And the band played on
by Randy Shilts
An examination of the AIDS crisis critiques the federal government for its inaction, health authorities for their greed, and scientists for their desire for prestige in the face of the AIDS pandemic, in a twentieth anniversary edition of the acclaimed exposé.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle
by Barbara Kingsolver
When Kingsolver and her family move from suburban Arizona to rural Appalachia, they take on a new challenge: to spend a year on a locally produced diet, paying close attention to the provenance of all they consume. "Our highest shopping goal was to get our food from so close to home, we'd know the person who grew it. Often that turned out to be ourselves as we learned to produce what we needed, starting with dirt, seeds, and enough knowledge to muddle through. Or starting with baby animals, and enough sense to refrain from naming them."

The Art of Relevance
by Nina Simon
What do the London Science Museum, California Shakespeare Theater, and ShaNaNa have in common? They are all fighting for relevance in an often indifferent world. The Art of Relevance is your guide to mattering more to more people. You'll find inspiring examples, rags-to-relevance case studies, research-based frameworks, and practical advice on how your work can be more vital to your community. Whether you work in museums or libraries, parks or theaters, churches or afterschool programs, relevance can work for you. Break through shallow connection. Unlock meaning for yourself and others. Find true relevance and shine.

The Bookseller of Kabul
by Asne Seierstad
Capturing the harsh realities of life in modern-day Afghanistan and plight of Afghan women, the Norwegian journalist provides a portrait of a committed Muslim man, a bookseller, and his family living in post-Taliban Kabul, Afghanistan.

Botany of Desire
by Michael Pollan
Focusing on the human relationship with plants, the author of Second Nature uses botany to explore four basic human desires--sweetness, beauty, intoxication, and control--through portraits of four plants that embody them: the apple, tulip, marijuana, and potato.

The Boys in the Boat
by Daniel James Brown
Traces the story of an American rowing team from the University of Washington that defeated elite rivals at Hitler's 1936 Berlin Olympics, sharing the experiences of such contributors as their enigmatic coach, a visionary boat builder and a homeless teen rower.
The Crucible
by Arthur Miller
A veiled reflection of the anticommunist witch-hunts of the 1950s, this play portrays seventeenth-century Salem, Massachusetts as a rigid theocracy eager to ferret out real or imagined deviations from the norm, and indicts everyone in Salem--and by extension American society--for the crimes of intolerance and blind hatred.

Dead Wake
by Erik Larson
Gripping and important, Dead Wake captures the sheer drama and emotional power of a disaster whose intimate details and true meaning have long been obscured by history.

Eyes Wide Open
by Paul Fleischman
Paul Fleischman offers teens an environmental wake-up call and a tool kit for decoding the barrage of conflicting information confronting them.

Farewell to Manzanar
by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston
The American-born author describes her family's experience and impressions when they were forced to relocate in a camp for the Japanese in Owens Valley, California, during World War II.

Galileo's Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith and Love
by Dava Sobel
Galileo Galilei's telescopes allowed him to discover a new reality in the heavens. But for publicly declaring his astounding argument--that the earth revolves around the sun--he was accused of heresy and put under house arrest by the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Living a far different life, Galileo's daughter Virginia, a cloistered nun, proved to be her father's greatest source of strength through the difficult years of his trial and persecution.

The Girls From Ames
by Jeffrey Zaslow
The story of eleven girls from Ames, Iowa, the ten women they became, and the mysterious death of their eleventh member demonstrates how female friendships can shape every aspect of women's lives.

How to Be Compassionate
by Dalai Lama
Through practical exercises and personal anecdotes, the revered spiritual leader shows how individuals' compassion can lead to global changes.

Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI
by David Grann
In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian Nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe. Then, one by one, they began to be killed off. One Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, watched as her family was murdered. David Grann revisits a shocking series of crimes in which dozens of people were murdered in cold blood. The book is a masterpiece of narrative nonfiction, as each step in the investigation reveals a series of sinister secrets and reversals. But more than that, it is a searing indictment of the callousness and prejudice toward
Native Americans that allowed the murderers to operate with impunity for so long.

Lab Girl
by Hope Jahren
An illuminating debut memoir of a woman in science; a moving portrait of a longtime friendship; and a stunningly fresh look at plants that will forever change how you see the natural world.

Little Heathens
by Mildred Armstrong Kalish
An evocative memoir of growing up in the heart of the Midwest during the Great Depression describes life on an Iowa farm during a time of endless work, resourcefulness, family and kinship, and no tolerance for idleness or waste.

Mennonite in a Little Black Dress
by Rhoda Janzen
A poet describes how, after her husband left her for a relationship with a man and she subsequently was seriously injured in a car crash, she returned home to her close-knit Mennonite family and came to terms with her failed marriage and her choices in life.

Mountains Beyond Mountains
by Tracy Kidder
A portrait of infectious disease expert Dr. Paul Farmer follows the efforts of this unconventional Harvard genius to understand the world’s great health, economic, and social problems and to bring healing to humankind.

Musicophilia
by Oliver Sacks
In this book, Oliver Sacks explores the power music wields over us; a power that sometimes we control and at other times don’t. He explores, in his inimitable fashion, how it can provide access to otherwise unreachable emotional states, how it can revivify neurological avenues that have been frozen, evoke memories of earlier, lost events or states or bring those with neurological disorders back to a time when the world was much richer.

My Life in France
by Julia Child
A memoir begun just months before Child’s death describes the legendary food expert’s years in Paris, Marseille, and Provence and her journey from a young woman from Pasadena who cannot cook or speak any French to the publication of her legendary Mastering cookbooks and her winning the hearts of America as “The French Chef.”

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness
by Michelle Alexander
Argues that the War on Drugs and policies that deny convicted felons equal access to employment, housing, education, and public benefits create a permanent under caste based largely on race.

The Odyssey
by Homer/ translated by Robert Fagles
The award-winning translator of Iliad and Oresteia introduces a new translation of Homer’s age-old tale of the wanderings of Odysseus during his ten-year voyage back home to Ithaca after the Trojan War as
he overcomes both divine and natural forces.

Old age is another country: a traveler's guide
by Page Smith
Smith tells us how to grow old with dignity, humor, and active participation in life during the sometimes puzzling retirement years.

The Orchid Thief
by Susan Orlean
A staff writer for The New Yorker describes the life and times of John Laroche, a plant smuggler and orchid thief, and the eccentric world of Florida's obsessed collectors of rare plants.

The Rainbow Comes and Goes
by Anderson Cooper
A poignant correspondence between the CNN journalist and his iconic designer mother, exchanged in the aftermath of the latter's brief illness, shares a rare window into their relationship and the life lessons imparted by an aging mother to her adult son.

Reading Lolita in Tehran
by Azar Nafisi
Lolita in Tehran? Yes, and plenty of other Western classics, read and discussed by a group of women who met secretly with Nafisi, an instructor at the University of Tehran until she was expelled in 1997 for shunning the veil and left the country.

Refuge: an unnatural history of family and place
by Terry Williams
The author of Leap describes her Mormon upbringing, juxtaposing these reminiscences with discussions of the flooding of a wildlife bird sanctuary and its effect on that ecosystem, and her family's legacy of cancer.

The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey
by Candice Millard
The true story of Theodore Roosevelt's harrowing 1914 exploration of one of the most dangerous rivers on earth, a black, uncharted tributary of the Amazon that snakes through one of the most treacherous jungles in the world. Indians armed with poison-tipped arrows haunt its shadows; piranhas glide through its waters; boulder-strewn rapids turn the river into a roiling cauldron. After his humiliating election defeat in 1912, Roosevelt set his sights on the most punishing physical challenge he could find, the first descent of an unmapped tributary of the Amazon. He and his men faced an unbelievable series of hardships, losing their canoes and supplies to punishing whitewater rapids, and enduring starvation, Indian attack, disease, drowning, and a murder within their own ranks. Three men died, and Roosevelt was brought to the brink of suicide. Yet he accomplished a feat so great that many at the time refused to believe it.

The Sixth Extinction
by Elizabeth Kolbert
Drawing on the work of geologists, botanists, marine biologists and other researchers, an award-winning writer for The New Yorker discusses the five devastating mass extinctions on earth and predicts the coming of a sixth.
The Spirit Catches You And You Fall Down
by Anne Fadiman
A tragic tale of cultural differences chronicles the fight over the proper care of an epileptic Hmong child between a California medical center and her tradition-minded Laotian refugee family.

Thunderstruck
by Erik Larson
A portrait of the Edwardian era recounts two parallel stories--the case of Dr. Hawley Crippen, who murdered his wife and fled to America, and Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor of wireless communication--as the new technology is used to capture a killer.

The Tipping Point
by Malcolm Gladwell
By exposing the importance of the “tipping point” in human affairs--that moment when a trend, idea, or social behavior crosses the threshold into acceptability--the author sheds important light on the forces that drive group dynamics and mass culture.

Unbroken
by Laura Hillenbrand
Relates the story of a U.S. airman who survived when his bomber crashed into the sea during World War II, spent forty-seven days adrift in the ocean before being rescued by the Japanese Navy, and was held as a prisoner until the end of the war.

A Walk in the Woods
by Bill Bryson
Bryson shares his breath-taking adventures and the fascinating history of the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail, in this wry account of his arduous trek past the Trail's natural pleasures, human eccentrics, and offbeat comforts.

The Warmth of Other Suns
by Isabel Wilkerson
In an epic history covering the period from the end of World War I through the 1970s, a Pulitzer Prize winner chronicles the decades-long migration of African Americans from the South to the North and West through the stories of three individuals and their families.

What It Is Like To Go To War
by Karl Marlantes
Drawing on his background as a decorated Vietnam War veteran, the author offers insight into his war experiences, maintaining that combat troops are ill prepared for the psychological and spiritual trauma of battle.

The Year of Magical Thinking
by Joan Didion
An autobiographical portrait of marriage and motherhood by the acclaimed author details the critical illness of her daughter, Quintana Roo, followed by the fatal coronary of her husband, John Gregory Dunne, and her daughter's second bout with a life-threatening ailment, and her struggle to come to terms with life and death, illness, sanity, personal upheaval, and grief.