

#3

Biographies/Autobiographies/Memoirs



Adler, Margot, *Heretic's Heart: a Journey through Spirit and Revolution*, 1997

The granddaughter of famed psychoanalyst Alfred Adler, Margot Adler remembers the 1960s as not merely about sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll, but as a time of ideas and commitment. Central to the book is the riveting correspondence between the author, a radical antiwar Berkeley activist and a skittish Vietnam soldier counting the days until his tour ends. This is a must-read for all 60s-70s activists and activist wannabes
070.92.A237.h

Bragg, Rick, *All Over but the Shoutin*, 1997

The unforgettable memoir about growing up dirt-poor in Alabama pays tribute to the author's indomitable "momma," who in spite of a drunken, absent husband, raises three loved and well cared for boys. Bragg triumphs over his raggedy childhood to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1996
B.B72977.ba

Chen, Da, *Colors of the Mountain*, 1999

Growing up during the Cultural Revolution in China, Chen chronicles the cruelty his family faced as former landlords, a highly stigmatized class. Not without humor, however, the book also recounts the author's scampish adventures with his "hoodlum" friends and his bad attitude toward school—until he decides to hit the books to avoid a life of backbreaking labor in the rice paddies. Da Chen recently graduated from Columbia Law School on a full scholarship
B.C4203.Cc

Clarke, Gerald, *Get Happy: the Life of Judy Garland*, 2000

An addictively readable book about an entertainer of almost magical power. Author Clarke discovered legal papers unopened for 90 years and a diary that shed new light on her childhood and the myth and misery of her final years. One reviewer recommends listening to the CD, Judy Garland at Carnegie Hall, as an antidote to this riveting, yet tragic account
B.G1845.Cg

Cramer, Richard Ben, *Joe DiMaggio: the Hero's Life*, 2000

Amidst all the success and adulation, Joe DiMaggio had an overweening need to have others serve him—to take all the good will extended to him and to give so very little back. The hero America created and held on to for so long was actually a cheapskate, a terrible father and friend, and, as Marilyn Monroe once confided to an intimate, a wife beater. A truly superb biography that will keep you reading into the wee hours
B.D591.Cj

Crimmins, Cathy, *Where is the Mango Princess?*, 2000

The author embarks on a whole new life after husband, Alan, is brain injured in an accident. His personality change is severe, and Crimmins describes the experience as like being hastily wedded to a complete stranger. Not only does Alan have to relearn basic motor skills and readjust to his new life, but his personality—the very character traits Crimmins fell in love with—is totally reversed (instead of possessing a thoughtful intellect, Alan now has a childish and crass sense of humor; instead of being a loving parent, he berates and abuses their 7-year-old daughter). The writing is full of insight, passion, unflinching honesty, and is often very funny.
362.1.C8683.w

Dickerson, Debra, *An American Story*, 2000

Debra Dickerson gives us an honest and tough story as she chronicles her life from the ghetto in St. Louis to Harvard Law School. In between she joins the Air force where she discovers her own strengths and also the fact that America is not the meritocracy that she had believed in. A striver and an achiever, Dickerson speaks with brutal candor about race and class in the US
B.D5572.da

Dudman, Martha Tod, *Augusta Gone: A True Story*, 2001

The author thought she had given her two teenaged children "a perfect life," until her daughter, Augusta, started to spiral out of control. Augusta challenged and defied rules, lied, skipped school, came and went as she pleased, took drugs, and was openly hostile to her mother. The author sent her to a special school, where she ran away and attempted suicide. This riveting story of every mother's nightmare will leave you as bewildered and beleaguered as the author, and, thankfully, hopeful at the end.
306.874.D8654.a

Eggers, Dave, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*, 2000

At the age of 22, Eggers becomes both an orphan and the unofficial guardian of his 8-year-old brother when his parents die within five

months of one another of unrelated cancers. An often hilarious account, Eggers delivers a hip, flippant, observant, and staggeringly well written memoir of how a Gen-Xer deals with the challenges of single motherhood. 973.92.E295.h

Ellroy, James, *My Dark Places*, 1996

Hard-boiled mystery writer Ellroy goes back to his roots for "one more dance with the redhead". The woman in question is his mother, who was murdered when he was 10 years old. The case has remained unsolved, and Ellroy pairs off with one of the original detectives in an attempt to answer the riddles that have haunted him. An unsentimental and fascinating journey into past memories and present thoughts. Now we know why Ellroy writes the way he does B.E4727.Em

Fisher, Antwone Quenton, *Finding Fish: A Memoir*, 2001

The uplifting story of Antwone "Fish" Fisher begins as a tragedy, with the African American boy shuttled between orphanages and an abusive foster home until age 17 when he becomes homeless. His resilience is remarkable. He joins the Navy to obtain shelter, and the rest is an amazing journey towards outstanding achievement as a Hollywood screenwriter. B.F5295.Ff

Foreman, Amanda, *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*, 1998

Beautiful, sensitive, extravagant, and politically savvy, Georgiana Spencer came from one of 18th century England's richest families (Princess Diana was a Spencer, too). She indulged in drink, high-profile love affairs, including a notorious menage a trois, and gambling. Yet she was also a pioneer—canvassing for her favorite political causes among the lower classes. A mesmerizing read about an amazing woman and her aristocratic milieu B.D4955.Fg

Gillman, Peter and Leni, *The Wildest Dream: the Biography of George Mallory*, 2000

In this well-researched biography, the Gillmans' chronicle the intricate and diverse life of the man who lost his life on Mount Everest. Known from childhood as the boy who climbed everything that was possible to climb, this book portrays Mallory not only as an adventurer, but as a scholar, teacher, father, and loving husband. Mallory's insatiable appetite for risk and danger make this climactic biography a true page-turner B.L53279.Gw

Grandin, Temple, *Thinking in Pictures: and Other Reports from My Life with Autism*, 1995

This is a true marvel of book. Grandin, a high-functioning autistic who holds a doctorate, has created a fascinating picture of someone who experiences the world in a totally incomprehensible way from the rest of us. Her scientific achievements are all the more extraordinary. An uplifting and wise book that will hook many readers 616.8982.G764.t

Guralnick, Peter, *Careless Love: the Unmaking of Elvis Presley*, 1999

Guralnick's success here lies in his ability to write a down-to-earth, yet captivating, account of the often-sensationalized life of Elvis Presley. In this second volume of the two-part biography, the author provides a strikingly detailed portrait of Elvis' last two decades. This biography is appropriate not only for the Elvis aficionado, but also the casually interested. B.P9254.Gc

Hillenbrand, Laura, *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*, 2001

This thrilling biography of the little, knobby-kneed racehorse that could is a lesson in courage, perseverance, and humility that will keep you reading into the wee hours. Meticulously researched, it is also a social history of the 1930s, and how dual heroes of horse and jockey captured, against phenomenal odds, the nation's imagination. 798.4.H5574.s

Karr, Mary, *Cherry, a Memoir*, 2000

A chronicle of female adolescence with all its fantasies, lies, and fears, Cherry is a wild and exhilarating ride by a writer/poet whose words sing off the page. For anyone who has ever flouted authority, or wanted to . . . welcome to scrappy, tough talking, adventurous Mary Karr. If you came of age in the 60s and were even the slightest bit naughty, this book will engage you from the first sentence. B.K1474.Kc

Kimmel, Haven, *A Girl Named Zippy*, 2001

This good-humored memoir chronicles a girl growing up in small Indiana town in the 1960's and 70's. A child whose first spoken words were "I'll make a deal with you," at the tender age of three, Zippy has a great tongue-in-cheek sense of humor and an eye for the little details that make up a good story. Zippy takes the reader back to a kinder, gentler time and place—a place many of us remember fondly. B.K5717.Kg

Knipfel, Jim, *Slackjaw*, 2000

A darkly humorous memoir from an alternative-press columnist who spares himself the drudgery of self-pity. Knipfel is a victim of a slowly advancing blindness, yet he keeps his mind's eye sharply focused on the absurdity of life. Beginning with the most humorous attempted suicide in my recollection, this memoir will appeal to those who refuse to take things too seriously 362.1977.K748.s

Lauck, Jennifer, Blackbird: *A Childhood Lost and Found*, 2000

A stunning memoir of Lauck's first 11 years of life—and what a life it was! At age 5, Lauck played nursemaid to her partially paralyzed mother. When her mother dies, dad remarries a woman of questionable judgment, then dies of a heart attack leaving the children in the care of the stepmother. By age 10, Lauck finds herself working as a cook's assistant at a church-run haven for the

homeless, where she rises at 6 to begin the day, walks 40 blocks to school, then returns to help with the evening meal. The author's clarity of vision and insight transform this breathtaking tale of resilience into the ultimate page turner.

B.L362.Lb

Massaquoi, Hans J., *Destined to Witness: Growing up Black in Nazi Germany*, 1999

Massaquoi, a former editor of Ebony magazine, was born in Hamburg shortly before WW II. The son of an African prince and a German nurse, he was raised by his mother as a typical German boy, accepted by neighbors and family. With the advent of the Nuremberg laws doors started to close to him; he was not allowed to join the Hitler youth with his friends, and was forced to study welding instead of going to high school. This is a startling and unique memoir of survival in Nazi Germany

B.M3823.Md

Martin, Russell, *Beethoven's Hair*, 2000

Part biography, medical mystery, and historical treasure hunt, this fast-paced book tells the story of how a lock of the famous composer's hair, purchased at auction by two Beethoven-enthusiasts from Arizona, provided scientists with clues as to why the composer's health and hearing failed. From the first chapter, set in an operating room at the University of Arizona Medical Center as the keepsake with the lock is opened, this book will keep you mesmerized by one incredible revelation after another.

780.92.M365.b

McCall, Nathan, *Makes Me Wanna Holler: A Young Black Man in America*, 1994

The author, a reporter for the Washington Post, gives a brutally honest account of his life, from angry inner city street kid to respected newsman. The journey is harrowing and filled with vivid images of self-destructive behavior growing up in the 70's in a working class neighborhood in Portsmouth, Virginia. McCall had a stable family but could not resist the lures of the street and quickly progressed from petty crimes to armed robbery, which earned him a stretch in prison. A fascinating story of personal transformation.

B.M1238.Mm

Moss, Barbara Robinette, *Change Me into Zeus's Daughter*, 2000

As if growing up in a dysfunctional family with eight siblings, an alcoholic father, and a mother who kept herself distant from her dismal surroundings weren't enough, Moss suffered even deeper wounds from facial disfigurement as a result of malnutrition and lack of proper dental care. This work emphasizes personal growth and understanding that flower even in the darkest weeds of life

362.292.M8557.c

Nasdijj, *The Blood Runs Like A River Through My Dreams: A Memoir*, 2000

A beautiful, harsh memoir of the lifestyles of the not so rich or famous. Nasdijj tells the heroic tale of his adopted son, Tommy Nothing Fancy, who is dead of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome induced seizures by his seventh birthday. A victim of FAS himself, Nasdijj was living on the streets prior to publication. He is a tender writer with an eye for what is true; he has written a lovely book.

B.N1715.Nb

Reichl, Ruth, *Tender at the Bone: Growing up at the Table*, 1998

Ruth Reichl, a gifted observer of her own and the human condition, was the former restaurant critic for the New York Times and currently is the editor of Gourmet Magazine. She has written a warm, funny, laugh-out-loud book. Food is the constant that ties her story together and you will forget neither the characters, the meals, nor the recipes.

B.R27104.Rt

Rich, Frank, *Ghost Light: A Memoir*, 2000

Rich was the drama critic for the New York Times, 1980-93. Born in 1949, he grew up in and around Washington, D.C. He fell in love with the theater when he first listened to recordings of South Pacific as a young boy. The way he describes the excitement of live theater will resonate with all theater lovers. He briefly crosses paths with all kinds of people, from Timothy Leary's daughter to a young Marion Barry.

B/R3738.Rg

S., Tina, and Jamie Pastor Bolnick, *Living at the Edge of the World; A Teenager's Survival in the Tunnels of Grand Central Station*, 2000

Tina S. spent four years as a teenage homeless drug addict, living in the tunnels of Grand Central Station, stealing, panhandling, hustling and bingeing on crack cocaine. This gritty memoir is not as hopeless as it seems. Thanks to help from social workers, an uncle dying of AIDS, and her own indomitable spirit, Tina escapes the hell of her life to become a productive person. What a story!

SassoB.n, Jean, *Princess: A True Story of Life Behind the Veil in Saudi Arabia*, 1992

Part one of three volumes exposing the basic human rights violations endured by women in the Muslim, male-dominated country of Saudi Arabia. The society, following ancient traditions and superstitious beliefs, perpetuates the myth of women as chattel. An engrossing read and cultural study.

305.42.S252.P

See, Lisa, *On Gold Mountain*, 1995

See based this history of one hundred years of her family on the stories she heard as a child and years of research. It's a fascinating recounting of personal stories, racism, and love between Chinese men and American women. See's great-grandfather was a crafty and successful businessman with four wives, and a somewhat murky history. It's a powerful history of two cultures meeting in a new world.

B.B4515.so

Snyder, Don J., *Of Time and Memory: A Mother's Story*, 1999

A young mother dies 11 days after giving birth to twin sons. A father never speaks of the woman, nor reveals the circumstances behind her death until he himself is diagnosed with a brain tumor. A beautifully written story of mystery, love, and reconciliation.

B.S6748.So

Sobran, Joseph, *Alias Shakespeare: Solving the Greatest Literary Mystery of All Time*, 1997

A Shakespearean scholar offers a fascinating account of how the life of Edward De Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, fits so well with the Shakespearean cannon that he could have used a pseudonym and written the classics himself. A work of literary detection, the author asks his readers to weigh all the evidence and decide for themselves

822.3.S6777.a

Stuart, Otis, *Perpetual Motion: The Public and Private Lives of Rudolf Nureyev*, 1995

An excellent biography of the greatest ballet dancer of our time, who commanded unsurpassed fees and changed the role of the male dancer from the second class, in the background, just-don't-drop-her-and-look-handsome, to a truly noble, creative artist

B.N934.Sp

Thompson, Hunter S., *Fear and Loathing in America: The Brutal Odyssey of an Outlaw Journalist* 1968-1976, 2000

An extensive collection of letters from a great literary and cultural icon of our time. Provocative and revealing, Thompson shares his incisive thoughts and wicked humor with the likes of Jimmy Carter, Tom Wolfe, and Kurt Vonnegut. A must-read for Hunter S. Thompson fans everywhere.

070.92.T373.fa

Vergheese, Abraham, *The Tennis Partner: a Doctor's Story of Friendship and Loss*, 1998

A passion for tennis serves doctor and student as a respite from the rigors of medical school as life off-court begins spinning wildly out of control. This author of "My Own Country" writes hauntingly and eloquently about alienation, loneliness, impending divorce and the tragic consequences of compulsive addictions.

610.92.V5865.t

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