

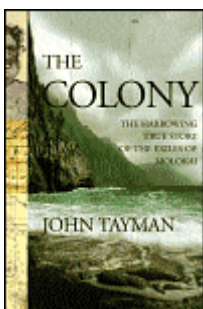
Possible titles for the Tuesday Night Book Group



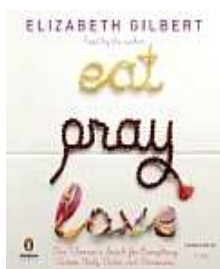
The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game by Lewis, Michael. New York Times Book Review Notable Book of 2006. 339p. pb avbl. Michael Oher is one of 13 children to a mother addicted to crack; he does not know his real name, his father, his birthday, or how to read or write. He takes up football, and school, after a rich, white, evangelical family plucks him from the streets. Then two great forces alter Oher: the family's love and the evolution of professional football itself into a game in which the quarterback must be protected at any cost. Our protagonist becomes the priceless package of size, speed, and agility necessary to guard the quarterback's greatest vulnerability: his blind side.



Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell 296p. pb avbl. The author of The Tipping Point examines the process of snap decision making. Gladwell's groundbreaking explication of a key aspect of human nature is enlightening, provocative, and great fun to read.



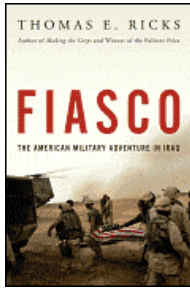
The Colony: The Harrowing True Story of the Exiles of Molokai by John Tayman. 421p. pb avbl. Tayman used 8000 pages of documents, and interviewed survivors, to tell the story of the 9000 leprosy patients who were exiled to the Hawaiian island of Molokai between 1866 and 1969. Booklist called this book "an utterly engrossing look at a heartbreaking chapter in Hawaiian history".



Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia by Elizabeth Gilbert. 352p. pb avbl. At the age of 31, Gilbert moved with her husband to the suburbs of New York and began trying to get pregnant, only to realize that she wanted neither a child nor a husband. Three years later, after a protracted divorce, she embarked on a yearlong trip of recovery, with three main stops: Rome, for pleasure; an ashram outside of Mumbai, for spiritual searching; and Bali, for "balancing." New York Times Notable Book of 2006.



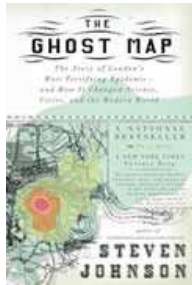
FALLING THROUGH THE EARTH: A Memoir. By Danielle Trussoni 256 p. pb avbl. This intense memoir revisits the author's rough-and-tumble Wisconsin girlhood, spent on the wrong side of the tracks in the company of her father, a Vietnam vet who began his tour as "a cocksure country boy" but returned "wild and haunted," and unfit for family life. Trussoni mixes these memories with spellbinding versions of the war stories her father reluctantly dredged up and with reflections on her own journey to Vietnam, undertaken in an attempt to come to terms with her father's experiences as a "tunnel rat".



Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq

by **Thomas E. Ricks**. 492p. pb avbl. New York Times Book Review and Washington Post best books of 2006.

The definitive military chronicle of the Iraq war and a searing judgment on the strategic blindness with which America has conducted it, drawing on the accounts of senior military officers giving voice to their anger for the first time.



The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic--And How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World by **Johnson, Steven**

299p. pb avbl. The intertwined histories of the spread of cholera in 19th-century London, the rise of cities, and the nature of scientific inquiry, offers both a riveting history and a powerful explanation of how it has shaped the world of today. A New York Times and Entertainment Weekly best book of the year.



Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage by **Heather Rogers**

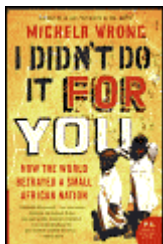
NYTBR & Booklist best books of the year. 304p. pb avbl. Exploration of our high-octane trash output. The US is the planet's #1 producer of trash. Each American throws out 4.5 pounds daily. How did we end up with this much rubbish, and where does it all go? Rogers answers these questions by taking readers on a grisly, oddly fascinating tour through the underworld of garbage...the history of rubbish handling from the 1800s to the present...the roots of today's waste-addicted society. Rogers draws connections between modern industrial production, consumer culture, and our throwaway lifestyle. She also investigates controversial topics like the politics of recycling and the export of trash to poor countries.



Heat: An Amateur's Adventures as Kitchen Slave, Line Cook, Pasta-Maker, and Apprentice to a Dante-Quoting Butcher in Tuscany by **Bill Buford**.

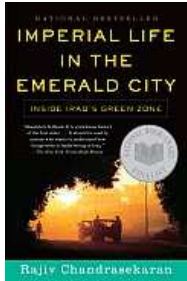
318p. pb avbl. a richly evocative chronicle of his experience as "slave" to Mario Batali in the small, chaotic, highest-standards kitchen of Batali's three-star New York restaurant, Babbo, and of his apprenticeships with Batali's former teachers.

A New York Times and Library Journal best book of the year.



I Didn't Do It for You: How the World Betrayed a Small African Nation by **Michela Wrong**

448p (Bibliography starts on p.403) Scarred by decades of conflict and occupation, of Eritrea has weathered the world's longest-running guerrilla war. The dogged determination that secured victory against Ethiopia, its giant neighbor, is woven into the national psyche, the product of a series of cynical foreign interventions. Michela Wrong reveals the breathtaking abuses this tiny nation has suffered and tells the story of colonialism itself.

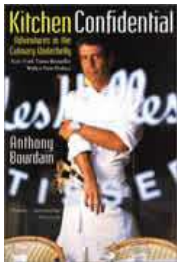


Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone by Rajiv Chandrasekaran. One of the New York Times Book Review's five best nonfiction books of 2007. 365p. pb avbl. What life inside the Green Zone was like in the first year of post-Saddam Iraq. Chandrasekaran's tragicomic chronicle reveals the bungling of inexperienced officials employed to rebuild a war-torn Iraq. Riveting, yet painful to read, this insightful book gives us a picture of how things went so wrong so fast.



Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster by Jon Krakauer 368p. pb avbl. The storm claimed five lives and left countless more in guilt-ridden disarray, By writing Into Thin Air, Krakauer may have hoped to exorcise some of his own demons and lay to rest some of the painful questions that still surround the event. He takes great pains to provide a balanced picture of the people and events he witnessed and gives due credit to the tireless and dedicated Sherpas. "Hypnotic, rattling...Time collapses as, minute by minute, Krakauer rivetingly and movingly chronicles what ensued, much of which is near agony to read. .. A brilliantly told story that won't go begging

when the year's literary honors are doled out." --"Kirkus Reviews"

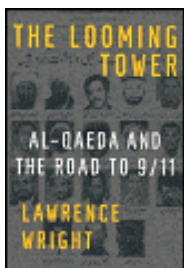


Kitchen Confidential: Adventures In The Culinary Underbelly by Anthony Bourdain 312p. pb avbl. Coming to Pittsburgh as part of the Drue Heinz Lecture Series. "...the best book I have ever read about the nuts and bolts mechanics of running serious restaurant kitchens...brilliant on the tumult of running a kitchen that might turn out anywhere from two hundred to four hundred serious meals a night." *Joseph Epstein, The Weekly Standard*



The Last American Man by Gilbert, Elizabeth 288p. pb avbl. National Book Award finalist In this rousing examination of contemporary American male identity, Gilbert explores the fascinating true story of Eustace Conway. In 1977, at the age of seventeen, Conway left his family's comfortable suburban home to move to the Appalachian Mountains. For more than two decades he has lived there, making fire with sticks, wearing skins from animals he has trapped, and trying to convince Americans to give up their materialistic lifestyles and return with him back to nature. To Gilbert, Conway's mythical character challenges all our

assumptions about what it is to be a modern man in America; he is a symbol of much we feel how our men should be, but rarely are.



THE LOOMING TOWER: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11. By Lawrence Wright. Alfred A. Knopf, \$27.95. 480 p. pb avbl. New York Times Book Review, Publishers Weekly; The Economist; The Washington Post; and Pulitzer Prize best books of 2006. Wright unmaskes the secret world of Osama bin Laden and his collaborators and also chronicles the efforts of a handful of American intelligence officers alert to the approaching danger but frustrated, time and again, in their efforts to stop it. Wright, a staff writer for The New Yorker, builds his heart-stopping narrative through the patient and meticulous accumulation of

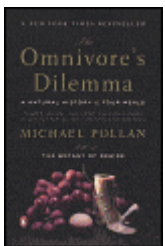
details and through vivid portraits of Al Qaeda's leaders. Most memorably, he tells the story of John O'Neill, the tormented F.B.I. agent who worked frantically to prevent the impending terrorist attack, only to die in the World Trade Center.



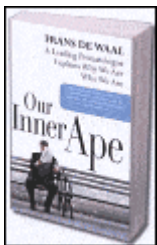
The Lost Painting by Jonathan Harr. 299p. pb avbl. "Jonathan Harr has taken the story of the lost painting, and woven from it a deeply moving narrative about history, art and taste--and about the greed, envy, covetousness and professional jealousy of people who fall prey to obsession. It is as perfect a work of narrative nonfiction as you could ever hope to read." --"The Economist"



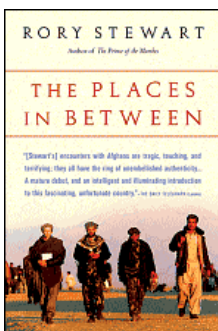
Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog by John Grogan 304p. pb avbl in March 08. In this funny and poignant memoir about a wildly neurotic Labrador retriever named Marley, an unsuspecting young couple come to understand what really matters. Marley had no brakes on his loyalty, exuberance, or passion.



THE OMNIVORE'S DILEMMA: A Natural History of Four Meals. by Michael Pollan. 464p pb avbl. New York Times Book Review; Publishers Weekly; and the Economist best book of 2006. National Book Critics Circle Award finalist for best nonfiction 2006. "When you can eat just about anything nature has to offer, deciding what you should eat will inevitably stir anxiety." Pollan gracefully navigates within these anxieties as he traces the origins of four meals - from a fast-food dinner to a "hunter-gatherer" feast - and makes us see, with remarkable clarity, exactly how what we eat affects both our bodies and the planet. His prose is incisive and alive, and pointed without being tendentious. In an uncommonly good year for American food writing, this is a book that stands out.



Our Inner Ape: A Leading Primatologist Explains Why We Are Who We Are by Frans De Waal 288p. pb avlb*K *PW NYTBR 100 best books of the year From "one of the world's greatest experts on primate behavior" (Desmond Morris) comes a look at the most provocative aspects of human nature-power, sex, violence, kindness, and morality-through our closest cousins. For nearly twenty years, De Waal has studied both the famously aggressive chimpanzee and the egalitarian, matriarchal bonobo, two species whose DNA is nearly identical to ours. The result is an engrossing narrative that reveals what their behavior can teach us about ourselves.



THE PLACES IN BETWEEN by Rory Stewart. 299p. pb avbl "You are the first tourist in Afghanistan," Stewart, a young Scotsman, was warned by an Afghan official before commencing the journey recounted in this splendid book. "It is mid-winter - there are three meters of snow on the high passes, there are wolves, and this is a war. You will die, I can guarantee." Stewart, thankfully, did not die, and his report on his adventures - walking across Afghanistan in January of 2002,

shortly after the fall of the Taliban – belongs with the masterpieces of the travel genre. This book cracks open a fascinating, blasted world miles away from the newspaper headlines.



Putin's Russia: Life in a Failing Democracy by Anna Politkovskaya

274p. pb avbl Politkovskaya uses her experiences as a journalist to highlight examples of treacherous treatment under Putin's command. His government, she maintains, has made a mockery of the courts. Judges and prosecutors are subject to "telephone justice,"--a telephone call from a government official dictates the outcome of most trials. She asserts that the military is a tool of the government and that the massacres at the Moscow theater hostage crisis and at Beslan were Putin's tactics to show that Russia's Chechen debacle is in fact a war on international terror. Her main point, ultimately, is that in Russia, all outrages stem from Putin's retreat from democracy.



SELF-MADE MAN: One Woman's Journey Into Manhood and Back Again.

By Norah Vincent. 290p. pb avbl An account of the year and a half she spent posing as a man. As "Ned" Vincent joined an all-male bowling league, dated women, worked for a door-to-door sales force, spent 3 weeks in a monastery, hung out in strip clubs and, most dangerous of all, went on a Robert Bly-style men's retreat. She creates rich portraits of the men she met in these places and the ways they behaved—as a lesbian, she's particularly good at separating the issues of sexuality from those of gender. But the most fascinating part of the story lies within Vincent herself—and the way that censoring her emotions to pass as a man provoked a psychological breakdown



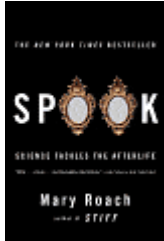
Skeletons on the Zahara: A True Story of Survival by Dean King

351p. pb avbl. 'This true-life saga reads like a cross between Master and Commander and Lawrence of Arabia. This enthralling narrative recounts the experiences of 12 American sailors who were shipwrecked off the coast of Africa in 1815, captured by desert nomads, sold into slavery, and subjected to a hellish journey through the bone-dry heart of the Sahara. The ordeal of these men—who found themselves tested by barbarism, murder, starvation, death, dehydration, and hostile tribes that roamed the desert on camelback—is made indelibly vivid in this gripping account of survival, courage, and brotherhood



Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time

by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin. 349p. pb avbl. After being helped by locals, Mortenson promised to build the impoverished town's first school, a project that grew into the Central Asia Institute, which has since constructed more than 50 schools across rural Pakistan and Afghanistan. Coauthor Relin recounts Mortenson's efforts in fascinating detail, presenting compelling portraits of the village elders, con artists, philanthropists, mujahideen, Taliban officials, ambitious school girls and upright Muslims.



Spook: Science Tackles the Afterlife by Mary Roach 311 p. pb avbl.

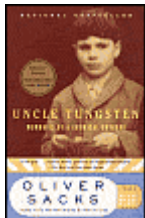
"an equally smart, quirky, hilarious look at whether there is a soul that survives our physical demise. Roach perfectly balances her skepticism and her boundless curiosity with a sincere desire to know...Duncan Macdougall, a respected surgeon who weighed consumptives at their moment of death to see if the escaping soul could be measured in ounces, female mediums who, during séances, extruded a substance called ectoplasm from their private parts (she even examines a piece of alleged ectoplasm archived at Cambridge University).

She goes to school to learn to be a medium, subjects her brain to electromagnetic waves to see if they induce the experience of seeing ghosts and joins a group trying to record sounds made by the spirits of the Donner party.



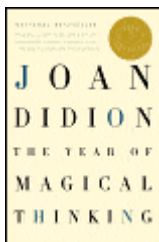
Sweet and Low: A Family Story by Rich Cohen 272p. pb avbl

Sweet and Low is the amazing, bittersweet, hilarious story of an American family and its patriarch, a short-order cook named Ben Eisenstadt who, in the years after World War II, invented the sugar packet and Sweet'N Low, converting his Brooklyn cafeteria into a factory and amassing the great fortune that would destroy his family. It is also the story of immigrants to the New World, sugar, saccharine, obesity, and the health and diet craze, played out across countries and generations but also within the life of a single family, as the fortune and the factory passed from generation to generation.



Uncle Tungsten: Memories of a Chemical Boyhood by Oliver Sacks 337p.

pb avbl. Sacks' parents were, and his 3 brothers became, physicians before him, so it was, perhaps, inevitable that he would become one, too. He did, but beforehand, in his childhood and early adolescence, he was enthralled with chemistry. His family fueled his fascination, for besides a mother who answered his early questions about metals and demonstrated to him their peculiar properties, he had an uncle whose business produced tungsten filament bulbs and who was so enamored of the metal and its properties that he maintained a lab in which he showed his nephew the neat things that could be done with tungsten and other elements. Sacks recalls his childhood preoccupation and the history he learned.



The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion. 227p pb avbl. This book is a moving record of Didion's effort to survive the death of her husband and the near-fatal illness of her only daughter. "We might expect that we will be prostrate, inconsolable, crazy with loss. We do not expect to be literally crazy, cool customers who believe that their husband is about to return and might need his shoes." It won the 2005 [National Book Award](#) for Nonfiction