



Michael Giltz, Contributor BookFilter creator

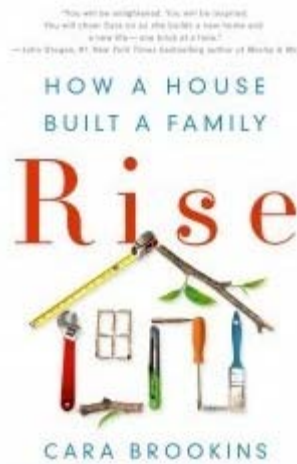
BookFilter: Darwin's Bombshell, How Building A Home Saved A Family, "Brokeback Mountain" In The Civil War And More New Books

01/25/2017 12:34 am ET

Hey Book Lovers! Welcome to our latest Top Picks Of The Week! We're ready to jump in a rental car and head down south on a road trip, but bad weather has us trapped! So this newsletter is coming to you from Allentown, PA. Of course, when you're stuck at home with endless rain, what better way to spend the day then reading? So if it's raining where you are or you're headed out of town to search for sunny skies and need some reading suggestions or you're about to go to your favorite bookstore, library or online retailer, head first to BookFilter and you'll discover all the best new releases in every genre.

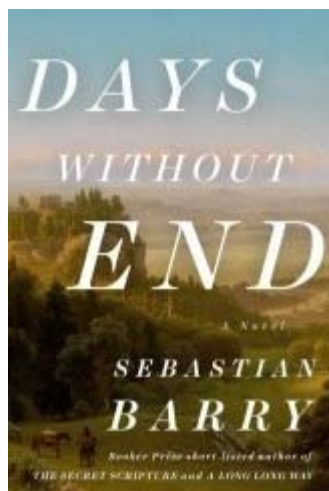
What we're reading:

- RISE: HOW A HOUSE BUILT A FAMILY by Cara Brookins (**memoir, self-help**)
- DAYS WITHOUT END by Sebastian Barry (**fiction**)
- WHY TIME FLIES by Alan Burdick (**science**)
- LIKE ONE OF THE FAMILY by Alice Childress (**fiction**)
- THE BOOK THAT CHANGED AMERICA by Randall Fuller (**history, science**)
- ACCIDENTALLY ON PURPOSE by Jill Shalvis (**romance**)
- THE ABOMINABLE MR SEABROOK by Joe Ollmann (**biography, comics**)
- THE PATRIOTS by Sana Krasiokov (**fiction**)



RISE: HOW A HOUSE BUILT A FAMILY by Cara Brookins

It sounds like a heart-warming, too-good-to-be-true Hollywood movie, but it really happened. Cara Brookins took her four kids and escaped an abusive marriage. Unfortunately, she had little money, no support to fall back on and really nowhere to live. Somehow, she got the cockamamie idea that if she and her kids could build a home, they could rebuild their lives. Brookins had never done much more than hammer a nail but that didn't stop her. She got a small loan from the bank, watched a lot of YouTube videos and she and her kids started pouring concrete and laying bricks for a two story, five bedroom home of their own. Don't be surprised if Emma Stone has already optioned this.... [Read More](#). [Love Memoirs? Discover More Here!](#) [Love Self-Help & Family? Discover More Here!](#)

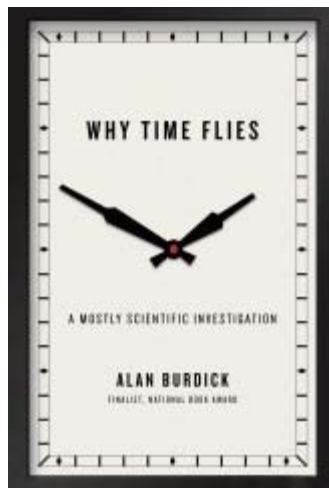


DAYS WITHOUT END by Sebastian Barry

Acclaimed author Sebastian Barry has written a decades-spanning historical novel that stretches from the potato famine in Ireland to new life in America for 17 year old Thomas McNulty to the brutal reality of the

Indian wars of the 1850s alongside his friend John Cole and ultimately the struggle for freedom that almost tore a nation apart. We've dubbed it "*Brokeback Mountain* during the Civil War" but we don't know yet if the ending is just as poignant.... [Read More](#). Love Fiction? [Discover More Here!](#) Love History? [Find More New Releases Here!](#)

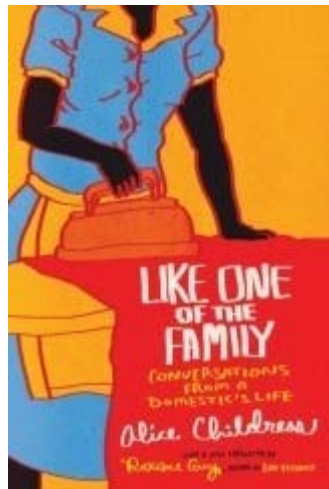
HAPPY YEAR OF THE ROOSTER! This Saturday kicks off celebrations for the Chinese New Year! It's the Year Of The Rooster -- specifically the Fire Rooster -- which is trustworthy but, like all Roosters, a little vain. Famous folk who were born in the Year Of The Rooster include Roger Federer and Beyoncé. Make sure you clean the house on Friday, wear red on Saturday (unless you're a Rooster, too, in which case avoid that color) and plan on about two weeks of fun ending with the Lantern Festival on February 11. If you want to learn more about China, Pulitzer Prize winning historian Barbara Tuchman can help. She headed to China right after Nixon in the early 1970s, and her *Notes From China* documents her impressions of that country with verve and insight. It's just been reissued this week in a handsome new paperback edition.



WHY TIME FLIES by Alan Burdick

This wide-ranging survey of the latest ideas about time touches only lightly on popular culture, like HG Wells and his time machine. Dive into Alan Burdick's book and you quickly find yourself immersed in talk of circadian rhythms and tales of scientists who sequester themselves in caves to see what a lack of sunlight and other triggers might do to their sleep cycle and sense of the passage of time. It's playful, interesting and has as much fun with philosophical questions about time as with the latest insights of practitioners. What's the most accurate clock in the world? Apparently, it's not a clock but just a constantly moving target, with various measurements around the globe averaged out so we can all agree on what time it was a few weeks ago at one particular moment. In other words, time is a hunch, a guess or entirely collapsible at will if you believe the new sci-fi movie "*Arrival*" starring Amy Adams. (In that Oscar-nominated film, aliens scoff at our childish idea of past, present and future.) Does time fly when you're reading it? Only if you believe it can.... [Read More](#).

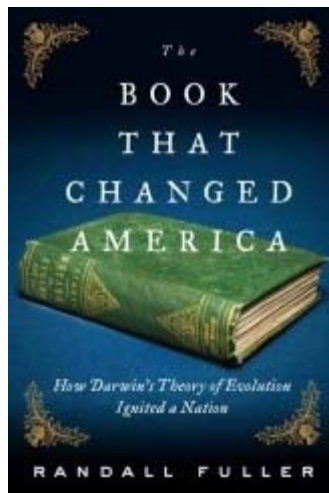
Love Science? Discover More Here!



LIKE ONE OF THE FAMILY by Alice Childress

Hey, it's a new book if you haven't read it yet! Alice Childress's classic 1956 novel about women who work as domestic servants in white households was originally published as a series of stories in the Paul Robeson founded newspaper Freedom. Childress was already an actress and playwright and she may have been inspired by Langston Hughes and his novel *Simple Speaks His Mind*, which Childress adapted successfully into a play in 1950. Here she brings to life Mildred, a woman in New York City who doesn't let her employer get off with any nonsense about how Mildred is "like one of the family." No she isn't, says Mildred, bringing to mind the great female character Lily Harper at the heart of the TV series *I'll Fly Away* (and embodied appropriately enough by another playwright, Regina Taylor). Funny and challenging, *The Help* it isn't..... [Read More](#).

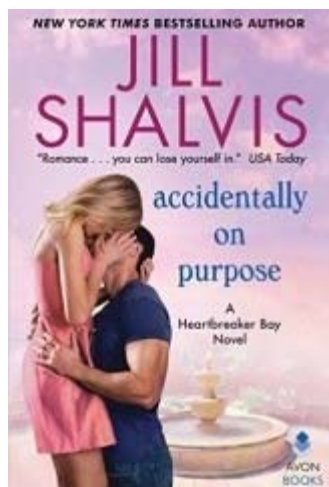
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THE BOOK THAT CHANGED AMERICA by Randall Fuller

The lightning bolt, the Big Bang of modern science that was Charles Darwin's publication of "On The Origin Of Species" is given its due in this engaging work of history. Fuller uses the hook of Darwin's book to offer a group portrait of American thinkers and writers. We implicitly understand the importance of the Theory of Evolution on the natural sciences, but Fuller awakens us again to its impact on *all* the sciences, not to mention philosophy, literature, politics, society at large and the ever-volatile issue of slavery. He shows how Darwin's ideas were immediately seized upon by abolitionists. Fine, but Fuller then shows the dismay -- the buyer's remorse, even -- of many ardent abolitionists as they wrestled with Darwin's work and how it challenged and undercut their faith, seeming to relegate God to observer. Fuller shows this passionate turmoil cutting a swath far and wide but especially in the group of Transcendentalists and their friends, people like Emerson and Thoreau right down to the talented young writer Louisa May Alcott, who was far readier than her well-intentioned father to see Darwin's ideas to their logical conclusion. Indeed, Alcott wrote about interracial romance in a controversial early novel.... [Read More](#).

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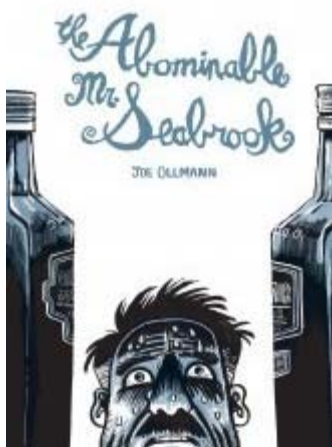


ACCIDENTALLY ON PURPOSE by Jill Shalvis

The latest in Jill Shalvis' best-selling Heartbreaker Bay series. Because sometimes you don't want to think, you just want to be entertained. What happens at Heartbreaker Bay? Usually women and men who fall in love but insist for some reason that they can't possibly be right for each other. In this case, it's career gal (and serious shoe shopper) Elle and her bodyguard/pain in the neck one-time boyfriend Archer. Are they fated to be together? Not for at least 250 pages or so.... Read More.

Love Romance? Discover More Here!

***PRIDE & PREJUDICE* IS PUBLISHED ON JAN 28, 1813**Jane Austen's masterpiece (ok, *one* of her masterpieces) is published anonymously by "A Lady" on January 28, 1813. For heaven's sake, if you haven't read it or *Sense & Sensibility*, well...do! How else can you properly enjoy the TV miniseries, the feature films, the countless spin-offs and adaptations or even *Bridget Jones' Diary*? If nothing else, you'll be able to spot knowing plays on its classic opening line such as this: "They say a Rider in possession of a good blade must be in want of a monster to slay." That's by Elle Katharine White, the author of Heartstone, which cheekily combines dragons with Jane Austen Regency romance. Her debut just arrived, some 104 years after Austen's original. If you liked Naomi Novik's fantasies, check it out...after reading *Pride & Prejudice*. (Though really, it's doubtful you'd be reading this newsletter if you hadn't read it already.) Then you can read Heartstone. Then you can read the deep-fried spin on Austen called *Pride, Prejudice & Cheese Grits*. And then you can foist this manga-illustrated edition on a Japanese comic book-obsessed niece or nephew. And of course *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. And on and on....

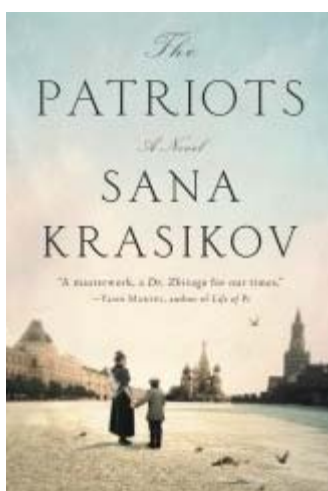


THE ABOMINABLE MR SEABROOK by Joe Ollmann

Nope, I'd never heard of journalist William Seabrook either. He was a pulpy, popular writer who specialized in

lurid tales and travelogues in which he himself took part in the adventures. Seabrook had several best-selling books, popularized the term "zombie" in a work about Haiti, rode with bedouins in the Middle East and boasted of eating human flesh with cannibals in Africa. (That was only half true -- he ate human flesh, but it was cooked up for him in Paris). At one point, Seabrook was among the highest paid writers in the US and hobnobbed with the likes of Aldous Huxley, Gertrude Stein, Man Ray and many others. On the other hand, he was also a dreadful drunk with a compulsive need to tie women up in chains and other restraints, a fact dealt with to varying degrees of reasonableness by three long-suffering wives.... [Read More](#).

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THE PATRIOTS by Sana Krasnikov

We've read many stories about people coming to America with hopes of a better life. We don't often hear about people *leaving* America for the very same reason. But in this sweeping debut novel, that's exactly what happens. During the Great Depression, Florence Fein leaves Brooklyn for what appears to be a secure and lucrative job in Moscow. Thus begins a saga that will see her son make the same journey in reverse and then *his* son head right on back to Russia. Praised in early reviews by the industry publications as well as authors like Khaled Hosseini of *The Kite Runner*, this is one of the most eagerly anticipated debuts of the year.... [Read More](#).

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Fiction!" to find even more great new picks? Will you share it with a friend? Will we keep asking questions?
If you love it, share it with your friends -- forward them the newsletter or just send them this link so they can sign up for themselves.

REGISTER TO VOTE!!

It's easy, it's fun, it's empowering.

Here's a nonpartisan site that will allow you to easily access your state's voter registration site.

Are you in New York? You can register online right here.

If you don't register and vote, you don't get to complain.

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