



Michael Giltz, ContributorBookFilter creator

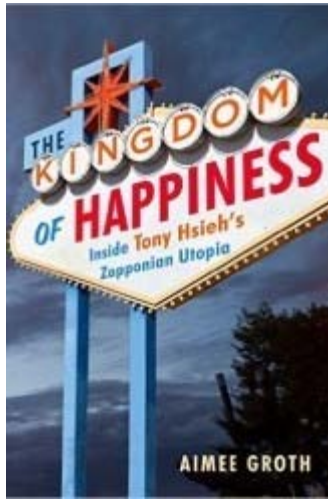
BookFilter: A History Of Direct Action, A Utopia In Vegas, Christina Baker Kline's Latest & More

02/21/2017 11:03 am ET | Updated Feb 26, 2017

Hey Book Lovers! Welcome to our latest Top Picks Of The Week! We're feeling a little under the weather -- sore throat, sniffly nose, etc. So we're taking it easy and eating healthy (fruit, chicken noodle soup, lots of liquids and ok, yes, a little chocolate but that's not *unhealthy*, is it?). The good side about feeling a little rundown? No one complains when you stay in bed and read the day away. So if you're planning on a sick day/day of fun, we've got some suggestions. Whether you're about to go to your favorite bookstore, library or online retailer, head first to BookFilter and you'll discover all the best new releases in every genre.

What we're reading:

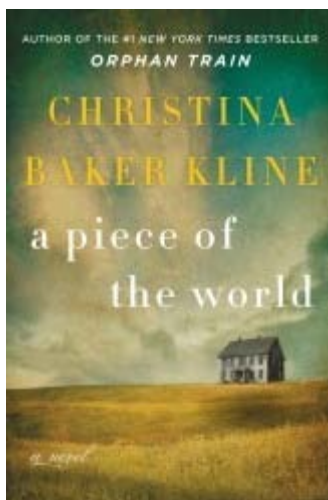
- **THE KINGDOM OF HAPPINESS** by Aimee Groth (**business**)
- **A PIECE OF THE WORLD** by Christina Baker Kline (**fiction**)
- **CONVERGENCE** by Peter Watson (**science**)
- **SHINING CITY** by Tom Rosenstiel (**thriller**)
- **PLANTS YOU CAN'T KILL** by Stacy Tornio (**home & garden**)
- **A CONJURING OF LIGHT** by V.E. Schwab (**sci-fi & fantasy**)
- **DIRECT ACTION** by L.A. Kauffman (**current events, history**)
- **THE WORLD TO COME: STORIES** by Jim Shepard (**fiction**)



THE KINGDOM OF HAPPINESS by Aimee Groth

If you lead a hugely successful business -- one that sold to Amazon for more than \$1 billion -- it's natural to think you're really smart about business. It's also natural to think you're smart about everything else too. Meet Zappos head Tony Hsieh. With others, he turned the online site for buying shoes into a powerhouse, in part by making it a great place to work. Then he decided to create a great place to work *and* live and Hsieh chose to do it in downtown Las Vegas. He also challenged journalist Aimee Groth to join him in this utopian experiment. Depending on your point of view, the result is a book that may detail the hubris of a business man gone mad or a new way of imagining our lives.... [Read More.](#)

Love Business? Check out our picks for the 15 Best Business/Current Event Books Of The Week!



A PIECE OF THE WORLD by Christina Baker Kline

Christina Baker Kline was the author of several popular and well-reviewed novels when she suddenly enjoyed transformative success with her 2013 novel "Orphan's Train." After six years recovering or avoiding or perhaps reveling in that dizzying achievement, she has returned with a new novel. Based on the famous Andrew Wyeth painting "Christina's World," it tells the story of the relationship between the artist and a woman plagued by illness who would prove his greatest inspiration. (Perhaps the novel isn't called "Christina's World" because the publisher feared people would think it was a memoir?) In any case, Michael Chabon and others have already hailed it as a worthy successor to "Orphan's Train".... [Read More.](#)

[Love Fiction? Browse Through Our Picks of the 24 Best New Releases!](#)

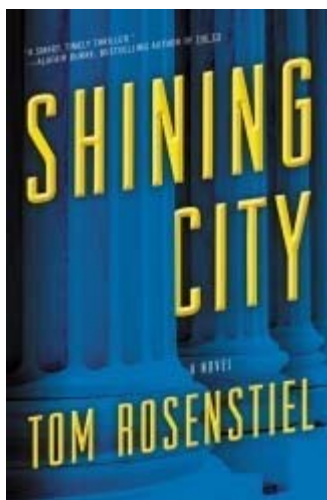
CHRISTMAS IN...FEBRUARY?

Poet Dylan Thomas recorded his tour de force reading of that remarkable short story "A Child's Christmas In Wales" on February 22, 1952 at New York City's Chelsea Hotel. Thank two pioneering women! Barbara Holdridge and Marianne Mantell were convinced there was a market in the US for audio recordings of poetry. They couldn't find any takers for Shakespearean recitals or medieval music so they focused on poets reading from their own work. They dug into their own pockets and launched the famed label Caedmon Audio with Thomas's vibrant tale of his charming childhood memories. With this bold gamble, Holdridge and Mantell planted the seeds for audio recordings of books, short stories, poems and radio plays ever since, a genre that is bigger than ever and one of the few areas of growth in the book industry. However, it wasn't the first time Thomas was recorded. Back in the UK, the BBC lied to the notoriously unreliable man and said he's have to pre-record a radio show that would normally be performed live. And no wonder: In 1952, Thomas showed up at the Chelsea Hotel drunk, refused to do the poems he'd agreed upon and insisted he do "A Child's Christmas In Wales" instead and no he didn't have a copy of it so someone would damn well have to find one! The result? A masterpiece of performance.



CONVERGENCE by Peter Watson Centuries ago, a person could be conversant in all the sciences by having a cabinet of curiosities, building a telescope and dabbling in this or experimenting in that. No more. What did chemistry have to do with astronomy anyway? Science seemed to have splintered. Now it's coming together once again. In this fascinating work, Peter Watson demonstrates how so many disparate areas of enquiry have become interlinked in the past 150 years, with the Theory Of Evolution, the insight of the conservation of energy and more. Each new wave of breakthroughs seems to turn all those disciplines into one web of knowledge. Watson dubs it the Convergence and with so many examples to draw upon, it's hard to argue with as a defining principle. It's a sweeping tale filled with mini-dramas, concise portraits of many scientists and a way of making complex ideas graspable by a layperson like myself.... [Read More.](#)

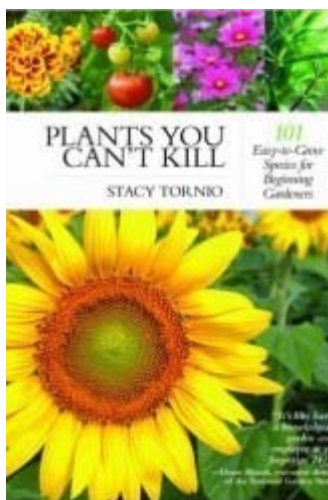
Love Science & Nature? We've Got Eleven More Choices Winnowed Down In A Survival Of The Fittest!



SHINING CITY by Tom Rosenstiel

Background working in and around DC politics so you've got the insider's perspective? Check. Experience reporting for newspapers like the LA Times to guarantee snappy writing? Check. Blurb from famous author touting this book as the real deal? Check. (It's Michael Connelly, among others, if you're wondering.) Finally, a ripped from the headlines plot for timeliness? Check! (It's about a Supreme Court nominee who may be the next target in a series of killings rocking the Capitol.) If like us you love to be in on the ground floor of a promising new series, check it out.... [Read More.](#)

Love Thrillers & Mysteries? Challenge Your Deductive Skills With 18 More New Puzzlers Out This Week!



PLANTS YOU CAN'T KILL by Stacy Tornio

Believe us when we say we could prove the title of this book wrong. What's the opposite of a green thumb? (Brown thumb? Thumb of death?) Whatever it's called, that's what we've got. But hope springs eternal and if we can find plants that we can't kill right away, that alone will be a triumph. So if you're challenged in the garden or just want to learn about some hardier than usual suggestions for planting, this might be the book for you. And hey, there's always next spring to try again.... [Read More.](#)

Love Home & Garden & Crafts? We've Got Five New Books Filled With Ideas & Projects You'll Love!



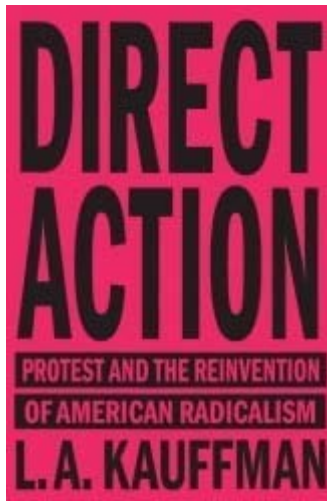
A CONJURING OF LIGHT by V.E. Schwab

Ok, we're a little impatient. Sometimes we like to wait until a series is over before diving in. (Who like to wait a year or more for the next installment in a story? No one!) That's especially the case with a work that has a clear beginning, middle and end in sight. So the finale of V.E. Schwab's fantasy series is high on our list of what to tackle next. It features strong reviews and a growing fan base from start to finish, so that's always a good sign. The tale involves magicians who can travel back and forth between alternate Londons that struggle for dominance. There's Gray London and Red London and White London and even once Black London (though no one likes to talk about Black London). If binge-reading is your thing, let's get together and start a Book Of The Week Club.... [Read More.](#)

Love Fantasy & Sci-Fi? You'll Find Eight New Spellbinders Out This Week!

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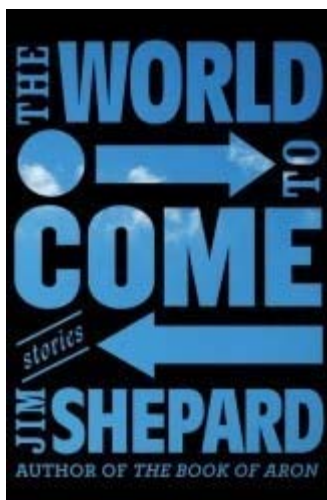
Are you enjoying our witty roundups at BookFilter? Have you discovered a book you might not have heard about anywhere else? Wondering how to say thank you? Easy -- share the fun! If you spot a book on BookFilter that might be perfect for someone you know, forward our email newsletter! If you find a book here and read it and love it, tell everyone on social media -- and tell them where you found it. Share a link so they can sign up for our newsletter as well. They'll thank you and then we'll thank you and you'll be thank-full. And how can we put this? Thanks!



DIRECT ACTION by L.A. Kauffman

"What happened to the American left after the Sixties?" That is the question that has bedeviled activist and journalist L.A. Kaufmann, who has been on the ground at protest movements her entire life, ranging from anti-apartheid to ACT UP/NY to Earth First! and beyond. She's wrestled with that query for years and the result is this scholarly work. Instead of a splintering of the left from its anti-Vietnam focus to a hundred different issues, Kaufmann paints a history of direct action. She sees its roots stretching far back but marks the beginning in the modern era to the MayDay protest in DC on May 3, 1971 right up to #BlackLivesMatter. It's thoughtful and interesting and ultimately hopeful for those who imagined the days of radical activism were stuck in the distant past.... [Read More.](#)

Love Current Events? Take Action & Check Out Our 15 Picks For The Best New Releases Of The Week!



THE WORLD TO COME: STORIES by Jim Shepard

Author Jim Shepard's most recent novel was the gripping heart-breaker "The Book Of Aron," easily one of our favorites of 2015. Now he's returned with a new collection of short stories. They're built around real-life events of overwhelming urgency, from French balloonists pushing the envelope on manned flight to pioneer housewives looking to forge a connection amidst harsh isolation to explorers testing their limits at the Arctic Circle. I've only read the first story, a corker of dreadful tension about the true story of a military disaster in peacetime that was wholly preventable. Delivered in a tone of reserve that's almost maddening as the tension rises, it captures the idiotic bureaucracy that stranded good men on a rickety rig in the Atlantic, the painful frustration of their loved ones back home and the nightmare of a storm of the century that dooms them all. Like all of Jim Shepard's work, it feels wholly original and yet of a piece with everything else he's done before.... [Read More](#).

Love Fiction? We've Chosen 24 New Releases! You'll Find Novels, Short Stories, Poetry, Classics, Literary Memoirs & More!

Thanks for reading our latest BookFilter newsletter! Tell us what you think -- drop a line at newsletter@bookfilter.com. Do you want more picks? Fewer? Did you click on any of the links like "More Fiction!" to find even more great new picks? Will you share it with a friend? Will we keep asking questions? If you love it, share it with your friends -- forward them the newsletter or just send them this link so they can sign up for themselves.

REGISTER TO VOTE!!

It's easy, it's fun, it's empowering.

Here's a nonpartisan site that will allow you to easily access your state's voter registration site.

Are you in New York? You can register online right here.

If you don't register and vote, you don't get to complain.

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category and offers passionate personal recommendations every step of the way. It's like a fall book preview or holiday gift guide — but every week in every category. He's also the cohost of Showbiz Sandbox, a weekly pop culture podcast that reveals the industry take on entertainment news of the day and features top journalists and opinion makers as guests. It's available for free on iTunes. Visit Michael Giltz at his website and his daily blog.

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