



More Books for Women

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About BTWOF

Books To Watch Out For publishes monthly e-letters celebrating books on various topics. Each issue includes new book announcements, brief reviews, commentary, news and, yes, good book gossip.

More Books for Women

covers the finest in thinking women's reading, plus mysteries, non-sexist children's books, and news from women's publishing. Written by the owners and staff at Women & Children First, and friends.

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The Lesbian Edition

covers both lesbian books and the whole range of books lesbians like to read. It covers news of both the women in print movement and mainstream publishing. Written and compiled by Suzanne Corson.

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The Gay Men's Edition

announces and reviews new books by and about gay men as well as other books of interest and gay publishing news. Written and compiled by Richard Labonte.

- March 2007 -
Volume 3 Number 3

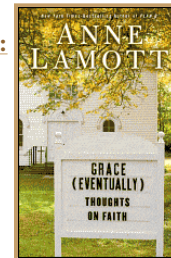
Welcome to the March issue of *More Books for Women*. Our reviewers bring you their thoughts on some of the new Spring titles for both adults and children of all ages. Enjoy!

Suzanne Corson
Books To Watch Out For

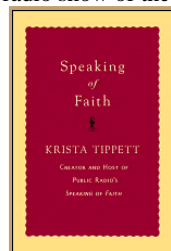


Ann Christophersen is inspired by...

Anne Lamott has a new book coming out mid-March, a sequel of sorts to two of her previous books. This one, **Grace (Eventually): Thoughts on Faith**, obviously has much in common with *Traveling Mercies: Thoughts on Faith* and *Plan B: More Thoughts on Faith*. Besides continuing her commentary on the role faith plays in her life, this time focusing on the subject of grace, she uses the ironic, irreverent, comic style all her fans recognize as her signature. And, as usual, she manages this tone while being utterly serious about the underlying message of each personal anecdote she offers. She writes in a story called "Nudges": "Just after I got sober, I met a wonderful couple, funny, charming intellectuals. They were spiritual in the same way I was and am, which is to say devout, with a sometimes bad attitude, a black sense of humor, and tendencies toward gossip and character assassination. We hit it off instantly." She has a tremendous aptitude for creating a central metaphor in each of the stories she tells that expands the meaning of the piece. You finish it refreshed by the telling and also with something to ponder. I love reading Anne Lamott. Penguin/Riverhead Books, \$24.95, 9781594489426.



Speaking of themes in Anne Lamott's last three books, you might notice one of my own. The other new book I'm recommending for March is **Speaking of Faith**, by Krista Tippett. Some of you might be familiar with Tippett, having heard her NPR radio show of the same title. In her book, she is at times quite personal, tracing her own changing relationship with religion and faith over time, and how that led her to create the radio show. She also argues for her conviction that the unique ideas and language of faith need to be inserted into all the important dialogues people have about their actions and beliefs. She is resolutely intellectual in her approach, and demonstrates why it is simplistic to think that science or any other discipline is inconsistent with faith, pointing to the irony, for instance, of the reductive "creation vs. evolution" argument when Darwin himself was a religious man. My habits of thinking, like those of many others of our time, are not easily reconciled to hers. But habits are often fertile ground for examination and change, and I find Tippett's book provocative and potentially important. Penguin/Viking, \$23.95, 9780670038350.



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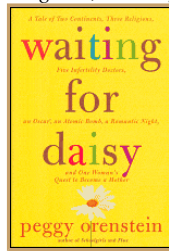


Linda Bubon loves...

Our book group had a good discussion with a book I adore, **The Love Wife** by Gish Jen. There are multiple narrators in this modern family story: #1, Carnegie Wong, the Chinese-American software marketer, who is moved to adopt an Asian-looking foundling, which is where he meets #2, Blondie (Jane), your average white-girl liberal who is moved to marry Carnegie; #3, Lizzie, the foundling, now a somewhat angry, hip teen; #4, her sister Wendy, adopted from China, now a middle-schooler; #5, Mama Wong, Carnegie's endlessly-striving immigrant mother who opposes the Carnegie/Jane mating and reaches out from the grave to bring into their family #6, Lan, a woman of Jane's age from mainland China who co-opts the children, flirts with Carnegie, is cold to Jane, and generally presents an enormous challenge, culturally and humanly. There's a great deal of humor in Jen's writing, and she creates sympathy for all her characters. Issues of identity, assimilation, and adoption are handled with the depth and complexity they deserve. Random House/Vintage, \$14, 9781400076512.



Waiting for Daisy has a subtitle that explains it all: *A Tale of Two Continents, Three Religions, Five Infertility Doctors, an Oscar, an Atomic Bomb, a Romantic Night, and One Woman's Quest to Become a Mother*. What it doesn't tell you is how compelling, honest, heart-wrenching, and at times witty Peggy Orenstein's memoir of her struggle with infertility is. Like *Schoolgirls* and *Flux*, I couldn't put *Waiting for Daisy* down. She is just such a great journalist; you learn more about infertility treatments and remedies than you ever thought you might want to know, but it's fascinating. Orenstein takes you inside the mindset of a couple who become increasingly obsessed with conceiving. Bloomsbury, \$23.95, 9781596910171.



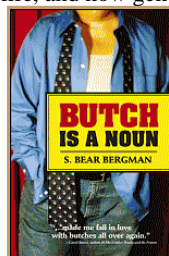
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Chelsey Clammer suggests...

After a lifetime of disability rights activism, Simi Linton finally wrote a memoir. **My Body Politic** was released last summer, and now it is available in paperback. After a fatal car accident in 1971 that left her husband dead and Linton paralyzed from the waist down, the fiery young activist slowly began to realize how her disabled body was a type of political action in and of itself. Challenging the ableist notions of normalcy that our society constructs and insists on, Linton details the past 30 years of her life in which she has fought for not only access to university buildings, but also the respect and just treatment that every woman deserves. Told in her compelling narrative style, Linton both informs and entertains her readers with the politics of her body and life. University of Michigan Press, \$18.95 paper, 9780472032365.

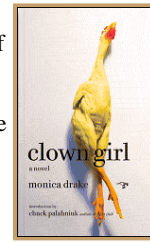


Picking up where some fiction writers and academics alike have left off, S. Bear Bergman weaves personal narrative and gender politics in hir (that's gender-neutral talk for neither her nor him) new exploration of the intersections of sexuality and gender. **Butch Is a Noun** describes exactly that: how sexuality becomes a way of life, and how gender is not always the best identifier to go by. Living in the spaces in between and beyond the male/female dichotomy, Bergman explains how life as a butch cannot be represented by either notion of that pesky gender binary. In a very accessible style, Bergman explains for all of the butches, femmes, straights, and gays alike out there what life as a butch is really like. But this memoir goes beyond the practice of trying to define one type of person. Bergman shows us all how gender identity is specific to each person, and that in order to truly understand a "category" of people, you first have to realize that categories are not always helpful. It's witty and fun, educational, and brilliant. *Butch Is a Noun* is definitely a book that everyone should read, regardless of your notion of gender. Suspect Thoughts Press, \$16.95, 9780977158256.



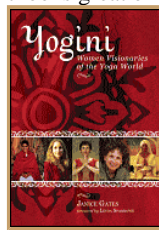
Angelique Grandone is moved by...

Clown Girl is a heart-wrenching love story and a dramatic tale of loss, redemption, and red, red noses. Monica Drake's descriptions of the hard-knock life of Sniffles the Clown in Baloneytown is darkly comic and completely brilliant. It leaves the reader questioning the great paradox of the world: can one be a Serious Clown? Hawthorne Books and Literary Arts, \$15.95, 9780976631156.

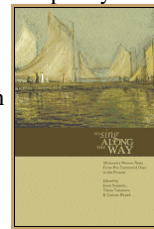


Mary Ellen Kavanaugh recommends...

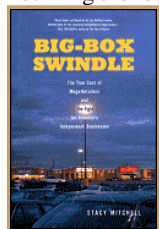
Beautifully designed with great artwork throughout, gracefully written, complete with a thoroughly accessible and engaging herstory of the place women have held in the world of yoga, **Yogini: The Power of Women in Yoga** by Janice Gates is a collection of brief biographies of current women who are movers and shakers in the world of yoga. What a delicious book! *Yogini* is a relaxing and inspiring read...and it looks great on your coffee table. I am rereading some of the stories because they are so inspirational. Each yogini's story about how she came to yoga makes me realize how imminent the capacity to change is in our day-to-day lives, if only we are open to seeing it - and, how much yoga prepares us to do just that. I am grateful for my own yoga teachers who have shown me that, and now for Janice Gates's amazing book which reminds me of the wisdom to be found from our yoga women leaders. Don't bypass this book just because you don't do yoga - it is true testament to the power women can find within when they pursue learning who they really are. (Note to booksellers: *Yogini* is readily available through major wholesalers.) Mandala Publishing, \$19.95 paper, 9781932771886.



For sure, I would not have picked up **To Sing Along the Way: Minnesota Women Poets from Pre-Territorial Days to the Present** (Connie Wanek, et al, eds.) if I were not living in Minnesota - and how much poorer I would be for that mistake! This beautifully produced collection of poems will delight any reader of poetry. I was recently most fortunate to attend a launch of the book at The Loft in Minneapolis and heard about 30 of the 47 poets included in the book read. *Wow* - from the 91-year-old to the 31-year-old, each poet delighted the audience with gems, short and long, reflecting on life as lived by women in Minnesota over the past century. The 90 or so people who came out in the minus-10 degree weather and stayed for three hours was a testament to the strength of both the poetry scene for women in the Twin Cities and the power of this collection. New Rivers Press, \$17.95 paper, 9780898232325.

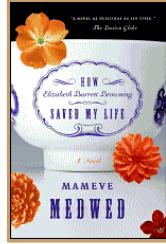
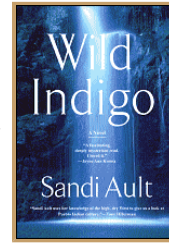


More thoughts on **Big Box Swindle: The True Cost of Mega-Retailers and the Fight for America's Independent Businesses** by Stacy Mitchell: This is a painful book for me to be reading right now - just three years out from having to close my own independent bookstore and in the middle of a corporate acquisition of one of the last independent book distribution companies in the country, so I am moving slowing through it. At times it makes me righteously outraged, at times it is just making me cry - it is so close to the bone. Those of us who came of age in the heyday of independent publishing and bookselling in this country are deeply mourning the loss of that world, for both personal and communal reasons. And, I believe everyone who cares about their local economy, a sense of community, freedom of speech, wide access to ideas, and the inclusion of marginal voices should be paying attention to what is happening in our culture at the hands of a few corporate giants, whose concern is nothing more than making money. Don't let them tell you otherwise. Mitchell, a senior researcher with the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, pulls together here an astute presentation of how this takeover has come to be, what local communities are doing to stem the growth, and what you can do as an individual to be part of creating more vital local communities. Run, don't walk, to your local independent bookstore (if you're still lucky enough to have one) and get a copy of this book. When you are done, donate it to your local library. Don't have a local bookstore? Check out www.booksense.com and order it from your nearest indie (or click on the title link above and order it from Women and Children First). Friends don't let friends buy from chains... Beacon Press, \$24.95, 9780807035009.



Sara Luce Look is reading...

I really enjoyed **Wild Indigo** by Sandi Ault, first in a new mystery series introducing Jamaica Wild. Based in New Mexico, Jamaica works for the Bureau of Land Management near the Tanoah Pueblo, and she lives with a wolf cub. She's a very interesting character; I enjoy how the author writes about Jamaica being a woman alone and an outsider, as well as how one can be both interested and respectful of other cultures. Penguin, \$23.95, 9780425213698.



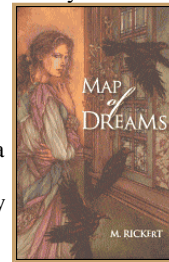
How Elizabeth Barrett Browning Saved My Life by Mameve Medwed is now out in paperback. Abby Randolph lives in Boston and her rather passionless life is changed when the *Antiques Roadshow* comes to town. Abby finds that she owns Elizabeth Barrett Browning's chamber pot, and that discovery significantly changes her life. This novel is very steeped in both New England culture and Harvard academic culture. HarperCollins, \$13.95, 9780060831202.



Science Fiction and Fantasy: Spotlight on Fantasy By Jill Roberts

Always pushing its own boundaries, fantasy has a limitless capacity to reinvent itself. Fantasy continues to reappear as if by magic, from TV's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (of which I am an unabashed fan), to profound works of imaginative literature. The renaissance of contemporary fantasy, maturing from children's literature, is best seen in literary fabulism. Since the early twentieth-century, the literary fabulists have been innovators, writers of extraordinary artistry, reworking the existing tropes of fantasy, creating fiction of great complexity and beauty.

One of my favorite new literary fabulists is the wonderful emerging talent M. Rickert. For the title story in her first short story collection, **Map of Dreams**, Rickert immediately guides you into borderlands, a lushly dangerous place somewhere between deep unconsciousness and an endlessly shifting version of reality. This is a very strong collection, and I was particularly taken by "Bread and Bombs," set in a post-apocalyptic suburbia where magical strangers encounter lurking paranoia; "The Girl Who Ate Butterflies," an unorthodox love triangle in which the carnal becomes carnivorous; and "Leda," a stark recasting of the Greek myth, told by a woman whose beauty makes her a target, but not a victim. These stories are lyrical and devastating, brutally honest, and profoundly satisfying. *Map of Dreams* is sophisticated fantasy that will appeal to both genre and literary readers. I am truly looking forward to seeing more of M. Rickert's work. Golden Gryphon, \$24.95, 9781930846449.



Literary fabulists to watch out for: Theodora Goss (*In the Forest of Forgetting*), Liz Williams (*The Demon and the City*), Cherie Priest (*Wings to the Kingdom*), and Elizabeth Hand (*Saffron and Brimstone*).

Moving back to the roots of literary fabulism: in **Lud-in-the-Mist** by Hope Mirrlees, the town of Lud-in-the-Mist is a pastoral paradise that has repressed its connection to the dark magic of faerie. Forbidden for generations, faerie fruit can confer both joy and madness, and its mysterious reappearance in Lud imperils both the established order and its restless youth. Conflicted Mayor Nathaniel Chanticleer is unwillingly drawn into a showdown with the sinister Widow Gibberty, and her co-conspirator, town physician Endymion Leer, and Lud will never be the same.

Fans of J.R.R. Tolkien will enjoy this seemingly traditional British fantasy that recalls *The Hobbit*, but was actually written eleven years earlier, in 1926. The acknowledged influence of Mirrlees's work by contemporary fantasists, such as Neil Gaiman and Michael Swanwick, has led to the rightful canonization of *Lud-in-the-Mist* as a classic fantasy novel. Cold Spring Press, \$11, 9781593600419.



Classic female fabulists to revisit: Mary Shelley (*Frankenstein*), C.L. Moore (*The Best of C.L. Moore*), Ursula K. Le Guin (*A Wizard of Earthsea*), Octavia Butler (*Kindred*).



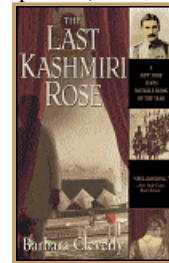
Mysteries

By Nan Cinnater



Apparently I was born without the romance gene - not the one for romance in real life but the one for romance in fiction. Sexual preference doesn't seem to matter; I don't care whether girl gets girl any more than I care whether girl gets boy. Surprisingly, I loved *The Lost Madonna* by Kelly Jones, a novel of romantic suspense that's not big on suspense. But it's a great story, flashing back to the flood in Florence in 1666 and the "mud angels," the international students who came to help rescue and restore the city's art treasures. No Dan Brown-style conspiracy here, but an evocative picture of Italy then and now, with a strong 52-year-old heroine, mature romance, and a little art history thrown in for good measure. Penguin/Berkley, \$7.99, 9780425214190.

The Last Kashmiri Rose by Barbara Cleverly takes us to India in 1922, where Scotland Yard Commander Joe Sandilands is on loan to the Bengal police (Delta, \$13, 9780385339711). At a British army outpost near Calcutta five officers' wives have died, seemingly accidentally, over the last twelve years. Sandilands is sent to investigate. His chief ally is the wife of a British administrator who fought to have the cases reopened, and a romance ensues. The mystery is meticulously constructed a la Agatha Christie, with good colonial background and only a little too much romance. This is the first in a series which now comprises five books. In the latest, *The Bee's Kiss* (Delta, \$13, 9780385340410), it's 1926 and Sandilands is back in London, where an elegant aristocrat is found bludgeoned to death in her room at the Ritz.



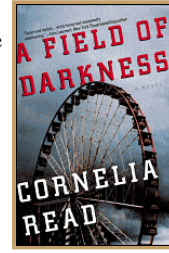
The Edgar Awards, given by the Mystery Writers of America, are the Oscars of mystery writing. As with the Oscars, when the nominations are announced, fans hurry to check out anything they have missed. (The Edgar nominations were reported in [MBW #16](#).)

The Dead Hour by Denise Mina (nominated for Best Novel) is the second in her series featuring Paddy Meehan, a young Irish Catholic woman who works as a reporter in Glasgow. Here Paddy gets involved with a case of spousal abuse ending in murder. The series is set in the 80s, giving Mina plenty of opportunity for pointed observations about feminism, Thatcherism, and Irish and Scottish politics. Little Brown, \$24.99, 9780316735940.

I just caught up with the first in the series, *Field of Blood*, in which Paddy is a teenager working as a lowly "copy boy" at a Glasgow newspaper. Mina is a great writer, and Paddy is a great character. Spunky, "chunky," and smart as a whip, Paddy is like a far more realistic, working-class Bridget Jones. When a three-year-old boy is murdered by older children, Paddy discovers a personal connection to one of the accused boys. Mina is brilliantly succinct, but even so the harsh realities of child murder can be hard to take. Similarly, Mina's previous trilogy (consisting of *Garnethill*, *Exile*, and *Resolution*, all available in trade paper) is wonderfully written, imbued with feminist politics, and despairingly gritty in its depiction of abuse, alcoholism, prostitution, and life on the street. *Field of Blood*: Little, Brown, \$7.50, 9780316154581.

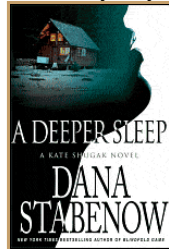


A Field of Darkness by Cornelia Read (nominated for Best First Novel by an American) introduces Madeline Dare, an ex-debutante living in Syracuse with her adored working-class husband. Maddie is the poor relation of her privileged family; as she puts it, "My money is so old there's none left." Twenty years ago, two girls were murdered outside Syracuse, and now evidence comes to Maddie that implicates one of her favorite cousins. Cornelia Read neatly combines heartland gothic with Gatsby-esque elegance and dysfunction. But it's Maddie's voice - sharp, funny, and discontent - that hooked me and that lingers after the case is concluded. I can't wait to meet this character again. Warner, \$22.95, 9780892960231.



(The Mystery Writers of America created a new website specifically for the Edgars: www.theedgars.com. It also contains information about an April 25 symposium in New York, open to the public, which features such writers as Laurie R. King and S.J. Rozan.)

It's almost spring and the perennials are coming back - by which I mean some of my favorite mystery writers have new books. Dana Stabenow's Inuit investigator Kate Shugak returns, after a brief hiatus, in ***A Deeper Sleep*** (St.



Martin's/Minotaur, \$24.95, 9780312343224). Anyone who hasn't discovered the Kate Shugak series, especially fans of outdoor adventure or of Nevada Barr, must give her a try. Stabenow's ***Blindfold Game***, a stand-alone espionage thriller featuring a woman Coast Guard commander off the Alaska coast, is now out in paper (St. Martin's, \$6.99, 9780312937553). Stabenow also edited the paperback anthology ***Powers of Detection: Stories of Mystery & Fantasy***. Ace, \$7.99, 97804411014644.

African-American writer Eleanor Taylor Bland has a new entry in her long-standing series about Illinois cop Marti MacAlister, ***Suddenly a Stranger*** (St. Martin's/Minotaur, \$23.95, 9780312360450), in which Marti is blackmailed by meth dealers. First in the series was *Dead Time*.

S.J. Rozan brings her architectural expertise to her new novel, ***In This Rain***, a story of the New York City construction industry featuring investigator Ann Montgomery (Random House/Delacorte, \$24, 9780385338042). Rozan writes about NYC like no one else, but I miss her series characters, private eye partners Lydia Chin and Bill Smith, last seen in the Edgar-winning *Winter and Night*.

In ***Find Me***, Carol O'Connell (not to be confused with the Rosie O'Donnell book of the same name), brings back her unique heroine, NYPD detective Kathleen Mallory, a feral child who was raised by a good-hearted cop and his wife. Here Mallory chases a serial killer along Route 66 while her partner tries to solve a murder back home. Penguin/Putnam, \$24.95, 9780399153952.

The mother-son writing team known as Charles Todd also created a unique detective in their period mysteries set in the 1920s. Scotland Yard Inspector Ian Rutledge is a WWI vet who suffers from shell shock - and hears the voice of a dead comrade in his head. In ***A Long Shadow***, Rutledge travels to a small village where the constable has been attacked with a bow and arrow. Meanwhile Rutledge himself is being stalked (Harper, \$6.99, 9780060786724). The two plots don't intertwine as smoothly as I expect from these classic whodunits, but the most satisfying aspect of these books is their psychological resonance with the impact of the Great War. In Todd's latest, ***A False Mirror***, Rutledge is called on to prove the innocence of a fellow vet whom he dislikes and distrusts. Morrow, \$23.95, 9780060786731.

Duncan Kincaid and Gemma James, partners in investigation and in life, are back in ***Water Like a Stone*** by Deborah Crombie (Harper/Morrow, \$24.95, 9780060525279). I love this series as much for the subtle, balanced depiction of the relationship as for the traditional Scotland Yard sleuthing. ***Dreaming of the Bones***, perhaps the best and most feminist of the series, has just been reissued. Harper/Avon, \$7.99, 9780061150401.

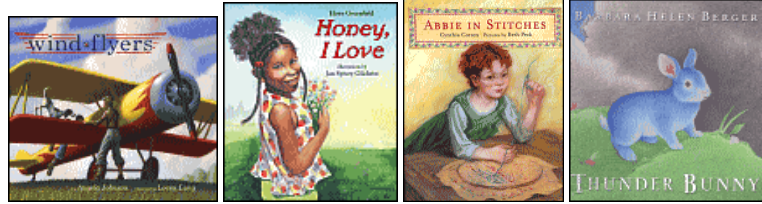
Mysteries To Watch Out For:

There's good buzz about ***Mistress of the Art of Death*** by Ariana Franklin, a medieval mystery featuring female coroner Dr. Vesuvia Adelia Rachel Ortese Aguilar (known as Adelia), graduate of a real medical school for women in Salerno. She is hired by Henry II to find out who is behind a series of child murders in Cambridge. Penguin/Putnam, \$25.95, 9780399154140.

Scandinavian mystery fans will want to know that **Sunstorm** by Asa Larsson won Sweden's Best First Crime Novel award. This features two women - a police inspector and an attorney - investigating the murder of a cultish church leader. Random House/Delta, \$12, 9780385340786.



For the Kids

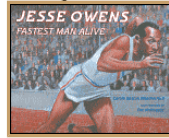


Recommendations from Linda Bubon

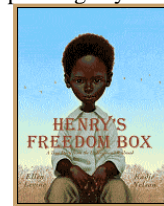
Were it not for Black History Month and Women's History Month celebrations in many of our schools, lots of great books about people of color and women would never be published. Here in Chicago, teachers get excited about these new offerings, but I think parents will also appreciate these beautiful new books that can make history come alive for children.

Angela Johnson tells the story of the Tuskegee Airmen in **Wind Flyers**, gorgeously illustrated by Loren Long. Told in the voice of a young boy about his great-great uncle, the prose captures the flyer's spirit, his desire to "catch the clouds and feel the wind." The text discusses the prejudice against African-American pilots as well as their bravery and conscientiousness, but it is still simple enough to inspire a 4- to 8-year-old. Simon & Schuster, \$16.99 hardback, 9780689848797.

Jesse Owens Fastest Man Alive by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Eric Velasquez, is another inspiring story for kindergarteners up to middle-school kids who are just learning about Hitler. Owens took five medals in the 1936 Olympics which were held in Berlin. His awareness of Jim Crow laws in the U.S. and Nazi hatred of Negroes does nothing to deter his focus and winning spirit. And he is shown to be a popular hero in both cultures. Walker, \$16.95 hardback, 9780802795502.

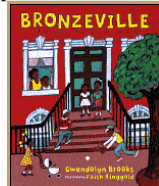


Henry's Freedom Box by Ellen Levine, with beautifully rendered paintings by Kadir Nelson, tells the powerful and true story of Henry "Box" who literally mailed himself in a wooden box in Richmond, Virginia, 350 miles away to freedom in Philadelphia. Wonderful details about the hard work of tobacco curing, the selling off of Henry's family, and the particulars of Henry's plan make this an exciting story for 6- to 10-year-olds. Scholastic, \$16.99 hardback, 9780439777339.



Two recent re-issues celebrate the bright spirits of black children: **Honey, I Love**, a wonderful, exuberant poem by Eloise Greenfield, first published in 1978, has been brought back to life with richly colored paintings by Jan Spivey Gilchrist and is out in an anniversary edition. For ages 2-6. HarperCollins/Amistad, \$16.99 hardback, 9780060091231.

In 1956, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks published her collection of poems celebrating the richness and emotional ups and downs of childhood,



Bronzeville Boys and Girls. Now Caldecott award-winning artist Faith Ringgold has reinvigorated the poems with vivid paintings. These poems will be read and re-read and are great for memorization. All ages. HarperCollins/Amistad, \$16.99 hardback, 9780060295059.

Inspired by a hand-stitched sampler she found in a book of historical samplers, Cynthia Cotton fashioned a story about Abbie, an early-19th-century girl who hates the stitching lessons she must practice every day in **Abbie in Stitches**, with lovely yellow-infused pictures by Beth Peck. Abbie finally produces a

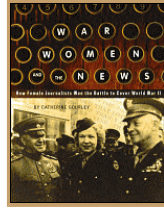
blood-stained little sampler that represents something she really loves - a book, and the (slightly crooked) words "I would rather read." I'm with you, girl. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, \$16 hardback, 9780374300043.

New in paperback, the wonderful picture-book biography of Victoria Woodhull, **A Woman for President**, by Kathleen Krull with Jane Dyer's illustrations, brings so much American history to life as well as telling the story of the first woman to own a newspaper, speak before Congress, have a seat on the stock exchange, and oh yes, run for President. Walker & Company, \$6.95, 9780802796158.



Abigail Adams: First Lady of the American Revolution by Patricia Lakin is a level #3 beginning reader, and a great introduction to the revolutionary war for 7- to 9-year-olds. Aladdin paperbacks, \$3.99, 9780689870323.

For older readers, 10 and up, Catherine Gourley brings us **War, Women, and the News: How Female Journalists Won the Battle to Cover World War II**, with lots of photographs from the papers of the time. Frustrated with being relegated to the society pages and domestic features, female journalists wanted to be where the action was when the war started, and fought for the right to report from the front lines. Atheneum hardcover, \$21.99, 9780689877520.



From Sara Luce Look

Author and illustrator Barbara Helen Berger (*Grandfather Twilight*) has created a gentle, spiritual story with soft illustrations about feeling different and special. In **Thunder Bunny**, the title character is the youngest of a family of rabbits, and she's different - she's blue! Granny Bunny says Thunder Bunny came from "out of the blue," but Thunder Bunny says she's from the sky. Penguin, \$16.99 hardcover, 9780399220357.



Awards

The **Story Prize** honors authors of short story collections written in English and awards the largest cash prize for fiction in the U.S. - \$20,000 for first prize. This year's winner is Mary Gordon for her collection *The Stories of Mary Gordon* (Random House/Pantheon). In her acceptance speech, Mary Gordon said, "The short story is a very precious and somewhat endangered species. A lot of great American short story writers have fallen on the sword of the novel. Short story writers never gain the place in American letter they deserve." The judges for this year's Story Prize were Edwidge Danticat, Ron Hogan, and Mitchell Kaplan. See <http://thestoryprize.org> for more information.

A new award has been established for genre fiction, this time for "romantic fiction" (as opposed to romances or erotica). The **Bronte Prize** was named for Charlotte Bronte, whose *Jane Eyre* "is largely regarded as the first real and viable work of 'romantic fiction.'" One of the finalists for the inaugural Bronte Prize is *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen (Algonquin Books), named as a favorite from 2006 by several of our reviewers (see the [review](#)). The other finalists are *Angels Fall* by Nora Roberts (Putnam), *Bee Balms & Burgundy* by Nelson Pahl (Cafe Reverie Press), *Finding Noel* by Richard Paul Evans (S&S), and *Tear Down the Mountain* by Roger Alan Skipper (Soft Skull Press). The winner will be announced on Thursday, March 15. More information on the Bronte Prize can be found at www.bronteprize.org.



Calls for Submissions and Contests

Seal Press seeks humorous essays about traveling with children for the forthcoming anthology *How to Fit a Car Seat on a Camel*, to be edited by Sarah Franklin. Essays should be between 1,000-3,000 words, and the deadline is May 1, 2007. For submission details and more information, visit www.sealpress.com/submissions/index.html.

CALYX, A Journal of Art and Literature for Women is accepting entries for the 6th annual Lois Cranston Memorial Poetry Prize. A maximum of three poems (six pages total) may be entered, and the entry fee is \$15 per poem. Deadline is May 31, 2007. See www.calyxpress.org for more information.



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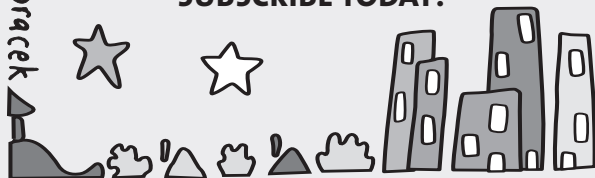
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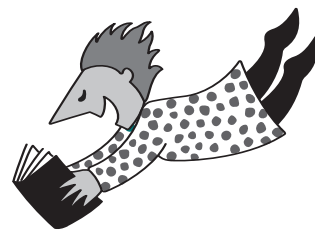
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