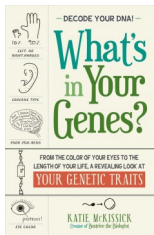


For the Love of Reading

From the color of Your Eyes to Your Type of Earwax



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If the last thing you learned about genes was Gregor Mendel's pea pod experiments, you might want to try this easy to read science book to get up to speed about many fascinating changes in hereditary theory.

For instance, humans have only 20,000 to 25,000 genes, downgraded from a previous estimate of 100,000. In comparison, a tiny water flea--barely visible to our naked eye--has about 31,000. You've heard the word genome in the news and on PBS. Your genome is your full set of genes. Every cell in your body gets a copy of the full set although each cell cannot read all of them. By the way, the word "cell" came from Robert Hooke, the first person who saw them in the 1600s. When he first discovered them under a microscope, they reminded him of monks' cells. Other interesting facts about your genome. The chromosomes scientists have discovered have something to do with either inherited diseases or traits. For instance, chromosome 1 is associated with deafness, schizophrenia and maple syrup disease. (You read that right!) If you have red hair, thank chromosome 2. Blue or green eyes? Chromosome 19 is for you. And yes, previously scientists thought that there were only two possibilities for eye color: brown or blue. Those green eyes, they just tagged as a variant of blue. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 21, 2014

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The Book of Unknown Americans



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With immigration a hot button issue both politically and in the news, it was interesting to read Cristina Henríquez's second novel *The Book of Unknown Americans*. It tells the stories of various immigrants (from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and other Latin American countries) who have all landed in Delaware.

The book opens with a family's arrival at night from the border. A paid driver has brought Arturo, Alma, and their daughter Maribel to this immigrant enclave outside of Dover. They are legal immigrants given papers to work on a mushroom farm. Or at least Arturo will work there. They have come primarily to get special schooling for 15 year old Maribel who fell off a ladder at her father's construction site in Mexico and has brain damage.

The story of this family is the heartwood of the novel. But woven in are life stories of other immigrants including a boxer, who came to the states to win matches but became instead a landlord, and an actress who worked hard to make it in New York City, but came to Delaware and formed her own theatre.

This beautiful book gives you a feel of how hard it is to start life over in a new place, not understanding the language or culture. It also explores issues of guilt and secrecy, and how they affect even the strongest of marriages. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 18, 2014

[The Book of Unknown Americans](#)

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Touching Strangers



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Anyone with the ability to get a stranger to pose for a camera while touching two or three other strangers in New York City must have both courage and amazing diplomatic skills. Enter photographer Richard Renaldi. Since 2007 Renaldi has been hauling his big, 8 by 10 inch view camera not just around New York, but around other cities and towns across America. This cool involving book presents some of the amazing portraits he's created.

The juxtapositions are captivating: ages, races, classes, sexes, outfits, jewelry, tattoos, and indoor and outdoor settings all present a panoply of portraits of 21st century Americans. In 'Jesse and Michael,' a bearded middle-aged man in an orange sweatshirt and woolen cap clutches the hands of a very old woman wearing a wig, with her cane draped over her purse.

Atlantic Ocean waves break behind them.

?Pedro and Neal? touch in some kind of shop or factory. Pedro sits, his body exuding confidence and authority, a radio attached to his shirt. Neal in a blue cap has claimed a perch on Pedro?s desk and Neal places one hand on Pedro?s shoulder, another around his wrist.

?Michael and Sarah? look like they could be engaged. Sarah leans into Michael?s shoulder on the NYC subway during winter?both wear coats and hats; their opposite hands are clasped on Sarah?s left wrist. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 13, 2014

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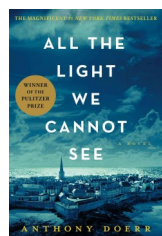
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All the Light We Cannot See



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A blind French girl. A brilliant German boy. A locksmith who works at a world-class museum. A French resistance worker who doubles as a housewife. An agoraphobic great uncle who has not left home since the close of the last war, WW1. A Nazi army gem expert who prowls after a world-class jewel that he believes will cure his advanced cancer.

These are the main characters that people this fascinating WWII novel. Tying them all together are radio signals and a blue diamond worth millions.

The novel alternates (mostly) between the points of view of Marie-Laure, a blind girl and Werner, an orphan who teaches himself advanced radio skills. Marie-Laure has been blind since the age of six. Just after the German occupation, she and her locksmith father flee Paris, but soon after the Germans take and imprison her father.

A myth surrounds the blue diamond itself. Marie-Laure learned about the diamond early in her life. The myth says that anyone who carries it will have bad luck befall them. Unfortunately, the museum director entrusts the locksmith with this diamond as the Germans enter Paris. He also ordered two other duplicates created to confuse anyone trying to track the diamond. None of the three employees trusted with the diamond know who has the real one. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 21, 2014

[All the Light We Cannot See](#)

[Coming of Age](#)

[Fiction](#)

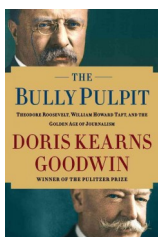
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Carnegie Award Winners Announced



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Since 2012, the American Library Association has chosen a best book for adult readers in both fiction and nonfiction that were published in the U.S. in the previous year. Drumroll!!! This year's winners are *The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the Golden Age of Journalism* by Doris Kearns Goodwin and *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tart.

Both books have received excellent reviews. *The Bully Pulpit* focuses on the great friendship between Roosevelt and Taft that was severely tried when they ran against each other for president in 1912. It also vividly describes the muckraking era in American journalism, so far removed from our journalism today, but having left a great influence on it.

The Goldfinch, reviewed here previously, tells the story of a young boy's sense of loss after being bombed in a museum and losing his mother. In the craziness after the bombing, he grabs the small painting of the title--a 13 and 1/4 by 9 inch work by the Dutch artist, Carol Fabritius, that was painted in 1654. Theodore's life spins out of control and he keeps this painting for years. It's a novel about art, relationships, and how circumstances can change the course of a life in a single moment. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 9, 2014

[Andrew Carnegie Award Medals for Excellence](#)

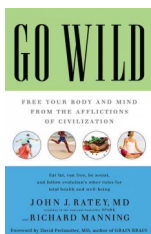
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Go Wild: Free Your Body and Mind from the Afflictions of Civilization



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This book is not about nature as I'd first thought, except for the fact that it recommends running in those glove-like shoes on outdoor trails. It is a book about health, however?how to keep it, how to get it back in a tense, stress-filled world.

What I like best about it is how the two authors, one a doctor, the other a science journalist cull recent research for results on diets and life-techniques that really work include cutting back on

carbs, sleeping eight hours, spending time moving outdoors and meditation. One study confirmed that Japanese businessmen had a 40% increase in their immune response after just one walk in the woods. Even more surprising is that this lasted for more than a month. The results in improved health and awareness for those that meditate were particularly powerful. Even novice meditators had an increased immune response to a flu virus than others."

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Posted by Dory L. on July 5, 2014

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