

The following “best book” suggestions are taken from Joyce Sarick’s *Readers’ Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction*, published by the American Library Association in 2001 and are intended as a supplement to recommendations by our staff and patrons.

If you like “**Adventure**,” try something by Clive Cussler, Nevil Shute, W.E.B. Griffin, Louis L’Amour, or James Clavell. These authors are ranked among the best in the field of adventure writing. Also consider great individual titles like *The Game of Kings* by Dorothy Dunnett, *Master and Commander* by Patrick O’Brian, *Sharpe’s Triumph* by Bernard Cornwell, *River God* and *Birds of Prey* by Wilbur Smith.

“**Fantasy**” readers might enjoy anything written by Orson Scott Card, Terry Goodkind, Mercedes Lackey, Patricia Wrede, or Jane Yolen. Some outstanding fantasy titles include: *Neverwhere* by Neil Gaiman, *Carpe Jugulum* by Terry Pratchett, *The Gunslinger* or *The Stand* by Stephen King, and *Child of the Northern Spring* by Persia Woolley.

If “**Historical Fiction**” is your thing look for works by James Michener, Charles Frazier, Ken Follett, Michael Shaara, Mary Renault, John Jakes, Louis L’Amour, Jean Auel, Andrea Barrett, Dorothy Dunnett, Catherine Cookson, Diana Gabaldon, Colleen McCullough, or Thomas Pynchon to name just a few. Individual titles that repeatedly show up as favorites include: *The Walking Drum* by L’Amour, *The Sunne in Splendor* by Sharon Kay Penman, Gore Vidal’s *1876*, *The Far Pavilions* by M.M. Kaye, and *The All-True Travels and Adventures of Liddie Newton* by Jane Smiley.

Okay “**Horror**” fans we all know Stephen King, but have you tried Clive Barker, Shirley Jackson, H.P. Lovecraft, Dean Koontz, or Anne Rice lately? Look for titles like *Hannibal* by Thomas Harris, *Watchers* by Koontz, *Night Light* by Michael Cadnum, or *The Reliquary* by Preston and Child.

In the highbrow category of “**Literary Fiction**” anything by William Faulkner, Anne Tyler, J.M.Coetzee, Wallace Stegner, Toni Morrison, John Updike, Andrea Barrett, or David Guterson should be a great read. Remember, this is a huge and arbitrary category so some authors will appeal to you more than others. The same is true for outstanding titles like *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf, *The Dancer Upstairs* by Nicholas Shakespeare, *The Adventures of Augie March* by Saul Bellow, *The Shipping News* by Annie Proulx, *The Flanders Panel* by Arturo Perez-Reverte or *Ordinary Love and Good Will* by Jane Smiley.

We want to hear from you “**Mystery**” readers and know we will because we’re going to leave someone out of this huge fiction category. Among the authors listed by Saricks as masters in the field of mystery writing, Robert Parker, Elizabeth Peters, Agatha Christie, Janet Evanovich, Tony Hillerman, Sue Grafton, Sharyn McCrumb, Jonathan Kellerman, and Lawrence Sanders. Titles range from the humorous cat books by Lillian Jackson Braun, to cook books by Dian Mott Davidson, to moody locales painted by Nevada Barr. Some special mention goes to *Darkness* by Dennis Lehane, *Face of a Stranger* by Anne Perry, *Undercurrents* by Ridley Pearson, and *The Ragman’s Memory* by Archer Mayor. There are whole anthologies out there devoted to cataloging mystery writers and their individual styles or let us show you how to use **Novelist** to find the perfect mystery read.

“Romance” readers we have some trouble with you because books can range from the innocently sweet to graphically explicit, so forgive us if we take a few minutes and beg your pardon if we suggest the wrong one. Well-known authors in this genre include Mary Balogh, Jane Anne Krentz, Amanda Quick, Julie Garwood, Georgette Heyer, and Jude Devereaux. Outstanding titles are *The Rake* by Mary Jo Putney, *Enchanted* and *Jade Island* by Elizabeth Lowell, *The Last True Cowboy* by Kathleen Eagle, and *The Bridges of Madison County* by Robert James Waller. Tess Gerritson, Sharyn McCrumb, Mary Higgins Clark, Iris Johanson, and Judith Lansdowne are branching out into a sub-category called **“Romantic Suspense”** that you might want to explore.

“Science Fiction” fans will be thrilled by anything written Orson Scott Card, Octavia Butler, Isaac Asimov, or Ray Bradbury. But consider Kim Stanley Robinson, Monica Hughes, Ursula LeGuin, and Roger Zelazny too. Do we need to mention *The Hitchhiker Trilogy* by Doug Adams, *Macroscope* by Piers Anthony, *Hyperion* by Dan Simmons, *The Mote in God’s Eye* by Larry Niven, *Timeline* by Michael Crichton, or *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood?

“Suspense” is another orphan because so many of the authors cross genres. But here are some books that fit squarely into this category *We’ll Meet Again* by Mary Higgins Clark, *Along Came a Spider* by James Patterson, *The Red Dragon* by Thomas Harris, *The Eagle Has Landed* by Jack Higgins, and *A Simple Plan* by Scott Smith.

The **“Thriller”** category could easily meld into Suspense or even Mystery but these authors and books were singled out by Saricks as the best hair-raisers: John Grisham, Lisa Scottoline, Robin Cook, Michael Crichton, Lawrence Sanders, Tom Clancy, Stephen Coontz, and John LeCarre. Some hot titles include *Harvest* by Tess Gerritson, *The Third Twin* by Ken Follett, *The Andromeda Strain* by Crichton, *Presumed Innocent* by Scott Turow, and *A Calculated Risk* by Catherine Neville.

“Western” fans love Louis L’Amour, Zane Grey, and Larry McMurtry but have you discovered Kathleen Eagle, Cynthia Haseloff, Janet Dailey, or Roseanne Bitner? Great books include *Dancing at the Rascal Fair* by Ivan Doig, *Hombre* by Elmore Leonard, *Shane* by Jack Schaefer, *Aces and Eights* and *Journey of the Dead* by Loren Estleman.

Readers who want to know about **“Women’s Lives”** will enjoy authors like Rebecca Wells, LaVyrre Spencer, Joanna Trollope, Terry McMillan, Maeve Binchy, Jodi Picoult, Elizabeth Berg, and Nina Bawden. Some memorable books include *Breath, Eyes, Memory* by Edwidge Danticat, *The Millstone* by Margaret Drabble, *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, *London Holiday* by Richard Peck, and *After All These Years* by Susan Isaacs.

And for a trip down memory lane, **“Gentle Reads”** are exactly what they sound like --- good books, good plot, no surprises, no graphic language or salacious sex scenes. This category is represented by: Eudora Welty’s *Delta Wedding*, Paul Gallico’s *Arris Goes to Paris*, Jan Karon’s *Mitford* series, Elizabeth Goudge’s *Green Dolphin Street*, Eva Ibbotson’s *Song for Summer*, Elizabeth Cadell’s *The Corner Shop*, and anything by Miss Read.

Enjoy! Send your feedback to: milnebooks@gmail.com