

2012 Notable Books List

American Library Association

Reference and User Services Association

All information from ALA website, <http://TinyURL.com/3q8spn9>

Fiction

[*Nashville Chrome*](#) by Rick Bass. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 9780547317267.

This lovely and unsettling account of pop trio The Browns reels you in as though the concept of rags to riches were brand new.

[*Room: A Novel*](#) by Emma Donoghue. Little, Brown. 9780316098335.

Five-year-old Jack vividly narrates the story of his life confined in a room with his mother in this unsettling exploration of resilience and hope.

[*A Visit from the Goon Squad*](#) by Jennifer Egan. Knopf. 9780307592835.

A '70s punk band becomes the touchstone for a motley crew who spin their interconnected stories over time and distance.

[*Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter*](#) by Tom Franklin. William Morrow. 9780060594664.

Two men – one black, one white – must confront the secrets surrounding their childhood friendship following the disappearance of two girls in rural Mississippi.

[*Freedom*](#) by Jonathan Franzen. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 9780374158460.

This incisive portrait of the fractured Berglund brood captures the zeitgeist of contemporary America.

[*Next*](#) by James Hynes. Reagan Arthur. 9780316051927.

Welcome to the worst day of Kevin Quinn's life as he battles the anxieties of the modern world in steamy Austin, Texas.

[*The Surrendered*](#) by Chang Rae Lee. Riverhead. 9781594489761.

The complex entangled lives of three people forever scarred by the Korean War are sympathetically portrayed in gorgeous prose.

[*Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War*](#) by Karl Marlantes. Atlantic Monthly Press.

9780802119285.

An ambitious and idealistic American Marine faces the horror, heroism, futility, and pragmatism of war in this visceral portrayal of life in-country.

[*The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet: A Novel*](#) by David Mitchell. Random House.

9781400065455.

A young clerk attempts to establish himself in the artificial and intense world of Dejima, the Dutch trading colony in 1800s Japan.

[*Skippy Dies*](#) by Paul Murray. Faber and Faber. 9780865479432.

Filled warmth and humor, this coming-of-age novel set in a Dublin boys schools is a sprawling homage to adolescence, string theory, donuts, and unrequited love.

[*The Lotus Eaters*](#) by Tatjana Soli. St. Martin's. 9780312611576.

The adrenaline high that danger offers infects photojournalist Helen Adams as she documents the war in Vietnam.

[*The Lonely Polygamist: A Novel*](#) by Brady Udall. W.W.Norton. 9780393062625.

In this big-hearted novel, Golden Richards and his clan navigate their chaotic lives as each clamors to be noticed.

Non-Fiction

[*Washington: A Life*](#) by Ron Chernow. Penguin. 9781594202667.

A landmark biography provides insights into the complexities of this founding father's character, and brings him fully to life within the context of his times.

[*The Hare with Amber Eyes: A Family's Century of Art and Loss*](#) by Edmund de Waal. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 9780374105976.

Blending history, biography and art, this personal account elegantly traces the fate of a European Jewish family and their collection of 246 netsuke.

[*Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*](#) by Barbara Demick. Spiegel & Grau.

9780385523905.

Chronicling the experiences of six people, this powerful account draws back the curtain on the brutality of life under a totalitarian regime.

[*Travels in Siberia*](#) by Ian Frazier. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 9780374278724.

Stricken by *Russia love*, a writer sets out to experience all things Siberian and takes us along for the rollicking journey.

[*The Price of Altruism: George Price and the Search for the Origins of Kindness*](#) by Oren

Harman. W.W. Norton. 9780393067781.

This moving work provides insight into the mind of a tormented genius attempting to understand an illusive aspect of human nature.

[*Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*](#) by Daniel Okrent. Scribner. 9780743277020.

This intoxicating history of the 18th amendment reveals the surprising relationship between Prohibition and other social movements, and explores its lasting impact on American life.

[*Citizens of London: The Americans Who Stood with Britain in Its Darkest, Finest Hour*](#) by Lynne Olson. Random House. 9781400067589.

In this compelling portrait three influential individuals persuade a reluctant President to come to the aid of a beleaguered nation in the early days of WWII.

[*The Last Stand: Custer, Sitting Bull, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn*](#) by Nathaniel Philbrick. Viking. 9780670021727.

An epic encounter between two iconic individuals is vividly portrayed in fluid, evocative, and decidedly objective prose.

[*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*](#) by Rebecca Skloot. Crown. 9781400052172.

A science writer uncovers the fascinating story of an African-American woman's cancer cells harvested for medical research, thereby raising important questions of bioethics.

[*Just Kids*](#) by Patti Smith. Ecco. 9780066211312.

The poet and musician's endearing memoir about her relationship with Robert Mapplethorpe captures life and art in New York City during the 1960s and '70s.

[*The Tiger: A True Story of Vengeance and Survival*](#) by John Vaillant. Knopf. 9780307268938.

Russia's ecological and cultural history serves as the backdrop for this riveting adventure tale of man versus beast.

[*The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*](#) by Isabel Wilkerson. Random House. 9780679444329.

The 20th century exodus of over 6 million Black Americans from the South is sensitively retold through the lives of three who left.

Poetry

[*Unincorporated Persons in the Late Honda Dynasty: Poems*](#) by Tony Hoagland. Graywolf Press. 9781555975494.

These poems capture the absurdities and loneliness of American life using matter of fact language and humor.

[*Wait: Poems*](#) by C.K. Williams. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 9780374285913.

A lifetime of experience is distilled into a slim but significant volume of verse by this Pulitzer and National Book Award winning poet.

Presentation by Lincoln City Libraries Director Pat Leach

Titles Pat discussed in specific are **highlighted in yellow**. The rest of the list is provided for readers' convenience.

Bethany BooksTalk – December 16, 2011 / Lunch at the Library – February 1, 2012

Lincoln City Libraries, Lincoln, NE