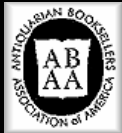




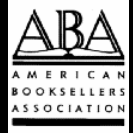
BOOKTALK



The bi-monthly Newsletter of
Sam Weller's Bookstore

New, Used and Rare Books

Salt Lake's Premier Full-Service Bookstore since 1929



April-May 2011



From Tony Weller:

The Search, Stories and Memories

As announced in the previous issue of BookTalk, we suspended used and rare book buying in January to clean out 8000 square feet of storage we had filled with lengthy runs of LDS and geological publications, among other things, since the early 1970s. It was a lot of work but while it happened, Catherine and I kept hard focus on our location search. We're still negotiating a deal commenced in December but since the last two properties we seriously pursued fell through, we aren't permitting ourselves excitement until the deal is certain.

Cleaning our storage areas stirred up many dusty memories. I started assisting my father Sam with book deals when I was about 10 years old. In my teens, I would sometimes groan when I heard my dad say, "We'll take it all." As I grew older, I better understood his methods. Over the last few months, as we moved thousands of things we've amassed over the last half-century, I reminisced about working with my dad, his intense maverick style, hectic teams of book-laden booksellers running in and out of houses, vans and the bookstore; climbing ladders to retrieve uncommon publications for grateful clients. All through my life I have sold odd items out of these storage areas while wondering when and how much of the stuff I would eventually have to move. I got

my answer this year.

We are still moving, pricing, inventorying and making space for publications like Millennial Stars, Juvenile Instructors, Priesthood Manuals, Conference Reports, Young Women's Journals, Perry's Magazines, Improvement Eras, as well as U.S. Geological Survey publications: Monographs, Annual Reports, Folio Maps, Professional Papers, Bulletins. It's been mentally and emotionally weighty work. I have long felt we were heroes of the book, literacy and preservation for saving and making available so many diverse publications; for attempting to serve the interests of all; for giving unusual books long chances to find interested owners. But as we consider the giant task of moving this bookstore, we acknowledge that we live in a new era, and that we can't take all this stuff with us. So Joan, Frank and I routed the inventory found in storage toward the rare book department, the second hand department, the bargain room. With a poignant nod to an era now ending, we sent damaged, unsaleable and forgotten books that have not sold at cheap prices to recyclers.

Vacating the 2nd floor also entailed cleaning out a room where our family stored personal things. The largest portion of that were the belongings of Margaret Smith, who was like a second mother to me. Margaret lived a very interesting life: She taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Idaho and worked in Yellowstone in the 1930s. During WWII she worked in the local distribution office for MGM Studios. She was also a gray lady and continued

Continued on p. 3

Events: April-May

- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club** Tuesday, **April 5th**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. April selections are from *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Three Gables*, *The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire*, and *The Adventure of the Three Garridebs*. Tickets are \$12 and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.

- ◆ **Philip Connors: Reading & Signing** Saturday, **April 9th**, 6:00 PM. In store. Philip Connors is a major new voice in nature writing and will be reading from his debut book, *Fire Season: Field Notes from a Wilderness Lookout* at Sam Weller's Bookstore. Check out Catherine Weller's review on page 4.

- ◆ **Peter Orullian: Reading & Signing** Friday, **April 15th**, 7:00 PM. In store. Peter Orullian will be reading from his debut fantasy, *The Unremembered*, book one of the exciting new series, *The Vault of Heaven*.



- ◆ **Hard Boiled Book Club** Tuesday, **April 26th**, 7:00 PM. Salt Lake City Public Library 2nd Floor Conference Room. Moderated by Zach Sampinos. April's hardboiled selection is *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole. 20% off in the month prior to the meeting!

- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club** Tuesday, **May 3rd**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. April selections are from *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of*

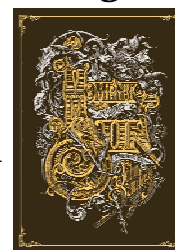
the Veiled Lodger, *The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place*, and *The Adventure of the Retired Colourman*. Tickets are \$12 and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.

- ◆ **Katie Arnold-Ratliff: Reading & Signing** Monday, **May 9th**, 6:00 PM. In store. Katie Arnold-Ratliff will be reading from and signing her haunting debut novel, *Bright Before Us*, new from Tin House Books.



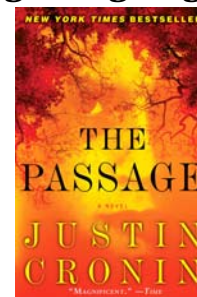
- ◆ **John Scalzi: Reading & Signing** Wednesday, **May 18th**, 6:00 PM. In store. Favorite blogger of Whatever! will be reading from and signing *Fuzzy Nation*.

- ◆ **John Sayles: Reading & Signing** Friday, **May 27th**, 7:00 PM. In store. Screenwriter, writer and director John Sayles will read from and sign his novel, *A Moment in the Sun*, new from McSweeney's Books.



- ◆ **Hard Boiled Book Club** Tuesday, **May 31st**, 7:00 PM. Salt Lake City Public Library 2nd Floor Conference Room. Moderated by Zach Sampinos. May's hardboiled selection is *Beta Male* by Ian Hollingshead. 20% off in the month prior to the meeting!

- ◆ **Justin Cronin: Reading & Signing** Thursday, **June 2nd**, 7:00 PM. Salt Lake City Public Library Nancy Tessman Auditorium. Justin Cronin will be reading from and signing his New York Times bestselling novel, *The Passage*!



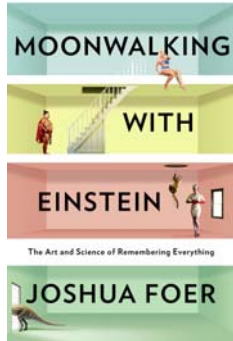
April's Queereads 20% off pick is *Queer* by William S. Burroughs.

May's Queereads 20% off pick is *Clown Girl* by Monica Drake

Best Weller's Selection

April/May

Reviewed by John Clukey



Moonwalking with Einstein:

**The Art and Science
of Remembering
Everything**

by Joshua Foer

978-1-59420-229-2

The Penguin Press

\$26.95

Best Weller's Price \$21.56

Have you ever walked into a room only to realize you can't remember why you entered? Joshua Foer has. Wait—what was this review about? Oh, I remember now!

A science reporter, Foer covered the 2005 U.S. Memory Championship and was astounded by contestants' amazing feats of memory. But every contestant he interviewed insisted that their memories are nothing special. They used time-tested techniques that can turn anyone into a memory champion. In fact, those techniques were invented in the fifth-century B.C. by the Greek poet Simonides of Ceos.

Foer resolved to enter the 2006 Championship and find out everything he could about memory along the way. On his journey he met a friendly old man with severe amnesia, a savant who claims to have memorized 9000 books, and a South Bronx history teacher who helps his students pass the state Regents exam with flying colors.

Foer asserts that memory technique is not beyond even the most forgetful of us. He describes himself as the sort of guy who "shampoos his hair twice in the morning because he forgot that he had just done it." You'll enjoy the journey from memory wimp to memory champ!

From Tony Weller (continued from page 1)

caring for veterans for a decade after the war ended. Margaret managed institutional accounts for our bookstore from the mid-

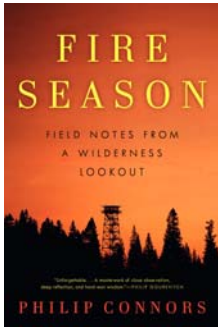
1970s until 1993. Though she died in 1994, I only now have finished sorting through her belongings. I am glad Marriott Library has taken a small number of her photos and papers to preserve for posterity.

Many years ago, Sam Weller agreed to store some papers for Eugene Jelesnik, violinist and promoter, friend of Jimmy Durante, Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra, host of the popular local Talent Showcase television program, and frequent performer at the Cinegrill. When I found Gene's papers, our best cobbled-together memory recalls that he and family members had retrieved materials he wanted and left the rest with us. I am happy that the Utah State Historical Society has added these to their archive dedicated to Jelesnik's life.

We received help and advice from George's Architectural Salvage, who helped us tear down old shelving and assess other non-book things that surfaced. We feel good that George will be able to find new uses for much of the material we have shed.

Our storage area was mostly filled with books, which, of course, sat on shelves. The shelves we used in storage weren't fancy, ranging from well made to simply hammered-together. As we did with our inventory, we sorted shelving into groups reflecting future dispositions. We found many bookcases we don't intend to take to our next location that are too good to junk. That shelving is for sale at very cheap prices. Though many units are plain utilitarian shelves, there are better looking cases as well. The better ones, which are on display on our lower level, are priced variously from \$20 to \$50. The hall adjacent to our bookstore is now lined with the simple shelves priced at \$10 each. If you're decorating, these are probably not the shelves you'd choose but if you just need inexpensive shelving or you're good with paint, this is an inexpensive opportunity.

Staff Reviews: Nonfiction



Fire Season: Field Notes From A Wilderness Lookout by Philip Connors

978-0-06-185936-6

Ecco Press

\$24.99

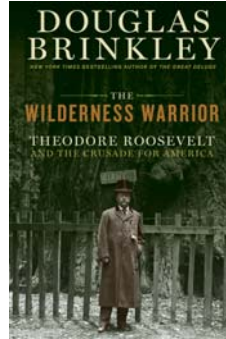
Reviewed by
Catherine Weller

One of the iconic images of the American West is the lonely fire lookout tower standing sentinel above the trees in the forests and wild lands. Another icon is the wildfire raging through those same lands. Philip Connors' book, *Fire Season*, delves into both. As he takes the reader through the months that make up the season for a fire look out in the Black Range of the Gila National Forest, he takes us through the history of fire management in the United States, beginning with the nascent Forest Service in the early 1900's and ending with the controlled burns and the "wildland fire use" fires of today.

But *Fire Season* isn't just a book about what look outs do during long days in those towers; nor is it simply a book about a man finding himself while losing himself in the wilderness, though both are strong and fascinating aspects of the book. *Fire Season* is a book that takes us to places as diverse as the first Wilderness Area in the United States and a city park located on an abandoned section of elevated train track in New York City while exploring ideas as diverse as the nature of aloneness and what wilderness means in a country where we love our outdoors to death. Connors' thoughtful and keenly observant writing style combined with his strong sense of place will lead to inevitable comparisons with some of the great writers of the West. This is the perfect book for those who love the West, love wilderness, and are interested in humanity's most fearsome and fascinating companion: fire.

Wilderness Cycle

Douglas Brinkley's new series on
American Environmental History
Reviewed by Frank Pester



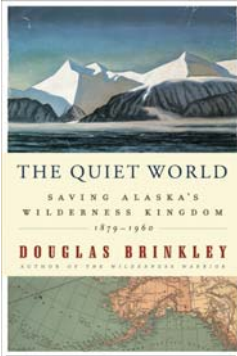
**The Wilderness
Warrior:
Theodore Roosevelt
and the Crusade for
America**
by Douglas
Brinkley
978-0-06-056531-2
Harper Perennial
\$19.99

Douglas Brinkley has embarked on an ambitious and worthwhile task writing a multi-volume history of environmentalism in the United States. It started in 2009 with the publication of his monumental biography of Theodore Roosevelt entitled *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America*. It spans from his family and the books and

people that influenced the young Theodore Roosevelt to his early life in the west and in upstate New York to his sudden rise to the Presidency. Brinkley does an admirable job of getting into the mind of the president as a born naturalist and the ideas —Darwinism— and people —Muir and Pinchot— that influenced him. This was a man who read a book a day, ran the country and was an expert ornithologist. He not only loved Nature but had the foresight to preserve resources, wildlife and habitats for future generations. Topping out at over 900 pages, it is a formidable book; well worth the reading, even if you have read other Roosevelt biographies. It's now available in paperback.

The cycle continues with this year's publication of the second book, *The Quiet World: Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom 1879 – 1960*. He Starts with John Muir and his passion for the glaciers and beauty of Alaska's mountains, moves

Staff Reviews Continued

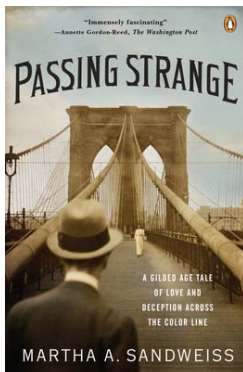


The Quiet World:
Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom, 1879-1960
by Douglas Brinkley
9780-06-200596-0
Harper
\$29.99

back to Roosevelt and the firing of his friend and Forest Service Director, Gifford Pinchot and his 1912 Bull Moose crusade, after the disappointment of his hand selected successor, Taft. Brinkley covers the creation of the Camp Fire Club of America and the Boy Scouts, then moves forward with many of the visionary environmentalists who fought to save the wildlife and beauty of Alaska. There is Charles

Sheldon who studied Alaska's great bears, William T. Hornaday and his book, *Our Vanishing Wild Life*, that paved the way to preservation of endangered large mammals, Robert Marshall, the Muries, Ansel Adams and many others. This is a struggle to preserve what was once called "Seward's Folly," a land rich in resources under the vast and fragile beauty which is Alaska.

The series will continue in the future with a book about Rachel Carson and president John F. Kennedy.



Passing Strange:

A Gilded Age Tale of Love and Deception Across the Color Line
by Martha A. Sandweiss
978-0-14-311686-8
The Penguin Press
\$17.00

Reviewed by Joan Nay

To readers of western history, the name Clarence King shares company with the likes of George Wheeler, F. V. Hayden, Samuel F. Emmons, Howard Stansbury, John Wesley Powell—all surveyor-explorers of the American West in

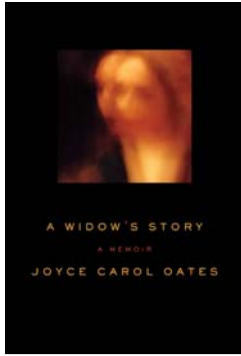
the 19th century. King is best remembered for his work, the stunning 7-volume set *Geological Explorations of the 40th Parallel*. Today that set easily commands five figures in original bindings in good or better condition. But Clarence King's story goes beyond that geologic masterpiece. Sandweiss's new biography of King is a compelling read as King's unusual and stunning life unfolds.

Like many of the 19th century government surveyors, King lobbied for contracts to explore the largely unknown west. His success in obtaining contracts took him far from his aristocratic Rhode Island home. His success in survey work meant King moved easily in the upper echelons of east coast society, and among government and business leaders.

Sometime in 1888 in New York City, King met Ada Copeland, a former slave from Georgia. Though obviously white skinned, King told Ada he was James Todd, a Pullman porter from Baltimore. Apparently Ada never had cause to question King's story. They married, lived in Brooklyn and later Flushing, New York, where they raised 5 children. All this time, King successfully lived a double life with apartments at prominent Manhattan clubs, and frequent extended travels abroad. Before King died in 1901, he confessed his real name and double life to Ada in a letter. Ada, who went on to live many more years, spent much of her later life struggling for legal sanction of her marriage and children, and the settlement of King's estate.

Sandweiss handles the issues of race and color with great aplomb, and keeps the reader engrossed. While the research and writing are superb, they take a back seat as the breath-taking account of King's double life unfolds. Ultimately however, Ada Copeland Todd King is the real hero. A highly recommended, rollicking good read.

More Nonfiction Selections



A Widow's Story:

A Memoir

by Joyce Carol Oates

978-0-06-201553-2

Ecco

\$27.99

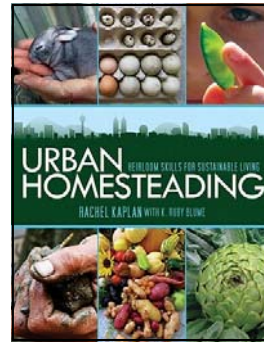
A Widow's Story is the acclaimed author's poignant, intimate memoir—a work unlike

anything she's written before—about the unexpected death of her husband of 46 years and its wrenching, surprising aftermath.

"My husband died, my life collapsed." On a February morning in 2008, Joyce Carol Oates drove her ailing husband, Raymond Smith, to the emergency room of the Princeton Medical Center where he was diagnosed with pneumonia. Both Joyce and Ray expected him to be released in a day or two. But in less than a week, even as Joyce was preparing for his discharge, Ray was dead from a hospital-acquired virulent infection and Joyce was suddenly faced—totally unprepared—with the stunning reality of widowhood.

A Widow's Story illuminates one woman's struggle to comprehend a life absent of the partnership that had sustained and defined her for nearly half a century. As never before, Joyce Carol Oates shares the derangement of denial, the anguish of loss, the disorientation of the survivor amid a nightmare of "death duties," and the solace of friendship. She writes unflinchingly of the experience of grief—the almost unbearable suspense of the hospital vigil, the treacherous "pools" of memory that surround us, the vocabulary of illness, the absurdities of commercialized forms of mourning. Here is a frank acknowledgment of the widow's desperation—only gradually yielding to the recognition that "this is my life now."

Enlivened by the piercing vision, acute perception, and mordant humor that are the hallmarks of the work of Joyce Carol Oates, this moving tale of life and death, love and grief offers a candid, never-before-glimpsed view of this acclaimed author and fiercely private woman.



Urban Homesteading:

Heirloom Skills

for Sustainable Living
by Rachel Kaplan with

K. Ruby Blume

978-1-61608-054-9

Skyhorse Publishing

\$16.95

On sale April 27th

A comprehensive and inspiring guide to self-reliance, sustainability, and green living for city dwellers.

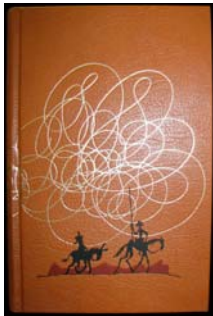
The urban homesteading movement is spreading rapidly across the nation. *Urban Homesteading* is the perfect "back-to-the-land" guide for urbanites who want to reduce their impact on the environment. Full of practical information, as well as inspiring stories from people already living the urban homesteading life, this colorful guide gives a clear understanding of the lifestyle to any reader. It embraces the core concepts of localization (providing our basic needs close to where we live), self-reliance (re-learning that food comes from the ground, not the grocery store), and sustainability. Readers will find concise how-to information they can immediately set into practice, from making solar cookers to growing tomatoes in a pot to raising chickens on a tiny plot to maintaining the mental serenity of country life in the fast-paced city environment. Full of beautiful full-color photographs and illustrations and plenty of step-by-step instructions, this is a must-have handbook for city folk with a passion for the simple life.

Rare Book Acquisitions by Tony Weller

- Ten leather bound **Easton Press** editions of the novels and stories of **William Faulkner**. Titles include *As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August* and *The Sound and the Fury*. Prices range from \$40 to \$175.

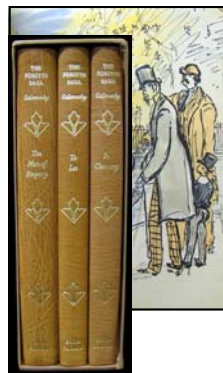


- Most appreciators of well-made books are aware of the editions of classics made by **The Folio Society** of London but fewer are aware of the more elegant leather bound volumes they produce. We have a few of these right now, including:



- The beautiful 2005 limited edition of *The History and Adventures of the Renowned Don Quixote* by **Miguel de Cervantes**, bound in earthy orange leather with lettering and a vignette on the front cover in rust, black and gilt. It's the Smollett translation with illustrations by **Quentin Blake** in duotone. Housed in a brick colored clamshell box. One of 1250 copies. \$1150

- The 1984 three-volume set of *The Forsyte Saga* by **John Galsworthy**, illustrated by **Anthony Gross** in black & white and color. Large octavo format bound in brown leather with simple gilt tooling. In a brown cloth slipcase. \$250



- **[Thomas] Malory's Chronicles of King Arthur**, from the **Winchester manuscript**, found in 1934 and predating the longer-known Caxton version. This three-volume octavo set was published in 1982, bound in rich red leather

with gilt lettering and décor. It is illustrated with linocuts by Edward Bawden, who has signed the first volume. Housed in a matching slipcase. \$500



- While sorting bound *Juvenile Instructors*, I found an unusual and very interesting volume that

contains only **the ads** from the 1901 issues of the magazine. It is a fascinating peek at the commerce of the time. Although there is much about that era I'm happy to have missed, I am saddened to note that nearly all goods and services were provided by local people in contrast to the corporate homogenization we suffer today. A piece of the backstrip of the red leather binding is coming loose. \$40

- A very nice copy of the 1960s Wagner reprint of **Orson Pratt's Seer**. Quarter leather with a gift inscription on the front endsheet. \$120



- In stock is the rare 3-volume set *From the Inferno to Zos*, which collects works by **Austin Osman Spare** into three folio volumes. This 1993 production with his psychological/occult/sexual drawings is



very hard to locate. Spare (1886-1956) was an English artist who was much liked by Aleister Crowley. Sadly, five pages in volume 1 are marked with yellow highlighter. The set is inexpensive at \$675.



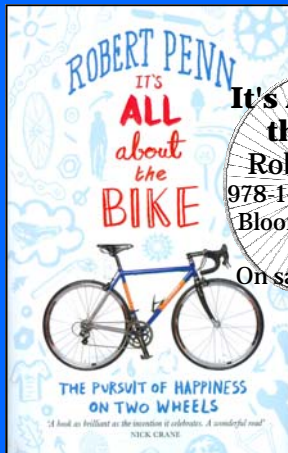
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www.SamWellers.com

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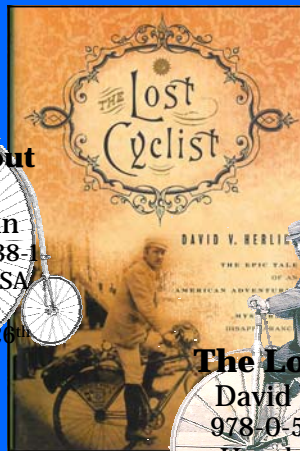
MAY IS BIKE MONTH!

YOUR PURCHASES ARE 10% OFF IN MAY WHEN YOU RIDE TO US!



It's All About the Bike

Robert Penn
978-1-60819-538-1
Bloomsbury USA
\$20.00
On sale April 26



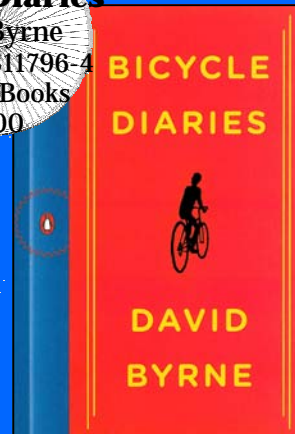
The Lost Cyclist

David V. Herlihy
978-0-547-19557-5
Houghton Mifflin
Harcourt
\$26.00

Bicycle Diaries

David Byrne

978-0-14-311796-4
Penguin Books
\$16.00



Newsletter Editor: John Clukey