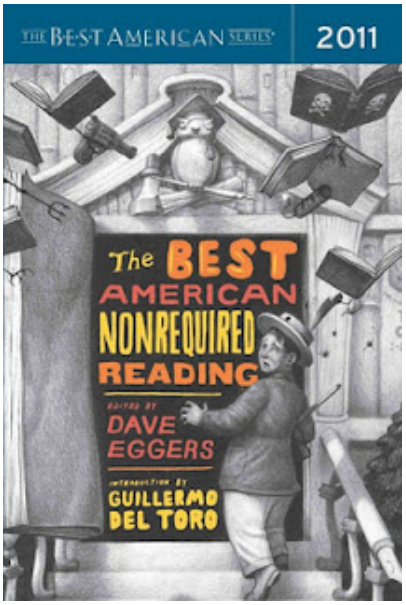
The Best American Nonrequired Reading: 2011



Forget the bland title, the latest Best American Nonrequired Reading [1] presents a fresh, amusing, and wide-ranging compendium of last year's best nonfiction and fiction.

It's not just the writing that is fresh but the kinds of content that editor Dave Eggers [2] chose to include are both imaginative and often cutting edge including such categories as: Best American Band Names, Best American Ominous Place Names, Best American Call of Duty Handles, Best Wikileaks Revelations, and Best American Commune Names. The reader senses not only a vibrant sense of humor (see Best American Categories that Got Cut) but someone behind the scenes who is curious, wide-reading, and always eager to learn something new. Also, someone with a great sense of humor.

There's even an entry (see pg. 19) on Best American New Entries to the O.E.D. Beginning with the Letter H. Under this heading you find definitions for hog calling and hog caller, hot piece and hot doggery.

Among several compelling biographical pieces, Chris Jones's "Roger Ebert: The Essential Man" gives an empathetic account of the illness that caused the great film critic to lose his voice.

In "Solitude and Leadership" William Deresiewicz offers a strong argument for why solitude is even more important in 2011 when Americans are seldom beyond the reach of email or a cell phone.

The book even highlights two pieces of graphic fiction with new work by James Sturm and Olivier Schrauwen.

So for a real trip into the heart of contemporary American writing, pick up this book. There's also a Best American Essays series [3] you could try but it won't be nearly as much fun.
For the Love of Reading[4]Information, Answers & Reviews [5]Essays [6]Short Stories [7]
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Posted by Dory L. on Nov 3, 2011

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Links:
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