



Reading for Pleasure

Books can be studied, analysed, interpreted – they can also be read for pleasure. This handout is for people who are looking for books in the library of Konstanz University just to read for pleasure.

- (1) How this list of suggestions started
- (2) Book titles

(1) How this list of suggestions started

For students of English Literature it can be wonderful to discover the great literary figures of the past such as Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, the Bronte sisters, Jane Austen. It can also be tiring, having to understand older forms of the English language, and having to analyse and interpret. (It can also be frustrating if students acquire these older forms of the language, use them in their writing, and are told they are now old-fashioned.) Of course students are also introduced to contemporary writing in English, but in seminars and lectures the focus tends to be on analysis.

Reading contemporary writing outside of class can be a pleasure and a boost to your learning at the same time, no matter whether you are studying English Literature or Economics, Philosophy of Physics. For that reason, I have enjoyed, over the years, suggesting many contemporary book titles for the library to acquire.

Obviously, if you want the current bestseller you can go and buy it. But the university library has lots of wonderful books in English, shelves and shelves full, some to be read in an evening, some to be browsed in with pleasure over days or weeks, just waiting to be discovered.

In this list of suggested titles you will find mainly fiction. There are thrillers, travel literature, detective stories, historical novels, love stories, adventure, social criticism, fantasy, science fiction etc., but no classics of the 19th century or earlier. The books are on this list because somebody told me they liked them, or I like them (they are like old favourites), or they were on the bestseller list, and so on. Most of the writers have written many books, not just the titles here. But you can discover that for yourselves. They are not all easy to read, but if you enjoy the book then the effort will be worth it.

A good tip: if you find you are not really interested in the book you have chosen, put it back on the shelf and choose another. This is not a list of books for study purposes, but for PLEASURE.

They can all be found on the **eng 959** shelves in the library, unless indicated otherwise. If the author is “**Ackroyd**” you just go to the English books, look for the shelves of “eng 959” books then “eng 959 a ...”

Please note: I have only grouped them roughly, not precisely according to genre as many of them would fit into several categories, and because it seems a pity for you, the reader, to open the book with fixed expectations.

I have marked Scottish books with an asterisk*. If you would like more Scottish titles please see [FyF_cm_scotlandwriting.pdf](#).

Some of the books below have been turned into films. For more information on books with film adaptations, please see [FyF_fictionfilm.pdf](#).

(2) List of suggestions

Non-fiction:

BLIXEN, Karen: Out of Africa (skd 959)

FERMOR, Patrick Leigh: Between the Woods and the Water: on foot to Constantinople from the Hook of Holland

HARRIS: Native Stranger: a black American's journey into the heart of Africa (ame 959)

LEE, Laurie: As I walked out one midsummer morning

MATHABANE: Love in Black and White: the triumph of love over prejudice and taboo (soz611:st90/m19)

*McKINLAY, William: Karluk: a great untold story of Arctic exploration (erd 332.40)

*MILLER, Christian: A Childhood in Scotland

SCOTT, Rachel: A Wedding Man is Nicer than Cats, Miss: a teacher at work with immigrant children (6 fse 116)

THEROUX, Paul: The Great Railway Bazaar: by train through Asia (ame 959)

TRENCH, Richard: Forbidden Sands: a search in the Sahara (erd788.3z)

Fiction:

Crime fiction / thrillers / adventure:

ANTHONY, Evelyn: The Poellenberg Inheritance

ARCHER, Jeffrey: A Matter of Honour

*BUCHAN, John: The Thirty-Nine Steps

FLEMING, Ian: The Spy who loved me, Diamonds are forever (all the James Bond stories)

FORBES, Colin: Double Jeopardy

FORSYTH, Frederick: The Odessa File

GEORGE, Elizabeth: In the Presence of the Enemy (ame 959)

HAMMET, Dashiell: The Maltese Falcon (ame 959)

HIGHSMITH, Patricia: The talented Mr Ripley (ame 959)

JAMES, P.D.: Unnatural Causes

MACINNES, Helen: Prelude to Terror

*MACLEAN, Alistair: Ice Station Zebra

MARSH, Ngaio: Artists in Crime

*MINA, Denise: Sanctum

*RANKIN, Ian: The Naming of the Dead

Children's – from 9 to 90:

BERTAGNA, Julie: Zenith

LEWIS, C. S. : The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

*McLEAN, Allan: The Hill of the Red Fox

PULLMAN, Philip: His Dark Materials. A Trilogy (The Golden Compass etc.)

ROWLING, J. K. : Harry Potter stories

TOLKIEN, J. R. : Lord of the Rings

Historical fiction:

GRENVILLE, Kate: The Secret River (early 19th century Australia)

STEWART, Mary: The Crystal Cave. Unfortunately this book, the first of five novels on Post-Roman Britain and the legend of King Arthur, is no longer available in the library. You might like to look for it elsewhere as Mary Stewart is recognised as one of the really good story tellers of 20th century Britain, as were Jean Plaidy (various pseudonyms) and Rosemary Sutcliff. Jean Plaidy: e.g. 'The Scarlet Cloak' (Spanish Inquisition). Rosemary Sutcliff: e.g. 'The Eagle of the Ninth' (Roman Britain), filmed recently by Kevin Macdonald (2011).

McCULLOUGH, Colleen: The October Horse (Ancient Rome)

SMITH, Wilbur: The Quest (Ancient Egypt)

Science fiction:

LE GUIN, Ursula: The Dispossessed is now only available in the library in German 'Planet der Habenichtse'. Try The Birthday of the World and other stories (1959).

WYNDHAM, John: The Day of the Triffids

Mixed:

ACKROYD, Peter: Hawksmoor

ADAMS, Richard: The Girl in a Swing

ALDERMAN, Naomi: The Liars' Gospel

*BARKER, Elspeth: O Caledonia

BARNES, Julian: Staring at the Sun

BROOKNER, Anita: Hotel du Lac

BAINBRIDGE, Beryl: The Girl in the Polka-dot Dress

BOYD, William: Ordinary Thunderstorms

*BROWN, George Mackay: Greenvoe

- BROWN, Rita Mae: Southern Discomfort (ame 959)
- CAPOTE, Truman: Breakfast at Tiffany's (ame 959)
- CAREY, Peter: Bliss (Australian setting)
- DAVIDSON, Toni: My gun was as tall as me
- DESALVO, Louise: Casting Off (ame 959)
- *ELPHINSTONE, Margaret: An Apple from a Tree, and other visions (short stories)
- FORSTER, Margaret: Private Papers
- FOWLES, John: The French Lieutenant`s Woman
- FRENCH, Marilyn: The Bleeding Heart (ame 959)
- GOUDGE, Elizabeth: Green Dolphin Country (New Zealand setting)
- *GREIG, Andrew: Electric Brae
- GRISHAM, John: Playing for Pizza (ame 959)
- *GUNN, Neil: Highland River
- HASTINGS, Miriam: The Minotaur-Hunt
- HOFFMAN, Alice: At Risk
- HOSSEINI, Khaled: Kite Runner (ame 959)
- HULME, Keri: The Bone People (New Zealand setting)
- KENEALLY, Thomas: Schindler`s Ark
- LE CARRE, John: The Constant Gardener
- LURIE, Alison: Foreign Affairs (ame 959)
- MACKAY, Shena: A Bowl of Cherries
- MARTEL, Yann: Life of Pi (ame 959)
- *MASSIE, Alan: The Sins of the Father
- McCULLOUGH, Colleen: The Thorn Birds, an Australian family saga, also filmed for TV, unfortunately no longer available in the library

MITCHELL, Margaret: Gone with the Wind (ame 959)
MORGAN, Charles: Sparkenbroke
MORRISON, Tony: Beloved (ame 959)
MUNRO, Alice: Dear Life: stories (ame 959)
O'BRIEN, Edna: Saints and Sinners (short stories)
O'FARRELL, Maggie: After you`d gone
OATES, Joyce: A Garden of Earthly Delights (ame 959)
RUSHDIE, Salman: The Enchantress of Florence
SAYWELL, Cherise: Desert Fish (Australian setting)
SCOTT, Paul: The Jewel in the Crown (India during the British Empire)
*SMITH, Iain Crichton Smith: The Dream
SMITH, Martin Cruz: Stallion Gate
STYRON, William: Sophie`s Choice (ame 959)
SWIFT, Graham: Waterland
SYAL, Meera: Anita and Me
TAYLOR, Cory: Me and Mr Booker (Australian setting)
WINTERSON, Jeanette: The Daylight Gate

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August 2004, updated March 2008, March 2014