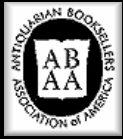




# BOOKTALK



The bi-monthly Newsletter of

## Sam Weller's Bookstore

New, Used and Rare Books

Salt Lake's Premier Full-Service Bookstore since 1929



### December 2009-January 2010



#### From Tony Weller:

#### Happy Holidays

Though Christmas is the holiday of my youth and culture, in the spirit of inclusiveness, I offer Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa and Happy Solstice. After all, we are in this one world together. As I encounter more and more persons who long for less crowded and harried lifestyles, I

envision books playing a warm and rewarding role in our more genteel and hopefully saner future. And as I have done the past several years, in this edition of BookTalk, I will present you with some books from our rare book department that I think would make wonderful holiday gifts. But before that, a few updates.

#### New Convenient Parking

We are happy to announce that the parking at 222 South Main will open to the public some time in December. Note that it is right next door to us! One hundred of the parking stalls are priced at meter rates for the first hour and thus constitute the least expensive covered parking in the area. But note: after one hour, so-called market rates will apply. But the parking is very close and if you lose track of time, you won't receive a ticket or a fine. One enters from 2<sup>nd</sup> South by the entrance to the Hotel Monaco or via the alley that runs behind our building. Unless you travel by bike, foot or TRAX, please try it out on your next visit. Also, through New Year's Day, parking meters are free for up to two hours.

#### The Move

We have not yet sold our building but all moving plans remain intact. We are now negotiating with two prospective buyers. So we are laying plans for what we expect to be our last holiday season in this location and hope to proceed with the move early in 2010. You can be assured that we will publicize it heavily when it happens.

#### The Sale

In October we re-thought our pre-moving sale. Since Spring we have tripled the size of our bargain books areas. They now consist of roughly 1500 square feet in three rooms. Books are marked between \$1 and \$5 and sorted by topic. Buy 10 and we cut the price in half.

#### The American Booksellers Association's Request for the U.S. Department of Justice to Investigate Illegal Online Pricing of this Season's Projected Best-Sellers by Amazon, Wal-Mart and Target

You may have already noticed best sellers on these websites being sold at 25% to 33% of list prices. Yup, you read right: that *is* "of" not "off." You might *not* know that anti-trust laws prohibit predatory pricing, one of the definitions of which is selling products for less than wholesale prices. It's illegal because large companies with the financial power to use such underhanded practices overwhelm competition by absorbing temporary losses until the smaller competitor fails. Since our economic system is on pretty shaky ground and the causes all lead to Wall Street, this would be a good time for our government to begin enforcing the *existing* anti-trust laws that have been neglected for a few generations. We hope the justice department will reject the truncated anti-trust interpretations

## Upcoming & Ongoing Events: December & January

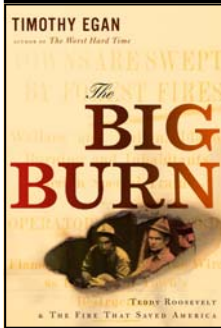
- ◆ **NOVEL PULP:** *New Paper Works* by Amber Heaton, Jared Steffensen, Lauren Huber & David Wolske. Ongoing through **January 8th**. *Gallery on the Mezzanine*
- ◆ **Holiday Reading Window December 2<sup>nd</sup>—23<sup>rd</sup>** Sign up to read for two hours in Sam Weller's front display window, see box on page 3 for details.
- ◆ **Lit. Knit** Wednesday, **December 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>**, 5:30 PM. In store. Bring in your knitting/crocheting for an hour of bookish (and other) discussion.
- ◆ **Vegan Holiday Cook-Off** Saturday, **December 12<sup>th</sup>**, 4:00 PM. In store. Call John Clukey to sign up. Bring your favorite holiday vegan dish for a chance to win one of three vegan-themed books.
- ◆ **Queereads Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and the Utah Pride Center. Wednesday, **December 16<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30 PM. In store. Moderated by Liz Shattler. December's selection is *Baby Remember My Name* edited by Michelle Tea.
- ◆ **Steven L. Richardson and Benjamin L. Richardson: Signing** Saturday, **December 19<sup>th</sup>**, 1:00 PM. In store. Steven and Benjamin Richardson will be signing their book, *3D Atlas of Salt Lake Valley's Tri-Canyon Area*.
- ◆ **Hard Boiled Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and SLUG Magazine. Tuesday, **December 29<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30 PM. In store. Moderated by Zach Sampinos. December's selection is *Risk* by Colin Harrison.
- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club** Tuesday, **January 5<sup>th</sup>**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. January's selections from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes: The Gloria Scott*, *The Musgrave Ritual* and *The Reigate Puzzle*. Tickets are \$12, and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.
- ◆ **Lit. Knit** Wednesday, **January 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>** 5:30 PM. In store. Join the lively gaggle of knitters as we cluck and click with some bookish dish.
- ◆ **Gallery Stroll** Friday, **January 15<sup>th</sup>**, 6-9PM. *Gallery on the Mezzanine*.
- ◆ **Queereads Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and the Utah Pride Center. Wednesday, **January 20<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30 PM. In store. Moderated by Liz Shattler. January's selection is *The Lost Language of Cranes* by David Leavitt.
- ◆ **Hard Boiled Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and SLUG Magazine. Tuesday, **January 26<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30 PM. In store. Moderated by Zach Sampinos. November's selection is *Jesus' Son* by Denis Johnson.
- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club** Tuesday, **February 2<sup>nd</sup>**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. January's discussion will be *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes: The Crooked Man*, *The Resident Assistant* and *The Greek Interpreter*. Tickets are \$12, and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.



## Best Weller's Selection

December/January

Reviewed by Frank Pester



### **The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire That Saved America** by Timothy Egan

978-0-618-96841-1

Delacorte Press

\$27.00

"In the northern Rockies, the later winter of 1910 was one for the records. Storm after storm rolled out of the Gulf of Alaska . . . In late February, the weather warmed, and rain and higher temperatures made the snow heavy and prone to movement . . . But in early spring came a dramatic change, as if a switch had been turned off. . . . Where was the spring rain? The snow melted early, all of it. Creeks withered and stilled, the forest leathered and baked. Pine needles and twigs on the floor cracked underfoot, dry as sun-crisped bread chips . . . And then smoke started to fill the woods."

Timothy Egan has taken the story of the worst forest fire in American history and wrapped it with history, the story of the start of America's conservation movement, and such interesting and moving characters as Teddy Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot.

The book takes place at a pivotal time in American History—the country had been surveyed, and the industrial revolution was in full swing. Rich railroad men, industrialists, and lumber companies were making large land grabs, and visionary men like Roosevelt and Pinchot were trying to see how much of the resources could be preserved for future generations to enjoy while corrupt western senators were trying to thwart their every move. Roosevelt and Pinchot, both from wealthy backgrounds, felt sick of the corruption and wanton exploitation of America's resources. Even though Roosevelt was a hunter, he wanted to preserve lands and animals for the future. Pinchot, traveling through the forests of the West, envisioned a government agency to control and manage these resources for all Americans.

Egan engages the reader with the political background, the historical figures involved in the conflict, and the historical and social conditions of the country at this time. Beginning with the conditions facing Wallace, Idaho, as wild fires raced toward it, Egan recounts the movements involved with creating the new Forest Service and the politics of Roosevelt's Republican Progressive movement.

## Sam Weller's Holiday Reading Window

**The Reading Window is all about reading  
and giving!**

All participants can earn a Sam Weller's Gift Certificate and give discounts to their family & friends. Here's how:

Tell your friends, family, & neighbors to stop by and wave during your window shift. Invite your visitors to do some holiday shopping at Sam Weller's. Any visitor who comes into our store during (or just before) your shift and mentions your name will get **10% off their ENTIRE PURCHASE**. (Discount does not include rare books, special orders, or gift cards.)

At the end of your group's window shift, Weller's will total up all discounted receipts from that time period to give you a **Sam Weller's Gift Certificate** for 10% of the receipts' value. The gift certificate amount is determined by your community's spending.

Sam Weller's will provide cookies and the Coffee Garden will provide drip coffee, tea, or hot cocoa for you to enjoy while you read.

**Contact the store for sign up info.**

The new Forest Service, beleaguered with limited finances and unwanted in the country it was trying to protect, is shown by Egan as facing its biggest task to date: a raging wild fire, starting in the tinder dry west of August 1910. Lightning strikes everywhere ignited the newly set aside National Forests and started blazes in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. A cry for help by the Forest Service fell mainly on the deaf ears of President Taft, until it became apparent the situation was well out of hand. The new Directors of the Forest Service, hand selected by Gifford Pinchot from Yale University and known as little GP's, are shown to be resourceful and courageous—resourceful in drawing help from new immigrants, prisons and the Buffalo soldiers of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry, sometimes even paying them out of their own pockets; courageous in helping those untried men and saving many lives.

The chapters on the actual fire are so realistic and drama filled, you can almost smell the smoke and feel the heat. A book for those who love history, especially history filled with human anecdotes. A "bully" of a book. **Best Weller's Price is \$21.60**

hawked by attorneys and publicists working for the gluttonous and combative retailers that are wreaking havoc on the book industry. For more detail on this concern, visit the ABA's [www.bookweb.org](http://www.bookweb.org) or [news.bookweb.org/news/7130.html](http://news.bookweb.org/news/7130.html).

### **Our Newest Rare Book Catalog**

We just issued our traditional holiday rare book catalog. In keeping with theories I presented last BookTalk, we have taken a new approach. As we have watched a gradual book world shift from content toward physicality, we decided to increase the number of photographs in our holiday catalog. Until recently, the only way one could access books was via paper and ink. As computers take over certain functionalities from books, we see authors, book-makers and publishers exploring the tangible delights of the object of the book. Though the changes are most apparent in post 1995 books, we felt that photos would best illuminate the pleasure inherent in the physicality of books. We hope you enjoy the result.

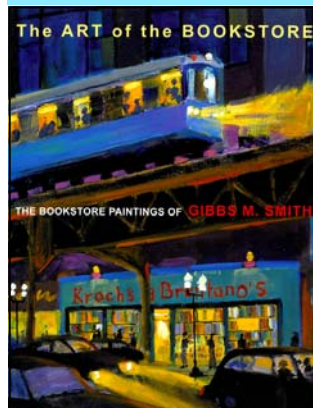
### **Happy New Year**

Books and book people blew my perceptual filters open wide early on and made me an aggressive idealist. My hopes for the new year are not different than in past years, simply more fervent. I hope for a world where difference is celebrated and enjoyed, but never occasion for conflict or prejudice. In this troubling time, it is incumbent upon all of us to reconceive our lives and customs, in order to guarantee the mere survival of our species, all the other species and the earth itself.

So Happy New Year. Let's envision a peaceful and beautiful future world in which we find no war, bigotry or hunger. To achieve this we simply *must* stabilize population and put an end to environmental degradation! If we become able to feed, house and clothe everyone, I think we'll find few who will want to fight. It's time we quit

treating animals like commodities. Let us recognize that consumer materialism is out-of-control and reduce our material wants to sustainable levels. Has more stuff really made us any happier? It is crucial that we recognize that those who collect income without providing services or goods are the economic problem and quit rewarding and worshipping those who exploit the less clever and powerful for personal profit. The *true* profits of progress are two-fold: they are money, the token of value used to exchange *services and goods*, and time. Time! We must fairly distribute the wealth and time. I may be a quixotic dreamer but remember what William Blake once aptly wrote: "What is now reality, was once only dreamed." Some customs and traditions will need to end. Let us dream with compassionately open eyes.

## **Staff Reviews**



### **The Art of the Bookstore: The Bookstore Paintings by Gibbs M. Smith**

by Gibbs M. Smith

978-1-4236-0643-7

Gibbs Smith, Publisher

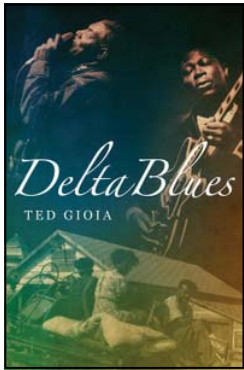
\$35.00

Reviewed by Joan Nay

Dedicated Utah publisher/bibliophile/artist, Gibbs Smith, celebrates 40 years of his publishing company with this attractive new work. What a luxury that over the years Gibbs could visit 68 bookstores around the country and paint each store front in a lively and lovely oil painting. Brief histories accompany the paintings included herein—most of which have been front cover illustrations of past Gibbs Smith

## Staff Reviews Continued

Publisher catalogs. Most stores featured are independently-owned, some large and well-known, some small and fairly obscure. Gibbs has been a customer at Sam Weller's since 1948, and graciously includes us, as well as two other SLC booksellers—both of whom began their bookselling careers here at Sam Weller's. In a word, Gibbs gets it! He shares his talent, skill and passion for the written word here, an indication that he understands and celebrates the "independent voices, the exchange of ideas, . . . the alluring power of bookstores, and captures a love of the printed word." Thanks Gibbs. Beautifully done!



### **Delta Blues**

by Ted Gioia

978-0-393-33750-1

W.W.Norton & Co.

\$16.95

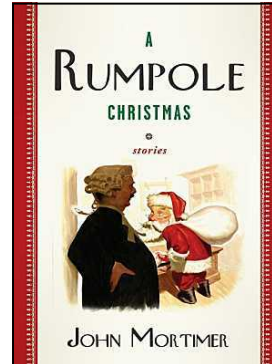
Reviewed by Jason Rabb

Gioia's *Delta Blues* is a broad but penetrating look into the Mississippi Delta blues. He spins in the early players of the Mississippi Delta, the Urban Blues greats, and the Blues Revival of the 1960s, while unraveling the previous scholarship and bringing clear-eyed analysis.

*Delta Blues* includes sections on Delta legends Charlie Patton, Robert Johnson, Son House, John Lee Hooker, and a fascinating section on often overlooked Delta son Howlin' Wolf. A young prodigy of early blues great Charlie Patton, Howlin' Wolf carried on Patton's booming voice and wild intensity that entertained a crowd, while scaring the hell out of them. Wolf turned Delta traditions into his own raucous urban sound in West Memphis, made his first recordings at Sun Studios at the late age of 41, and helped define the Chicago Blues with his cross town rival Muddy Waters.

Researching the greats and their Mississippi Delta connections, Gioia moves through lesser-known blues men, record labels, juke joints,

penitentiaries and plantations, while pulling apart the legacy of blues scholarship and myth.



### **A Rumpole Christmas**

by John Mortimer

978-0-670-02135-2

Viking Adult

\$21.95

Reviewed by Bruce Christensen

I bring all of you Rumpole fans tidings of great joy and, I hope, some comfort. At the death of John Mortimer last January, we wondered if we had heard the last of our favorite barrister. However, there were some stories previously published in magazines, which up until now have never been available in book form.

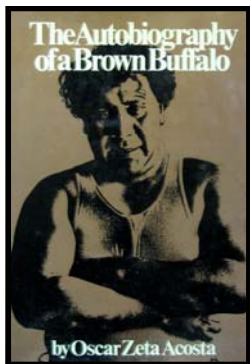
*A Rumpole Christmas* is a collection of those stories with a Christmas theme. So Horace is back with all of the delightful characters featured in Mortimer's wonderful tales of the life of an Old Bailey hack. Claude Erskine Brown, Soapy Sam Ballard, the Timson clan, Peanuts Malloy, and many other memorable characters who populate the many endearing Rumpole books that have kept us truly entertained over the years.

Hilda, she who must be obeyed, is still looking after Horace, with all the mothering care of a drill sergeant. The judges as always are doing everything they can to thwart Rumpole's efforts to defend his clients and at the same time to assist the prosecution. The author is constantly regaling us with his poignant and telling insights that make us laugh and think at the same time.

My main criticism of *A Rumpole Christmas* is that it is too short, and if these are the last stories featuring our hero it is indeed a sad thing to contemplate. Oh well, we can always return to *Rumpole of the Bailey* and all the other books in this series. If you have never encountered Horace Rumpole this a good place to start.

# Rare Book Gift Ideas

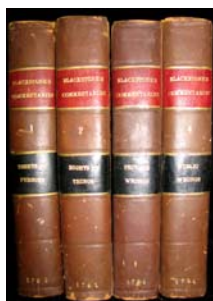
While many of us are planning for a simpler holiday this year, of course, I must extol the virtues of books as you consider gifts for your friends and family. Here is a tiny selection of the thousands of great books we offer from our rare book department. If none of these get your attention, we hope you'll contact us for more personalized gift selection service. We can find a book to tickle any fancy. But I thought *these* looked quite nice. *Tony Weller*



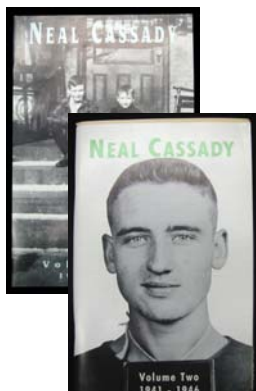
- Your gonzo friends might enjoy *The Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo* by **Oscar Zeta Acosta**, who is best known as Hunter S. Thompson's attorney and sidekick in the classic tale of madness and inebriation, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. A jacketed 1<sup>st</sup> edition for \$75



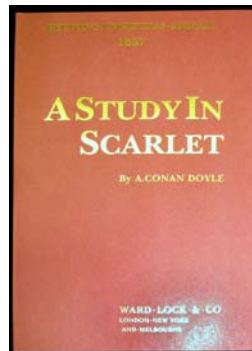
- An as-new 4<sup>th</sup> printing of *Yosemite and the Range of Light*. Large luscious photos with a bookplate signed by **Ansel Adams**. \$120



- The lawyer in your family would most certainly cherish a 1791 four-volume set of **William Blackstone's** *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. Our set has been rebacked in leather, preserving original boards. \$1000



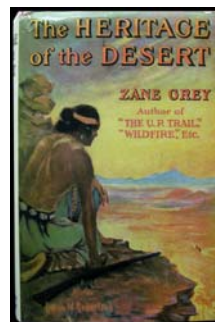
- In 1995 and 1998, **Tom Christopher** self-published two paperbound quartos about the preeminent beat/hippy prankster, **Neal Cassady**, simply titled, *Neal Cassady*. They contain photos, documents and reminiscences by those who knew him. You won't encounter them often. \$45



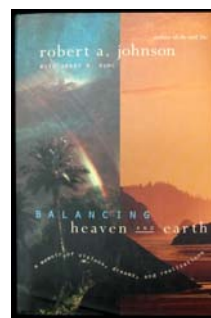
- **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's** first Sherlock Holmes novel, *A Study in Scarlet* was first published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887. It is of legendary rarity but so significant that careful facsimiles have been produced. We've got a perfect slipcased copy of the centennial edition of 550 copies. \$200



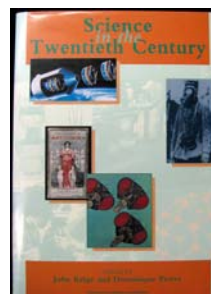
- Or, how about a very well preserved copy of Good Housekeeping magazine from March of 1917. Very entertaining. Pretty. Check out the ads! \$25



- First editions of **Zane Grey** novels in dust jackets are terribly hard to find. So many of his fans just have to settle for the nicest reprints they can find. We here offer a great looking jacketed reprint of *The Heritage of the Desert* for \$40

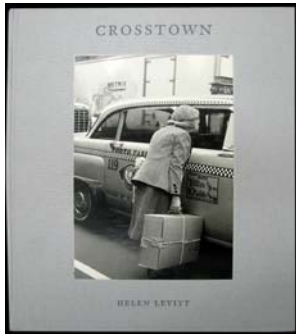


- An autographed 1<sup>st</sup> edition of Jungian, **Robert A. Johnson's**, *Balancing Heaven and Earth: a Memoir of Visions, Dreams, and Realizations*. Looks new and could be wrapped with your gift card for \$40



- *Science in the Twentieth Century*, edited by **John Krige** and **Dominique Pestre**. This 941-page small quarto volume from Harwood Academic Publishers of Amsterdam is an impressive survey of the last century of progress. As new in dust jacket. \$80

# For Book Lovers



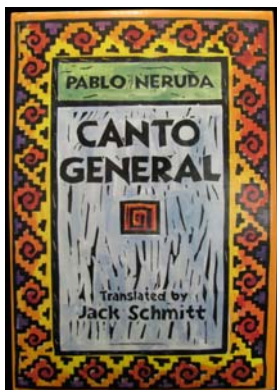
- A very clean copy of the 2001 photography volume, *Crosstown*, containing the odd provocative real-life city shots of **Helen Levitt**. Quite scarce. \$400



- *The Song of Robin Hood* by **Anne Malcolmson**, which puts the tale of Robin Hood into verse. This 1947 book has a really cool cloth cover replicating chain mail in silver and black. **Virginia Lee Burton's** full-page illustrations and small narrative vignettes make this book a pleasure to behold. Sans DJ. \$35



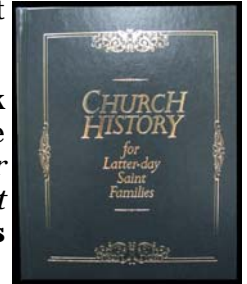
- Back before TV and electronics had overwhelmed our senses, publishers issued special volumes at the end of each year, for the holidays. A beautifully gilt decorated navy blue cloth 1853 copy of *The Mother's and Young Lady's Annual* with stories, poetry and engravings, some hand-colored, would make a charming gift. \$150



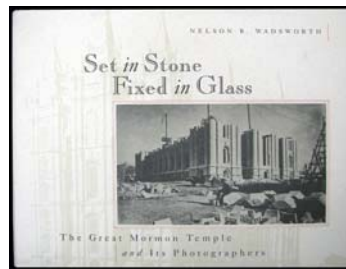
- The poetry lover in your life would enjoy **Pablo Neruda's** *Canto General* in a nice University of California 1st edition from 1991. \$40



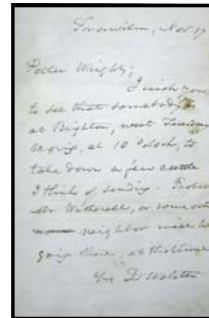
- An attractive red leather edition of *The Gospel Kingdom* by **John Taylor** in perfect condition. Raised bands, gilded edges and blind embossed boards. One of 618 copies by Desert Book in 2002. \$175



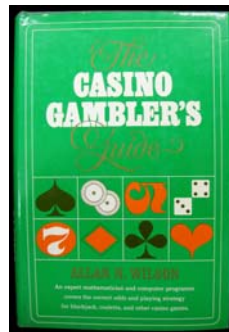
- A handsome dark green leatherette *Church History for Latter-Day Saint Families* by **Thomas R. Valletta**. \$45



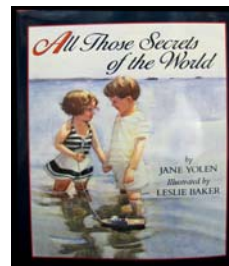
- Consider the wonderful 1992 book by **Nelson B. Wadsworth**, *Set in Stone Fixed in Glass: The Great Mormon Temple and Its Photographers*. A near perfect copy for \$50



- An elegant gift for a statesman or history buff is our gorgeous 18-volume set of the *Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*. Produced in an edition of only 30, this ¾ red leather set has an autographed letter from Webster mounted in the first volume. It looks as though it was produced yesterday, though it was done in 1905. Wow! \$7500



- For those who gamble, *The Casino Gambler's Guide* by **Allan N. Wilson** could assist in minimizing losses, maybe even winning big. This 1965 first edition is in near fine condition in its jacket. \$65

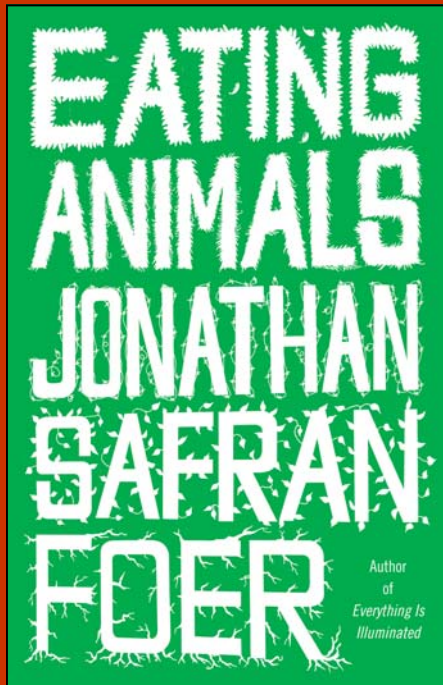


- A very nice signed copy of **Jane Yolen's** *All Those Secrets of the World*. Yolen has inscribed this young readers book as a Christmas gift! \$50



## Sam Weller's Bookstore

254 S. Main St., Downtown SLC  
(At the Gullivan Plaza TRAX Stop)  
(801)328-2586  
(800)333-SAMW  
www.SamWellers.com



### **Eating Animals**

by Jonathan Safran Foer

978-0-316-06990-8

Little, Brown and Company

Hardcover

\$25.99

The impending birth of his first child compelled Jonathan Safran Foer to investigate the truth behind the omnivorous diet. Brilliantly synthesizing philosophy, literature, science, memoir and his own detective work, *Eating Animals* explores the many fictions we use to justify our eating habits—from folklore to pop culture to family traditions and national myth—and how such tales can lull us into a brutal forgetting.