The Sparrow by Mary Doria Russell. The author interweaves theology, anthropology, history, and a sense of wonder in this story of what happens when a group of four Jesuit priests, an astronomer, a physician, her engineer husband, and a Jewish computer expert band together to travel to the Alpha Centauri world of Rakhat. It is a story of exploring new worlds and new ways of thinking, of alien cultures clashing and meshing. Extremely difficult to put down. The sequel, Children of God (813.54 Rus), returns the sole survivor of the first mission to Rakhat along with a new crew. It explores what happens in the world of Rakhat after the initial contact, and further explores the limits of the human soul. An interview of Mary Doria Russell by Krista Tippett on “Speaking of Faith” is available at http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/programs/2009/novelist-as-god/kristasjournal.shtml (RealAudio is needed).

Inés of My Soul by Isabel Allende. Historical fiction based on the life of Inés Suarez, a sixteenth-century Spanish conquistadora, it tells a story of conquest, power, and passion during the brutal death of one culture and the rise of a new one. Another Chilean chronicle, Allende’s The House of the Spirits follows several generations of the Trueba family, a rich history with an undercurrent of magical realism. Skip the movie.

Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know About the Emerging Science of Sex Differences by Leonard Sax. This substantive and practical book examines why gender matters in life and in education. Teachers as well as parents will find valuable information on how to discipline boys, approach girls, get boys to love to read, and get girls to excel at math and science. Issues explored include drug use, sex, aggression, and risk-taking in a reader-friendly style. Dr. Sax helps the reader understand how to work with boys and girls through examining their biologically hard-wired differences. This is a must read for anyone in education and for those who are parents!

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows. Don’t start this book unless you have time to finish it; it is too delightful and captivating to put down. Arranged as a series of letters written just after World War II ended, between a writer in London and a man she’s never met, who lives on the Channel island of Guernsey. She soon is drawn into this man’s world and his charming, eccentric friends in the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, a book club born during the German occupation of their island. A great summer read!

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell. From a regular contributor to The New Yorker, Gladwell’s books are well written, easy to read, and “…attempt to make us think about the world a little differently.” The Tipping Point covers the spread of epidemics, especially the social kind. Another Gladwell book, Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking (813.34 Gla), is about rapid cognition/decision-making and the power of first impressions. Read any or all of his books, in any order. • 302 Glad
Steve Wells, Dunham School of Business

Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell. Gladwell explores why some people succeed, living remarkably productive lives, while so many more never reach their potential. All adult educators should read this book! • 302 Gla
Sarah Radtke
School of Health & Physical Education

Duchess of Aquitaine: A Novel of Eleanor by Margaret Ball. Eleanor of Aquitaine is perhaps best remembered as the wife of Henry II of England. Sometimes forgotten is her first marriage to Louis VII of France. Her story is one of determination and courage at a time when women were mainly used as pawns in the monarchy’s plans. She was the exception to the rule. A good read on 12th century history that highlights more than dates and places. • 813.54 Bal
Andi Seifrid, Phillips Library

Drood: A Novel by Dan Simmons. Drood is written from the perspective of Wilke Collins, a character from the Dickens novel The Mystery of Edwin Drood. Falling outside of Simmons’ usual mold due to its archaic writing style and length of 700 pages, it is still well worth reading. • 813.54 Sim
Naomi E. Blackburn, MBA Student

The Necessary Revolution: How Individuals and Organizations Are Working Together to Create a Sustainable World by Peter Senge. The author addresses sustainability in the business world and explains the need for a shift in how we operate, giving concrete examples of companies and NGOs (non-governmental organizations, i.e. not-for-profits) using these principles. A realistic guide to implementing these changes in one’s own organization, it is remarkably well-written, putting complex principles into approachable terms. It summarizes the work of the foremost experts in this area, providing opportunities for further reading. A good read for all, but particularly for business, communication, political science, and natural sciences. • 338.927 Sen
Kate Purl, Communications

Napoleon’s Pyramids: A Novel by William Dietrich. Ethan Gage wins a medallion in a poker game; maybe not a lucky event. Soon after he’s on the run from a (false) murder charge, joining Napoleon’s army as a savant who is touted as being able to use the medallion to solve the mysteries of Egypt. One clue is lost as he inspects a metal calendar kept in the treasure hold of Napoleon’s flagship as Admiral Nelson is in the process of sinking the ship and the rest of Napoleon Bonaparte’s fleet in Alexandria. Gage survives the sinking; does he survive long enough to solve the mysteries? • 813.54 Die
Nancy Mactague, Phillips Library

Honolulu by Alan Brennert. Depicts the life of a picture bride in Honolulu and her freedom from the life of a typical picture bride. The author successfully incorporates historical incidents of the time period. • 813.54 Bre
Naomi E. Blackburn, MBA Student

The Story of General Dann and Mara’s Daughter, Griot and the Snow Dog: A Novel by Doris Lessing. Part science fiction and part historical imagination laced with a heavy dose of wisdom about what really matters in sustaining a culture. Between the lines, Lessing’s message cautions against taking our advanced society for granted. • 823.914 Les
Cathryn Wilkinson, Music
Mary, Called Magdalene by Margaret George. Although fictional, it is an interesting story of what Mary Magdalene may have really been like. Starting with her birth to her death, we see her become not the prostitute she has been labeled but a follower of Christ. She endures the rejection of her family, husband, and only child. Her faith in Jesus of Nazareth becomes the cornerstone of her life. A worthy read of a woman looking for her purpose in life and becoming what she was meant to be. • 813.54 Geo

Andi Seifrid, Phillips Library

The Secret History: A Novel by Donna Tartt. Follows the life of a young California man who joins a small group of students enrolled as Greek majors at an eastern university. Hard to put it down. • 813.54 Tar

Susan deRoche, Professional Studies

The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil by Philip Zimbardo. Understanding why evil exists in the world has been a human question since Biblical times. Through a look at historical events, from the Holocaust through Abu Ghraib, Zimbardo attempts to explain the “situational” impact of human behavior. Zimbardo led the Stanford Prison Experiment, one of the most chilling psychological studies ever completed. • 155.962 Zim

Gerald Butters, Arts & Sciences

Silent in the Grave by Deanna Raybourn. An engrossing murder mystery set in Victorian London, filled with a cast of colorful characters. Heroine Lady Julia Grey goes through a rebirth after the death of her husband. Her transformation is just as interesting as the investigation of who murdered her husband. • 813.6 Ray
Anna Marie Rudek-Spinos, Arts & Sciences

Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris. Written by the brother of Amy Sedaris, a popular comedic actress, David Sedaris shares amusing stories about random moments in his life. This book will put a smile on your face or even make you laugh out loud. • 814.54 Sed

Samantha Topino, Nursing Student

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak. Death himself narrates the story of Liesel Meminger, an orphaned girl living in Nazi Germany. Death first encounters Liesel when he comes for her little brother, and it is at her brother’s funeral that Liesel steals her first book, a gravedigger’s instruction manual. This is the book from which she learns to read, and, over the years, Liesel continues to steal books, even from a pile about to be burned by the Nazis. It is these stolen books that help Liesel to endure the tragedies of WWII Germany and eventually write her own story. • 823.92 Zus
Stephanie Carreno, Financial Aid

Wedlock: The True Story of the Disastrous Marriage and Remarkable Divorce of Mary Eleanor Bowes, Countess of Strathmore by Wendy Moore. Discusses the history and impact of England’s first divorce. • 941.07092 Moo

Naomi E. Blackburn, MBA Student

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho. The Alchemist is a timeless novel about Santiago, a young man who responds to a dream and leaves his work as a sheep herder to search for a hidden treasure. He travels from his homeland in Spain, crosses the sea and desert to reach the Egyptian pyramids where the treasure is hidden. • 822.34 Alc

Samantha Topino, Nursing Student

The Wordy Shipmates by Sarah Vowell. A funny book about New England Puritans. You don’t often hear the words funny and Puritans together in one sentence, do you? But Sarah Vowell has a knack for humorously enlightening readers about history (see her preceding book Assassination Vacation). The Wordy Shipmates follows the travails of the Massachusetts Bay colonists led by John Winthrop who arrived a decade after the Pilgrims. It was recommended to me by Jay Thomas (Education); I recommend it to you. • 974.088285 Vow

Amy Schlumpf Manion, Phillips Library
**Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith** by Barbara Brown Taylor. Once named one of the best preachers in the English-speaking world, Taylor details a lifelong love affair with God that doesn’t end with her decision to leave full-time ministry as an Episcopal priest. Those who are “spiritual but not religious” will relate, but so will those who are “spiritual and religious.” This is the best spiritual memoir I’ve read in years. • 283.092 Tay
**Heidi Schlumpf, Communication**

**Nineteen Minutes** by Jodi Picoult. Seventeen-year-old Peter is bullied constantly at school. His only friend, Josie, succumbed to peer pressure and left him in the dust. Peter turns to violence that affects the entire city, even those who weren’t in the school at the time of the incident. Josie’s mom, a judge who was assigned to Peter’s case, must decide whether or not to step down. Dealing with the tension of the case and the crumbling relationship between herself and Josie, she tries to get some information from Josie about what really happened, but Josie can’t seem to remember. Peter’s parents try to figure out if they were the cause Peter’s violent behavior. The final outcome will surprise you. • 813.54 Pic
**Alexis Bonnichsen, Student**

**A Forest Journey: The Role of Wood in the Development of Civilization** by John Perlin. The story of mankind’s utilization, exploitation, and destruction of the world’s forests that ties history, anthropology, and biology together. From the forests of ancient Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome, to medieval England and the New World, a panoramic framework provides understanding of the role of forests in the development of civilization. • 333.75 Per
**Hans Beck, Biology**

**Public Enemies: America’s Greatest Crime Wave and the Birth of the FBI, 1933-34** by Bryan Burrough. For those who like their gangsters fiction-free, try Burrough’s take on the criminals of the early 1930s and the men who eventually stopped them. Bonnie and Clyde, the Barker Gang, Machine Gun Kelly, Pretty Boy Floyd, and, of course, John Dillinger, became household names as their exploits were reported in an increasingly sensationalistic press. Rising from the dust of the Depression, they wreaked havoc across the Midwest. Enter the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a fledgling arm of the federal government populated by bumbling, incompetent lawyers. The FBI grew into a powerful and efficient crime-fighting organization under the leadership of the ambitious J. Edgar Hoover, helped by his number one media star, Melvin Purvis. Remarkably researched with topnotch storytelling, this is an especially entertaining read because you’ll recognize many locales mentioned: Dillinger’s east side Aurora hideout, Chicago hot spots, and the Lake Geneva haunts of the psychopathic Baby Face Nelson. Slated to be one of Hollywood’s summer blockbusters starring Johnny Depp (as Dillinger) and Christian Bale (as Purvis). Watch closely, you may see some familiar AU faces and the Paramount Theatre. • 364.97309 Bur
**Andrew Manion, Provost**