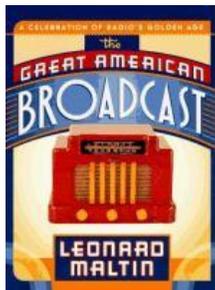


Some History, Real and Otherwise

Gere Branch BooksTalk – March 4 2019 – Scott Childers (SELS)

Non-Fiction:

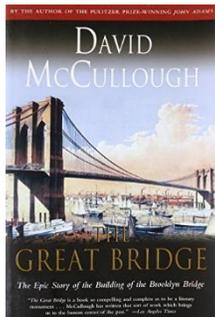
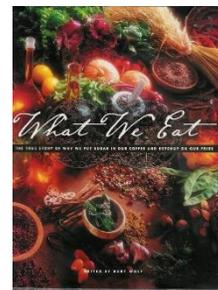


[The Great American Broadcast](#) by Leonard Maltin (1997) [791.44 Mal]

The popular authority on movies, television, and video now tunes in to the Golden Age of Radio. This fascinating and long-overdue celebration of the way things were including behind the scenes stories about Orson Welles, Lucille Ball, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Kirk Douglas, Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, and many, many others

[What We Eat: The True Story of Why We Put Sugar in Our Coffee and Ketchup on Our Fries](#) by Burt Wolf (2002) [641.3 qWo]

This book has lots of little tidbits of information about how different foods appeared in American cuisine. The story behind coffee, chocolate, sugar, corn and more are told in this companion piece to the author's "What We Eat" mini-series that still sometimes appears on PBS.

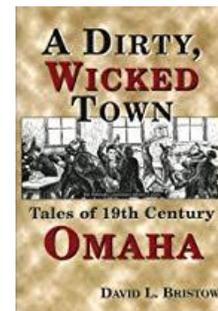


[The Great Bridge: The Epic Story of the Building of the Brooklyn Bridge](#) by David McCullough (1972, new edition 2001)

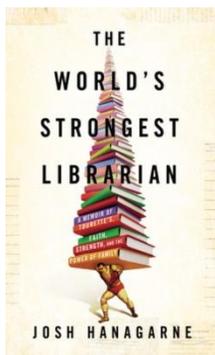
Built to join the rapidly expanding cities of New York and Brooklyn, the Brooklyn Bridge was thought by many at the start to be an impossibility destined to fail if not from insurmountable technical problems then from political corruption. The story around the Brooklyn Bridge is one like no other in our history. Courage, chicanery, unprecedented ingenuity and plain blundering, heroes, rascals, all the best and worst in human nature played a part. At the center of the drama were the stricken chief engineer, Washington Roebling and his remarkable wife, Emily Warren Roebling, neither of whom ever gave up in the face of one heartbreaking setback after another.

[A Dirty, Wicked Town: Tales of 19th Century Omaha](#) by David L. Bristow (2000) [978.225 Bri]

Omaha, Nebraska, is a laid-back city in America's heartland. In the nineteenth century, however, it had a very different reputation. Omaha grew from a speculative scheme in 1854 to a booming city. Along the way there were scores of great stories. David L. Bristow, an editor for *Nebraska History*, shares research includes all sorts of stories of Omaha's first days, including feuds, con-men, and other tales from the underbelly of a growing frontier town in a light, yet informative manner.



Memoir:



[The World's Strongest Librarian: A Memoir of Tourette's, Faith, Strength, and the Power of Family](#) by Josh Hanagarne (2013) [Bio Hanagarne]

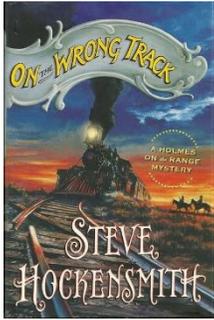
Josh Hanagarne couldn't be invisible if he tried. By the time he was twenty, the young Mormon had reached his towering adult height of 6'7" when — while serving on a mission for the Church of Latter Day Saints — his Tourette's tics escalated to nightmarish levels.

Determined to conquer his affliction, Josh underwent everything from quack remedies to lethargy-inducing drug regimens to Botox injections that paralyzed his vocal cords and left him voiceless for three years. Undeterred, Josh persevered to marry and earn a degree in Library Science. At last, an eccentric, autistic strongman — and former Air Force Tech Sergeant and guard at an Iraqi prison —

taught Josh how to "throttle" his tics into submission through strength-training.

This book explores the mysteries of this little-understood disorder, as well as the very different worlds of strongman training and modern libraries. With humor and candor, this unlikely hero traces his journey to overcome his disability — and navigate his wavering Mormon faith — to find love and create a life worth living.

Historical Fiction:



On the Wrong Track by Steve Hockensmith (Holmes on the Range #2) (2007) [Hockensmith]

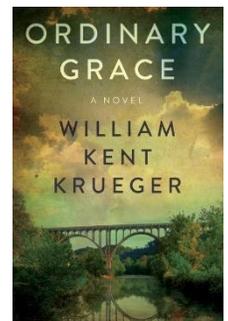
It might be 1893 and the modern world may in full-swing, but cowboy Gustav "Old Red" Amlingmeyer is an old-fashioned kind of guy. His brother Otto ("Big Red"), on the other hand, wouldn't mind climbing down from his horse and onto a train once in a while if it'll give his saddle-sore rear end a rest. So when it's Old Red who insists they sign on to protect the luxurious Pacific Express, Big Red is flummoxed. But Old Red, tired of the cowpoke life, wants to take a stab at professional 'detectifying' just like his hero, Sherlock Holmes and guard jobs for the railroad are the only ones on offer.

So it is that Big Red and Old Red find themselves trapped on a thousand tons of steam-driven steel en route to San Francisco with a crafty gang of outlaws somewhere around the next bend, a baggage car jam-packed with deadly secrets, and a vicious killer hidden somewhere amongst the colorful passengers.

Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger (2013) [Krueger]

New Bremen, Minnesota, 1961. It was a time of innocence and hope for a country with a new, young president. But for thirteen-year-old Frank Drum it was a summer in which death assumed many forms.

When tragedy unexpectedly comes to call on his family, which includes his Methodist minister father, his passionate, artistic mother, Juilliard-bound older sister, and wise-beyond-his years kid brother, Frank finds himself thrust into an adult world full of secrets, lies, adultery, and betrayal.



On the surface, Ordinary Grace is the story of the murder of a beautiful young woman, a beloved daughter and sister. At heart, it's the story of what that tragedy does to a boy, his family, and ultimately the fabric of the small town in which he lives. Told from Frank's perspective forty years after that fateful summer, it is a moving account of a boy standing at the door of his young manhood, trying to understand a world that seems to be falling apart around him. It is an unforgettable novel about discovering the terrible price of wisdom and the enduring grace of God.

Alternate History:



A Natural History of Dragons by Marie Brennan (2013) [Brennan]

This story, told in the form of journal entries, starts in a world very similar to Victorian England. Isabella, Lady Trent, tells the story of how she went from a bookish young woman, to become the preeminent dragon naturalist. This tells a story of a pioneering spirit who risked her reputation, her prospects, and her fragile flesh and bone to satisfy her scientific curiosity; of how she sought true love and happiness despite her lamentable eccentricities; and of her thrilling expedition to the perilous mountains where she made the first of many historic discoveries that would change the world forever.

Radiance by Catherynne M Valente (2015) [Valente]

Radiance is a decopunk pulp SF alt-history space opera mystery set in a Hollywood—and solar system—very different from our own. The story of Severin Unck is told using techniques from reality TV, classic film, gossip magazines, and meta-fictional narrative, Radiance is a solar system-spanning story of love, exploration, family, loss, quantum physics, and silent film.

