

Nonfiction books that read like fiction



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Public Library

Biographies

Gildiner, Catherine Ann

Too close to the falls

Psychologist Gildiner recounts her upbringing in Lewiston, near Niagara Falls, and her adventures assisting the deliveryman for the local pharmacy.

1999

B G468a

Juska, Jane

A round-heeled woman: my late-life adventures in sex and romance

"Before I turn 67-next March," Juska wrote to the personals column of the *New York Review of Books*, "I would like to have a lot of sex with a man I like." Thus begins this English teacher's adventures in the dating world after she decides she has been celibate for too long.

2003

B J96a

Mah, Adeline Yen

Falling leaves return to their roots: the true story of an unwanted Chinese daughter

Mah recounts her childhood in a wealthy family reigned by a cruel stepmother, in a society that devalued young women.

1997

B M2146a

Di Robilant, Andrea

The Venetian affair

Based on a stash of hidden letters, this book tells the story of a long, forbidden love affair between 18th-century Venetian nobleman Andrea Memmo (Di Robilant's ancestor) and a half-English beauty named Giustiniana Wynne.

2003

B M5331d

Sebold, Alice

Lucky

Lucky is Sebold's account of her long road to recovery from a brutal rape that occurred while she was a student at Syracuse University.

1999

B S4431a

Volk, Patricia

Stuffed: adventures of a restaurant family

Volk's Austrian-Jewish family is lovingly (and colourfully) portrayed in her memoir of growing up in her father's restaurant in Manhattan.

2001

B V916a

Wiencek, Henry

An imperfect god: George Washington, his slaves, and the creation of America

This new biography concerns itself with Washington's opinion about the emancipation of slaves. Relying on new sources, Wiencek concludes that while Washington equivocated for some time, he supported the abolition of slavery in his later years.

2003

B W318w

Turning points in history

Burr, Chandler

The emperor of scent: a story of perfume, obsession, and the last mystery of the senses

The story of a scientist with a peculiarly precise sense of smell who works to unravel the mysteries of this human sense.

2002

152.166 B968

Bobrick, Benson

Wide as the waters: the story of the English Bible and the revolution it inspired

A mixture of religious history and literary criticism, Bobrick's book spans centuries and profiles each Biblical translator, interpreting his work according to political and historical contexts.

2001 220.5 B663

King, Ross

Brunelleschi's dome: the story of the great cathedral in Florence

In Florence in 1420, Filippo Brunelleschi, a goldsmith and clockmaker, won a competition to design the dome of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. Completed in 1436, his design remains a towering achievement, and King's book traces its construction and the effects it had on Renaissance society.

2000 726.64 K54

Cadbury, Deborah

The lost king of France: a true story of revolution, revenge, and DNA

Cadbury's book intricately weaves the story of the last days of the French royal family with the contemporary search for answers to the mystery of what happened to young prince Louis-Charles, Duc de Normandie, who would have been Louis XVIII.

2002 944.04 C121

April 2005

Literary musings

Collins, Paul

Sixpence House: lost in a town of books

Collins, who writes for *McSweeney's*, chronicles the year he and his family spent living in Hay-on-Wye, a Welsh town of 1,500 people and forty bookstores.

2003 002.075 C712

Fadiman, Anne

Ex libris: confessions of a common reader

This short collection of connected essays about books, language, and literature muses on such topics as "marrying libraries" (how to merge book collections with a mate) and the satisfaction of reading aloud.

1998 028 F1452

Crimes and exploits

Ruddick, James

Death at the priory: love, sex, and murder in Victorian England

In 1875, Florence Ricardo, a young widow, married the successful young attorney Charles Bravo. In less than six months, Bravo was dead by poison, and the list of suspects grew. This famous mystery, investigated by Scotland Yard and Agatha Christie, among others, was never solved.

2001 364.1523 R914

Worrall, Simon

The poet and the murderer: a true story of literary crime and the art of forgery

A "new" poem by Emily Dickinson, discovered in 1997, was big news until it was discovered to be a fake. The poem was

eventually discovered to be the work of Mark Hofmann, a rare books dealer and a master forger who was in prison for murder, profiled here by Worrall.

2002 364.1523 W929

Harvey, Miles

The island of lost maps: a true story of cartographic crime

Crime in the library! In 1995, a librarian discovered that the man had cut four maps from a set of rare books. Dozens of similar thefts at similarly "secure" institutions were attributed to this man in one of the most ambitious cartographic crimes in history.

2000 912 H342

Social commentary

Ehrenreich, Barbara

Nickel and dimed: on (not) getting by in America

Essayist and cultural critic Barbara Ehrenreich embarks on a cultural experiment, taking a series of minimum-wage jobs to find out how unskilled workers in the U.S. get by. Her experiences are compelling.

2001 305.569 E33

Seaman, Barbara

The greatest experiment ever performed on women: exploding the estrogen myth

Seaman's criticism of hormone replacement therapy and estrogen in particular focuses on what she sees as the abuse of the trust women place in their doctors, drug manufacturers, and the American government.

2003 618.175 S438