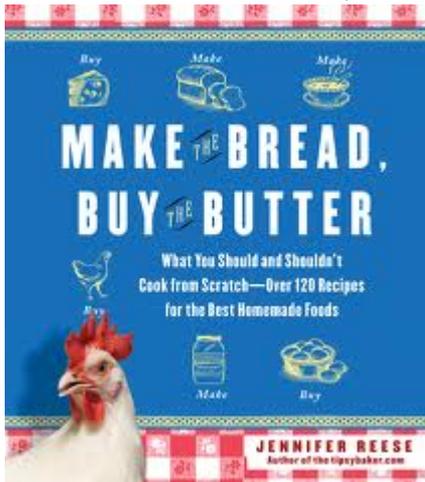


Sarah B.'s blog

[Make the Bread, Buy the Butter](#)



When enthusiastic home cook, Jennifer Reese lost her job she wondered if making homemade staples would be more cost effective. Is homemade mayonnaise cheaper than the tub you buy in the store? And just as important, does it taste better? Her book, [Make the Bread, Buy the Butter](#) has over 120 recipes for the from-scratch cook - looking for both cost savings and taste improvements.

Reese's journey to make and taste homemade versions of cupboard regulars like peanut butter and bread and the more exotic like camembert and prosciutto includes helpful input from her family. She makes it sound like making your own ginger ale isn't crazy ? but actually fairly easy, cheaper than store bought, and delicious. Her voice throughout the book is casual and often really funny. The best part of the book is her interest in the highly practical and includes a ?hassle factor? for each item. Every recipe has a realistic cost comparison with store bought and an indication of how difficult each item is to make. Right there in bold print is a verdict on each item: Make it or Buy it. A few items get a warning. Make or buy cream cheese? Reese says to make it once and then decide. Make or buy English muffins? Depends on whether you are eating them plain or as a base for eggs benedict.

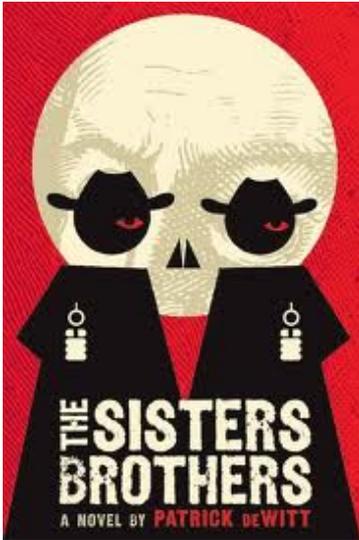
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[For the Love of Readingbuy the butter : what you should and shouldn't cook from scratch--over 120 recipes for the best homemade foodsCookbooksHow-to & DIYNofiction](#)

Posted by Sarah B. on Sep 5, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[The Sisters Brothers: A Most \(Un\)usual Western?](#)



I've worked in libraries for years including a few in Texas, so it is a wonder that I've never read a western. Part of the problem then with reading your first book in a genre is that you lack the language to properly describe it or make comparisons. Now I wonder if I shall ever read another for the fear that the next one won't hold up to [The Sisters Brothers](#) by Patrick deWitt.

It is the gold rush years and the infamous Charlie and Eli Sisters are riding from Oregon City to San Francisco on orders from the Commodore to kill Hermann Kermit Warm. There is trouble with horses, whores, a red bear pelt, excessive brandy drinking, a man named Mayfield, a witch and a mysterious magical formula. Large sums of money come and go. The characters are unique, but without a lot of overall development. Is this usual for a western? Is the level of violence similar to other westerns? Is this a parody of the genre, a homage or both?

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Posted by Sarah B. on Aug 28, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[Flygirl by Sherri L. Smith](#)



Ida Mae Jones is a young African-American woman living with her

family in Louisiana. Her father who taught her to fly a small crop duster has passed away, and her brother has signed up to serve in World War II. It is not surprising that Ida Mae feels caught between her family obligations and her love of flying. She learns about the Women Airforce Service Pilots ? a civilian organization that served to fly airplanes under the military with the goal of freeing up qualified men to serve in combat. The WASP pilots transferred planes and equipment from assembly plants to military bases and often trailed targets in the air for anti-aircraft artillery practice.

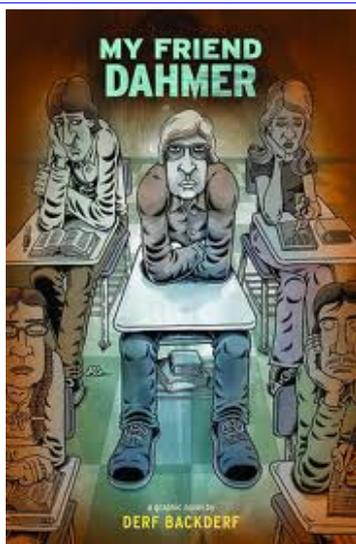
Not only was the WASP a highly selective group that underwent rigorous training, but Ida Mae faces even more difficulty because she knows she can't sign up as a black woman. Her fair skin allows her to pass for white, but the stress of this combined with the training proves difficult. On the positive side, the friends Ida Mae makes in WASP training are fantastic and provide support for Ida Mae even if they don't know her secret for sure. [Read more »](#)

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Posted by Sarah B. on Aug 3, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[True Crime + Graphic Novels](#)



A graphic novel about Jeffrey Dahmer? I am not a true crime reader. I am not even a fake crime reader, so I didn't think I would be interested. Boy, was I wrong. Last week I took [My Friend Dahmer](#) by Derf Backderf home based on a few coworker recommendations. I started reading fairly late one night and didn't put this book down until I was finished.

This book is sad, surprising and gross. But there is more than just morbid entertainment here. Backderf went to high school with Jeffrey Dahmer in Ohio in the 70s. His personal insight combined with meticulous research and interviews create a story that isn't really sympathetic, but does feel complete and informative. Backderf is a career comic artist, so the black and white illustrations feel like a natural way for this story to be told. He also includes some original drawings of Dahmer that he had done in high school. This isn't an easy read, but it is more than just shock value. [Read more »](#)

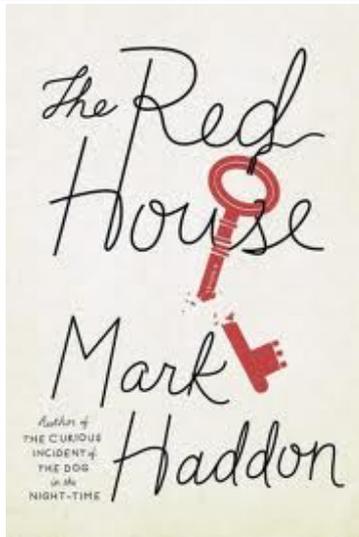
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Posted by Sarah B. on Aug 2, 2012

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[The Red House by Mark Haddon](#)



Like many readers, I loved loved loved [The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time](#). And I had high hopes for Mark Haddon's follow up, [A Spot of Bother](#) but was generally let down. That was years ago, and Haddon had sort of fallen off my radar when I recently came across his newest, [The Red House](#).

The premise is simple. Wealthy doctor, Richard invites his estranged sister, Angela, her unemployed husband and their three children to share a vacation house in the Welsh countryside knowing she cannot pay for a trip on their own. Joining Richard is his new wife and her willful teenage daughter. Their trip initially brims with the hope of forgiveness and family bonding, all nicely tucked away in a cozy modern pastoral setting. But secrets, resentments, pain and confusion ? both old and new ? follow everyone. The complicated dynamics of this family and their often awkward attempts to set things right are at the crux of this novel. Can't we all relate? Being in a family is hard.

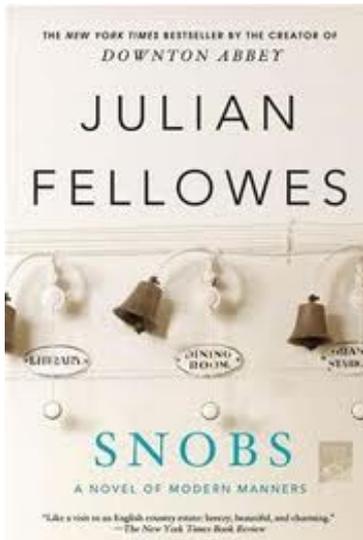
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Posted by Sarah B. on Aug 1, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[August Books Plus](#)



Whether you're inside enjoying the cool air or outside braving the weather at pool-side, consider that small country across the pond. Yes, England, and we're not talking about the Olympics but a *Downton-Abbey* type novel set in contemporary times. Are the rich really different from you and me? Screenwriter, novelist, and actor, Julian Fellowes tackles this subject in *Snobs*, a novel about a middle-class woman named Edith who would love the wealth and title of the Earl, Charles Broughton, whom she'd love to marry. Fellowes knows about castles and big estates. He's the son of a diplomat, and he visited many of the estates he writes about. He's also known struggling actors who aren't sure how they will pay next month's rent. As *New York Times* reviewer, Jonathan Ames said, *Snobs* is a "field guide to the behavior of the English aristocracy." Ames also wrote, "When you read a book, you're lost in time. All the more reason to read *Snobs*. It will distract you pleasantly. It's like a visit to an English country estate: breezy, beautiful and charming."

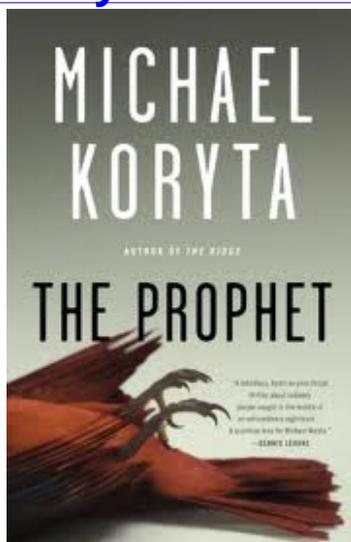
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Posted by Sarah B. on Jul 27, 2012 [Add new comment](#)



[Michael Koryta's The Prophet and Book Signing](#)



Local autho

r Michael Koryta's new book isn't coming out until

August 7 but you can already place a hold in our catalog. [The Prophet](#) is a straight up thriller that stars two brothers, one as an upstanding high school football coach and the other as a fringe bail bondsman. The brothers are estranged after the devastating fallout resulting from the kidnapping and brutal murder of their sister many years earlier. When a similar murder happens, the brothers must learn to work together before the murderer strikes again. Master thriller author Dennis Lehane says, "*The Prophet* is a relentless, heart-in-your-throat thriller about ordinary people caught in the middle of an extraordinary nightmare." And Kirkus reviews praises Koryta's newest as "a brilliantly paced thriller that keeps its villains at a tantalizing distance, a compelling family portrait, a study in morality that goes beyond the usual black-and-white judgments, and an entertaining spin on classic football fiction. A flawless performance." [Read more »](#)

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Posted by Sarah B. on Jul 23, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

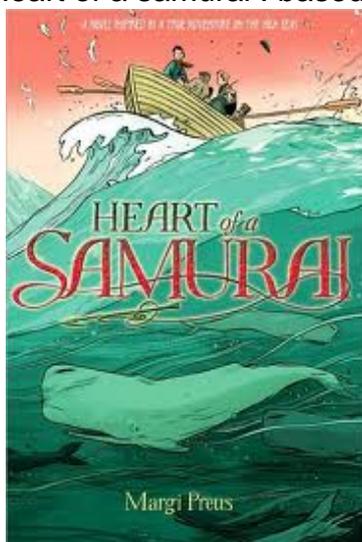
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[High Seas Adventure \(and so much more\)!](#)

[Heart of a samurai](#) : based on the true story of Manjiro Nakahama
[view in catalog](#)

ISBN:

[Heart of a samurai](#) : based on the true story of Manjiro Nakahama



?An action packed historical novel set on the high seas!? claims the book jacket for [Heart of a Samurai](#) by Margi Preus. Normally these aren't quite the descriptors I am looking for in a good book, but this Young Adult novel has amazing visual appeal and lying underneath the "high seas adventure" is a true heart of gold.

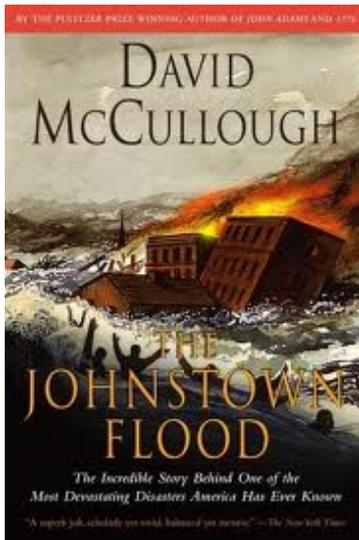
Preus tells a fictional account of a true story: Manjiro, a young man from a small fishing village, becomes the first Japanese person to set foot in America. Japan at the time had closed borders and a deep distrust for anything foreign. When Manjiro is rescued with his friends after being shipwrecked on an island by an American whaling ship, his life is changed forever. Captain Whitfield sees that Manjiro is a quick study, both in language and sailing and takes him under his wing. The more Manjiro sees outside Japan, the more he wants to learn and explore eventually ending up attending school in New Bedford, Massachusetts living with the Whitfields. [Read more »](#)

[For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Adventure Award Winner Coming of Age Historical Multicultural Newbery Honor Teens](#)

Posted by Sarah B. on Jul 12, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[Books Plus for July](#)



Although summer officially began just last week, it seems as though it's been hot and dry forever. As we water our gardens and lawns, it's hard to envision a major flood. But join us for a discussion about *The Johnstown Flood*--still the deadliest flood in US history. It happened in 1889 when the South Fork Dam (fourteen miles upstream from Johnstown, Pa.) failed. The American Red Cross, which Clara Barton had founded in 1891, led the relief effort with Barton herself taking charge. The flood caused many sociological repercussions because the community that was spared included summer homes of many millionaires including Andrew Carnegie and Andrew Mellon, while the community below that suffered had many poor Irish and German immigrants.

This was David McCullough's first book. McCullough went on to win two Pulitzer Prizes for later biographies of Truman and John Adams.

Books Plus meets the first Sunday of each month. All are welcome. Join the discussion or simply come to listen.

No registration necessary. **Drop in.**

2 p.m., First Sundays

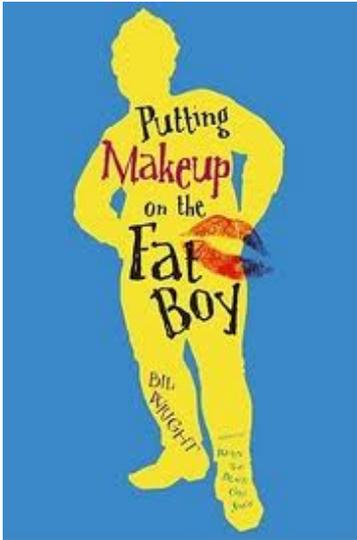
See the upcoming schedule below. [Read more »](#)

[For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews American History Library Program Nonfiction The Johnstown flood](#)

Posted by Sarah B. on Jun 26, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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[Lambda Awards and LGBT YA Fiction](#)



June is generally recognized as LGBT Pride Month. In honor of this, the [Lambda Awards were announced last week](#) for excellence in LGBT literature. A long list of winners in a wide variety of categories can be found on their website.

The winner in the LGBT Children's/Young Adult category is [Putting Makeup on the Fat Boy](#) by Bil Wright. This novel is about high school student Carlos Duarte who is juggling a job at the Macy's makeup counter, a jealous boss, his sister's abusive boyfriend, and a difficult crush. Booklist's review of Wright's novel remarks that "there's a whole lot going on in Wright's novel, but it's handled deftly and, for the most part, believably. Best of all, Carlos is not completely defined by his homosexuality. It is an important part of him, yes, but so are his ambition, his concern for his sister, and his capacity for friendship."

[Read more »](#)

[For the Love of Reading Information, Answers & Reviews Award Winner Coming of Age LGBTQ Putting makeup on the fat boy Relationships Teens Will Grayson, Will Grayson](#)

Posted by Sarah B. on Jun 11, 2012 [Add new comment](#)

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