning it into an international bestseller and a major motion picture. It's the story of Jacob Jankowski, who as a young man was tossed by fate onto a rickety train that was home to the Benzini Brothers Most Spectacular Show on Earth. For Jacob, now ninety, the circus world he remembers was both his salvation and a living hell. There he met Marlena, the beautiful equestrian star married to a charismatic but twisted animal trainer, and Rosie, an untrainable elephant—the great gray hope for this third-rate traveling circus. The bond that grew among this unlikely trio was one of love and trust, and ultimately, it was their only hope for survival.

Fiction • \$14.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-560-5
HighBridge Audio \$29.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-59887-062-6

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Loyalty
- Aging
- The Great Depression

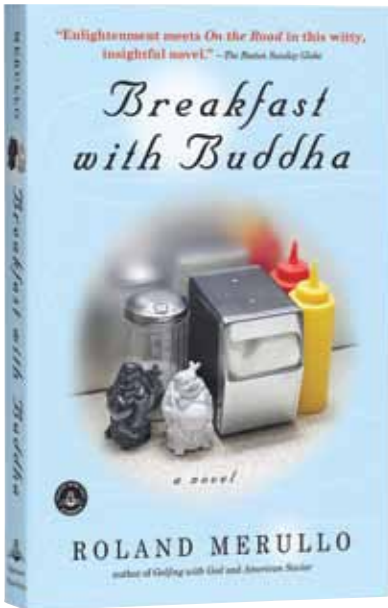


“This colorful headlong tale of a depression-era circus simply can’t be beat.”
—STEPHEN KING,
Entertainment Weekly

“A rich surprise, a delightful gem springing from a fascinating footnote to history.” —*The Denver Post*

Wine Pairing—It's not an elephant, but **Smoking Loon Cabernet Sauvignon** sounds rather like a circus attraction of some sort. This wine is dense, packed with fruit and sweet spices.

“Enlightenment meets *On the Road*.” —*The Boston Globe*



BREAKFAST WITH BUDDHA

Roland Merullo

When his sister tricks him into taking her guru, a crimson-robed monk, on a trip to their childhood home, Otto Ringling, a confirmed skeptic, is not amused. Six days on the road with an enigmatic holy man who answers every question with a riddle is not what he'd planned. But in an effort to westernize his passenger—and amuse himself—he decides to show the monk some “American fun” along the way. From a chocolate factory in Hershey to a bowling alley in South Bend, from a Cub's game at Wrigley Field to his family farm in North Dakota, Otto is given a remarkable opportunity to see his world—and more important, his life—through someone else's eyes. *Breakfast with Buddha* takes the reader into the heart of America, and in the process shows us a man on the verge of discovering his own true heart.

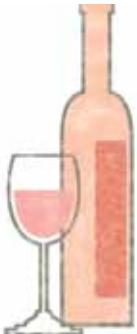
Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-616-9

Suggested topics for discussion:

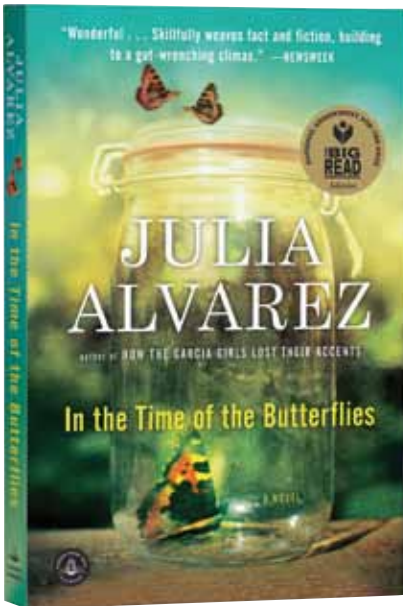
- Spirituality
- Personal transformation
- Contemporary American society

“Enchants the reader with a fresh awareness of how man confronts his spiritual side in a chaotic world.”
—Bookreporter.com

“A laugh-out-loud novel that's both comical and wise . . . balancing irreverence with insight.”
—*The Louisville Courier-Journal*



Wine Pairing—Spain's *Casteller Cava Rosé* is a bit of a riddler itself. The bottle's image of a castle is intriguing, and its pink bubbly contents will win you over with flavors and aromas of strawberry.



Suggested topics for discussion:

- Fiction based on historical fact
- Political oppression
- Female heroism

IN THE TIME OF THE BUTTERFLIES

Julia Alvarez

In November 25, 1960, three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Nor does it explain that the sisters were among the leading opponents of Gen. Rafael Leonidas Trujillo’s dictatorship. It doesn’t have to. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas—“The Butterflies.”

In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters—Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé—speak across the decades to tell their own stories. Through the art and magic of Julia Alvarez’s imagination, the martyred Butterflies live again in this story of courage, love, and the human cost of political oppression.

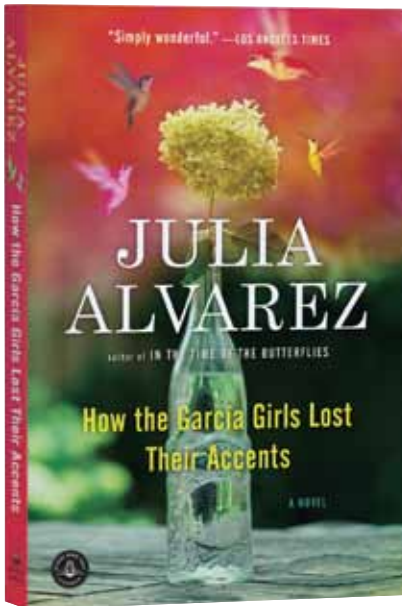
Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-976-4



“A gorgeous and sensitive novel . . . A compelling story of courage, patriotism and familial devotion.” —*People*

“Wonderful . . . Skillfully weaves fact and fiction, building to a gut-wrenching climax.”
—*Newsweek*

Wine Pairing—**Oro de Castilla**, made from the Verdejo grape in Spain’s Rueda region, speaks across centuries: this grape has been unique to the region since the eleventh century, but a blight of disease killed nearly all the vines. Today, however, they are being replanted, and the wine is making a comeback.



HOW THE GARCÍA GIRLS LOST THEIR ACCENTS

Julia Alvarez

When their father's role in an attempt to overthrow a tyrannical dictator is discovered, the García sisters—Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, and Sofía—and their family must flee their home in the Dominican Republic.

They arrive in New York City in 1960 to a life far removed from their dangerous, if genteel, existence in the Caribbean. As their parents try to find new lives, the girls try to lose themselves—by forgetting their Spanish, by straightening their hair and wearing fringed bell bottoms. For them, it is at once liberating and excruciating being caught between the old world and the new. Acclaimed writer Julia Alvarez's brilliant and buoyant first novel sets the García girls free to tell their most intimate stories about how they came to be at home—and not at home—in America.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-975-7

Suggested topics for discussion:

- The immigrant experience
- Sisterhood
- The 1960s

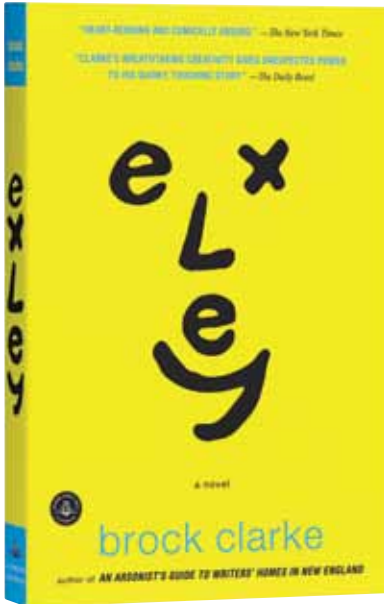
“A clear-eyed look at the insecurity and yearning for a sense of belonging that are a part of the immigrant experience . . . Movingly told.” —*The Washington Post Book World*

“Poignant . . . Powerful . . . Beautifully captures the threshold experience of the new immigrant, where the past is not yet a memory.” —*The New York Times*



Wine Pairing—Sogrape Callabriga Dao comes from Portugal, a country best known for its sweet Port offerings. But these nonsweet offerings are slowly winning over the American palate with their Old World restrained flavors—looks like they're here to stay.

“Remarkable . . . The literary equivalent of a half-court shot . . . Extraordinary.” —Michael Schaub, NPR.org



EXLEY

Brock Clarke

For young Miller Le Ray, life has become a search. A search for his dad, who may or may not have joined the army and gone to Iraq. A search for a notorious (and, unfortunately, deceased) writer, Frederick Exley, author of the “fictional memoir” *A Fan’s Notes*, who may hold the key to bringing Miller’s father back. But most of all, a search for truth. For Miller’s therapist, Dr. Pahnee, his patient is an increasingly baffling conundrum, a dedicated truth-teller who hasn’t a clue as to the difference between fact and fiction. In Brock Clarke’s smart, spirited novel about the differences between what we believe to be real and what is in fact real, we encounter a world that is both familiar and strangely disorienting, thought-provoking and wildly entertaining.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-084-8

Suggested topics for discussion:

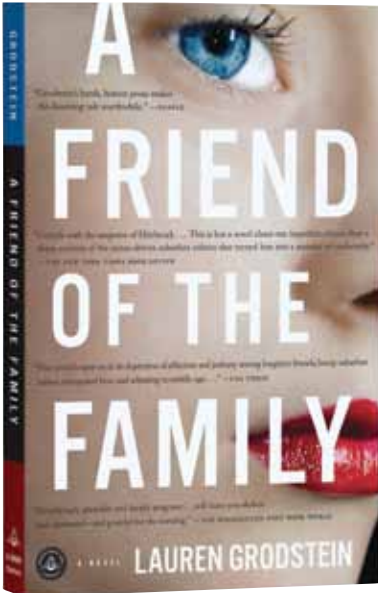
- Literature and satire
- Unreliable narrators
- Deception and honesty



“With humor as black as Exley’s liver, Clarke picks apart the fictions we tell one another—and those we tell ourselves.”
—*Entertainment Weekly*

“Clarke has a distinctively winning style . . . Both heart-rending and comically absurd.”
—*The New York Times*

Wine Pairing—**Black Box Cabernet Sauvignon** is hard to reconcile with reality. Can box wine really be this good?



A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY

Lauren Grodstein

Pete Dizinoff, a skilled and successful New Jersey internist, has a loving and devoted wife, a network of close friends, an impressive house, and, most of all, a son, Alec, now nineteen, on whom he has pinned all his hopes. But Pete hadn't expected his best friend's troubled daughter to set her sights on his boy. When Alec falls under her spell, Pete sets out to derail the romance, never foreseeing the devastating consequences.

In a riveting story of suburban tragedy, Lauren Grodstein charts a father's fall from grace as he struggles to save his family, his reputation, and himself.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-017-6
HighBridge Audio \$34.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-59887-943-8

A *Washington Post* Best Book
BookPage Best Fiction

Suggested topics for discussion:

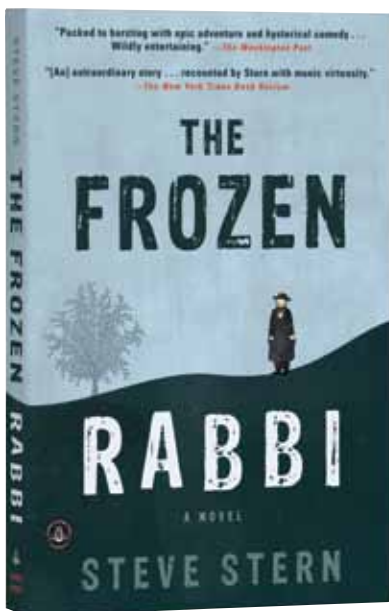
- Status-driven culture
- Friendship
- Parental expectations

“Spot-on in its depiction of affection and jealousy among longtime friends; boozy suburban bashes; unrequited love; and adjusting to middle age.” —*USA Today*

“Suspense worthy of Hitchcock . . . This is less a novel about one imperfect citizen than a sharp account of the status-driven suburban culture that turned him into a monster of conformity.”
—*The New York Times Book Review*



Wine Pairing—Whether in the city or in the suburbs, most everyone takes advantage of the price-to-volume ratio provided by box wines. **Almaden Pinot Grigio** is one example, charming drinkers with its simple fruity flavors.



THE FROZEN RABBI

Steve Stern

Award-winning novelist Steve Stern's exhilarating epic recounts the story of how a nineteenth-century rabbi from a small Polish town ended up in a basement freezer in a suburban Memphis home at the end of the twentieth century. What happens when an impressionable teenage boy inadvertently thaws out the ancient man and brings him back to life is nothing short of miraculous. "In the 25 years since [Stern] published his first book, younger Jewish writers have run with a similar shtick . . . In Jonathan Safran Foer, you see Stern's fanciful English, in Nicole Krauss his magic realism, in Michael Chabon his updated golems and gun-toting shtarkers. But Stern was there first, and with *The Frozen Rabbi* it feels like he may be last too: this is a novel so rich, full, funny, dense and exhausting, it feels like there may be no more Steve Stern books left to write—by him, or anyone else," gushed the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-052-7

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Tradition and ritual
- The immigrant experience
- Literature and satire

"Stern embraces every outrageous possibility, in lush, cartwheeling sentences that layer deep mystery atop page-turning action atop Borscht Belt humor . . . A fine performance."
—*The Washington Post*

"A wonderfully entertaining, inventive new novel that evokes Amy Bloom, Michael Chabon and Isaac Bashevis Singer . . . Laugh-out-loud funny, the sort of humor that takes you by surprise."
—Heller McAlpin, NPR.org

Wine Pairing—**Araucano Sauvignon Blanc** is an Old World-style wine that finds itself smack-dab in the middle of the New World-wine explosion in Chile.



“Provocative, genre-spanning fiction.” —*Booklist*



SOMETHING FOR NOTHING

David Anthony

Martin Anderson has a racehorse, a deep-sea fishing boat, and a vacation home in Tahoe. But his life is in freefall. It's the 1970s, and with the arrival of the oil crisis and gas rationing, his small aircraft business is tanking, as is his extravagant lifestyle. Martin keeps many secrets from his wife, including his financial predicament. So when he's given the opportunity to clear his debt by using one of his planes to make a few arial drug runs between California and Mexico, Martin accepts the offer . . . only to find that his troubles have just begun. Smart, suspenseful, and funny, this debut is a perfect snapshot of America's misguided pursuit of happiness—then and now.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-022-0

Suggested topics for discussion:

- 1970s American culture
- Economic crisis, then and now
- Crime and punishment

“A character-driven comic thriller . . . Readers will hammer along as much to find out what happens next as to see Martin absorb life's punches.”
—*The Washington Post*

“A clever and surprisingly heartfelt debut . . . [Martin's] ridiculous antics are laced with a yearning to belong that's so intense it borders on deranged innocence, rendering him the most lovable drug smuggler in ages.” —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review



Wine Pairing—If the economy has forced you to cut back on some expenses, know that you can still drink well on any budget. **Campo Viejo Rioja Reserva** is a steal at \$11, and it drinks just like a good aged wine.

“The best Alaska memoir of late, maybe the best ever.”

—*Booklist*, starred review



TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE GARDEN AND THE DOGS

Heather Lende

After a near-fatal bicycle accident in her tiny Alaskan town, bestselling author Heather Lende has an opportunity to contemplate faith and friendship, observe the breathtaking beauty of the northern wilderness anew, and truly come to appreciate the remarkable inhabitants of Haines, Alaska, without whom she could never have recovered. Lende’s idea of spirituality is rooted in community, and her irrepressible spirit and commitment to living life on the edge of the world deepens our understanding of what links us all. Like her own mother’s last instructions, “Take good care of the garden and the dogs,” Lende’s writing, so honest and unadorned, offers profound lessons to live by.

Memoir • \$14.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-051-0

Suggested topics for discussion:

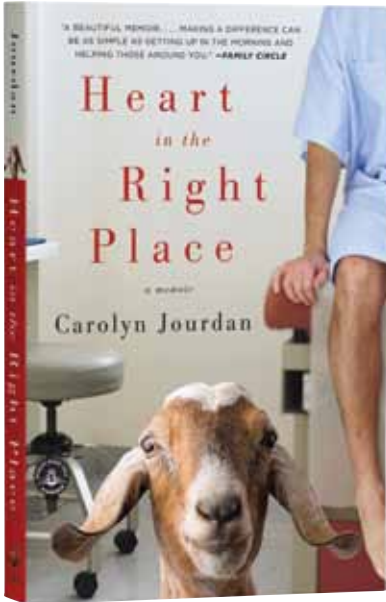
- Faith
- Trauma and healing
- Community

“Celebrates the resilience of ordinary people, gathered together to help one another with the business of living and dying. Reading this memoir is like listening to an old friend.” — *BookPage*

“Lende has a knack for subtly illuminating the remarkable in the commonplace . . . Her voice, which alternates between folksy and formal, playful and prayerful, entertaining and elegiac, is reminiscent of Garrison Keillor, Krista Tippett, Tom Bodett, Kathleen Norris and Anne Lamott.” — *Minneapolis Star Tribune*



Wine Pairing—An evening in with a bottle of Germany’s floral and citrus-heavy **Villa Wolf Pinot Gris** is as comforting and life-affirming as a night spent with one’s oldest friends.



HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE

Carolyn Jourdan

Carolyn Jourdan, an attorney on Capitol Hill, thought she had it made. But when her mother has a heart attack, she does what any good daughter would do. She returns home—to the Tennessee mountains, where her father is a country doctor, and her mother works as his receptionist. Jourdan offers to fill in temporarily for her mother, but days turn into weeks as she trades her suits for scrubs and finds herself following hazmat regulations for cleaning up bodily fluids; maintaining composure when confronted with a splinter the size of a steak knife; and tending to the loquacious Miss Hiawatha, whose daily doctor visits are never billed. Most important, though, she comes to understand what her father means to this close-knit community and discovers that some of our biggest heroes are the ones living right beside us.

Memoir • \$14.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-613-8

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Father-daughter relationships
- Reinventing one's life
- Compassion

“A beautiful memoir . . . Making a difference can be as simple as getting up in the morning and helping those around you.” —*Family Circle*

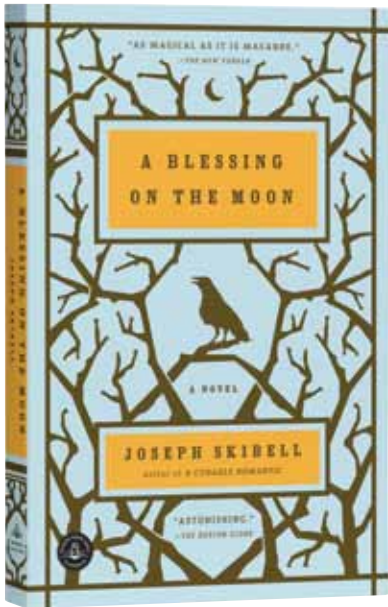
“Heartwarming and hilarious . . . You’ll fall in love with this story about family, community, and coming home.”

—*The Satellite Sister Radio Show*



Wine Pairing—A heartwarming story calls for a heartwarming wine. **Dr. L Riesling** is slightly sweet, with notes of honey and good, cleansing acidity—the perfect companion.

“As magical as it is macabre.” —*The New Yorker*



A BLESSING ON THE MOON

Joseph Skibell

Joseph Skibell’s magical tale about the Holocaust—a fable inspired by fact—received unanimous nationwide acclaim when first published in 1997. At the center of the story is Chaim Skibelski—whose own death is merely the beginning of his troubles. In the opening pages, he is shot along with the other Jews of his small Polish village. But instead of resting peacefully in the World to Come, Chaim, for reasons unclear to him, is left to wander the earth, accompanied by his rabbi, who has taken the form of a talking crow. Chaim’s afterlife journey is filled with extraordinary encounters whose consequences are far greater than he realizes.

Not since Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* has a work so powerfully evoked one of the darkest moments of the twentieth century with such daring originality.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-61620-018-3
HighBridge Audio \$29.95 CD
ISBN 978-1-61573-532-7

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Magical realism
- The Holocaust
- Use of humor to explore tragedy

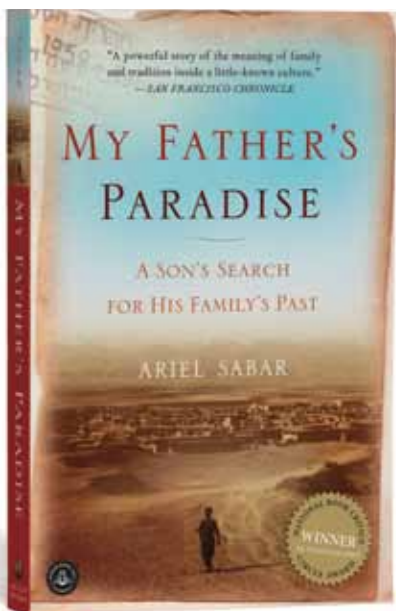
“Startingly original . . . Recalls the dark, hallucinatory world of Jerzy Kosinski’s *The Painted Bird* while at the same time surpassing it.”
—*The Washington Post*

“Brilliant . . . Astonishing . . . He has turned the full light of his extraordinary talent on one of history’s darkest moments and taught us to see it again.”
—*The Boston Globe*



Wine Pairing—El Coto de Rioja Crianza has a European profile that will complement this story beautifully. Sour cherry, earth, and herbs mark this Old World Spanish winner.

Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award
for Autobiography



Suggested topics for discussion:

- Middle Eastern culture
- Religious tolerance
- Family history

MY FATHER'S PARADISE

A Son's Search for His Family's Past

Ariel Sabar

In a remote corner of the world, forgotten for nearly three thousand years, lived an enclave of Kurdish Jews so isolated that they still spoke Aramaic, the language of Jesus. Mostly illiterate, they dwelt in harmony with their Muslim and Christian neighbors in the mountains of northern Iraq. To these descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel, Yona Sabar was born. His son Ariel grew up in Los Angeles, where Yona had become an esteemed professor, dedicating his career to safeguarding his people's traditions. Ariel wanted nothing to do with his father's strange immigrant heritage—until he had a son of his own. A sweeping saga of Middle Eastern history, it is also a story of tolerance and hope set in what is today the very center of the world's attention.

Memoir/Middle East History • \$14.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-933-7

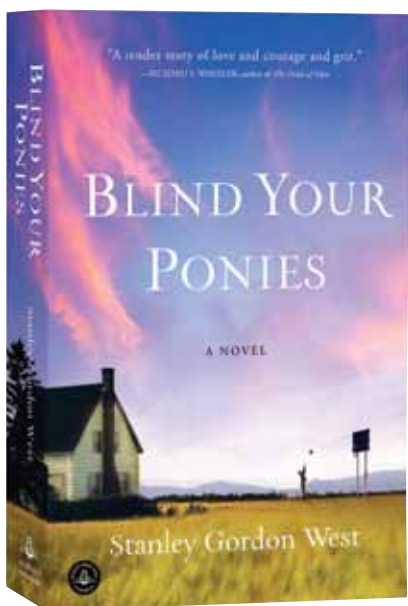


"A powerful story of the meaning of family and tradition inside a little-known culture."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*

"A wonderful, enlightening journey . . . with the power to move readers deeply even as it stretches across differences of culture, family, and memory." —*The Christian Science Monitor*

Wine Pairing—It's not all about Champagne. **Mionetto Il Prosecco** comes from Italy, a country people tend to forget about when thinking about sparkling wine. But this wine is a winner, with its simple fruity flavors and delicate bubbles.

“A fervent feel-good fairy tale of a novel.” —*Booklist*



Suggested topics for discussion:

- **Small-town life**
- **Teacher-student relationships**
- **Triumphing against the odds**

“An uplifting story about the triumph of human decency.”
—*Publishers Weekly*



BLIND YOUR PONIES

Stanley Gordon West

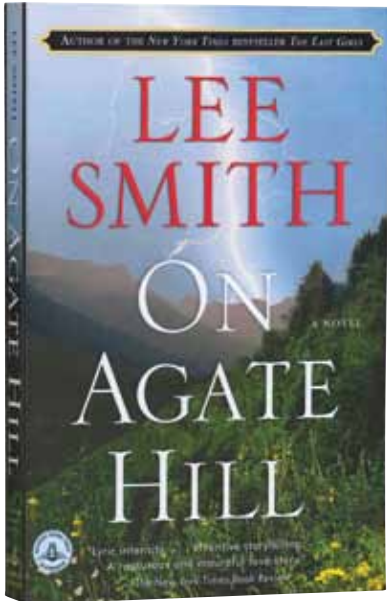
Sam Pickett never expected to settle in this dried-up shell of a town on the western edge of the world. He’s come here to hide from the violence and madness that have shattered his life, but what he finds is what he least expects. There’s a spirit that endures in Willow Creek, Montana. It seems that every inhabitant of this forgotten outpost has a story, a reason for taking a detour to this place—or a reason for staying.

As the coach of the hapless high school basketball team (zero wins, ninety-three losses), Sam can’t help but be moved by the bravery he witnesses in the everyday lives of people—including his own young players—bearing their sorrows and broken dreams. How do they carry on, believing in a future that seems to be based on the flimsiest of promises? Drawing on the strength of the boys on the team, sharing the hope they display despite insurmountable odds, Sam finally begins to see a future worth living.

Author Stanley Gordon West has filled the town of Willow Creek with characters so vividly cast that they become real as relatives, and their stories—so full of humor and passion, loss and determination—illuminate a path into the human heart.

Fiction • \$14.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-984-9

Wine Pairing—**Fetzer Chardonnay**, with its complex and delightful fruit flavors, is enjoyed on many a porch across small-town America.



ON AGATE HILL

Lee Smith

A dusty box discovered in the wreckage of a North Carolina plantation contains the remnants of an extraordinary life. Through these treasured mementos we meet Molly Petree, orphaned by the Civil War and raised in the ruins of this once prosperous plantation. She's a refugee who has no interest in self-pity and means to live her life to its fullest. So, when a mysterious benefactor appears out of her father's past to rescue her, teenaged Molly never looks back—until she is an old woman and returns to Agate Hill. Spanning half a century, Lee Smith's portrait of a fiery headstrong woman recalls the South from the Reconstruction to the Roaring Twenties—and, in the process, gives us a living, breathing heroine, gripping the reader's arm as the story unfolds.

Fiction • \$13.95 paperback
ISBN 978-1-56512-577-3

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Love and devotion
- Post-Civil War South
- Sexual politics

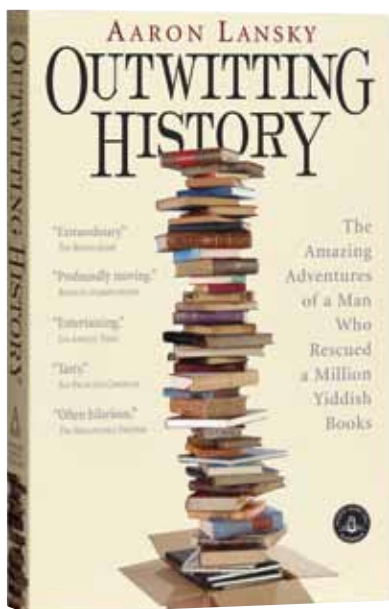
“Lyric intensity . . .
Inventive storytelling
. . . A rapturous and
mournful love story.”
—*The New York
Times Book Review*

“Brings a dead world
blazingly to life.”
—*The Washington Post
Book World*



Wine Pairing—**Conquista Malbec** is a Southern wine in its own right; coming from Argentina, the southernmost tip of the Americas, it's traveled quite a bit to arrive on your table. And you'll enjoy it—the wine is only a bit fruity, dominated by leather and spice.

“Incredible . . . Inspiring . . . Important.” —*Library Journal*, starred review



OUTWITTING HISTORY

Aaron Lansky

In 1980, a twenty-three-year-old student named Aaron Lansky set out to rescue the world's abandoned Yiddish books before it was too late. Thirty years and one and a half million books later, he's still in the midst of a great adventure. Filled with poignant and often laugh-out-loud tales from Lansky's travels across the country as he collected books from older Jewish immigrants—books their own children had no use for—*Outwitting History* also explores brilliant Yiddish writers and enables us to see how an almost-lost culture is the bridge between the Old World and the future. As the *Boston Globe* enthused, “What began as a quixotic journey was also a picaresque romp, a detective story, a profound history lesson, and a poignant evocation of a bygone world.”

Nonfiction • \$13.95 paperback

ISBN 978-1-56512-513-1

Suggested topics for discussion:

- Jewish history and culture
- Visionary quests
- Literary legacies

“A marvelous yarn, loaded with near-calamitous adventures and characters as memorable as Singer creations.”

—*The New York Post*

“Every now and again a book with near-universal appeal comes along; *Outwitting History* is just such a book . . . An unpretentious, entertaining account of [an] odd hunting party, and the diverse group of people who aided it along the way.” —*The Oregonian*



Wine Pairing— Few people know it, but Turkey has a long wine tradition, and some historians even believe that winemaking began in this region. Çankaya, a fresh and aromatic white wine, is a great Turkish specimen.


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2012 INTERVIEWS WILL FEATURE:

MARCH

LAUREN GRODSTEIN and STEPHEN KING
discussing *A Friend of the Family*

APRIL

CAROLINE LEAVITT and ANNE LAMOTT
discussing *Pictures of You*

JUNE

TAYARI JONES and JUDY BLUME
discussing *Silver Sparrow*

AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING ON OUR WEB SITE:

ROBERT GOOLRICK and GARTH STEIN
discussing *A Reliable Wife*

JULIA ALVAREZ and EDWIDGE DANTICAT
discussing *In the Time of the Butterflies*

HEIDI W. DURROW and TERRY McMILLAN
discussing *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky*





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