



Michael Giltz, Contributor BookFilter creator

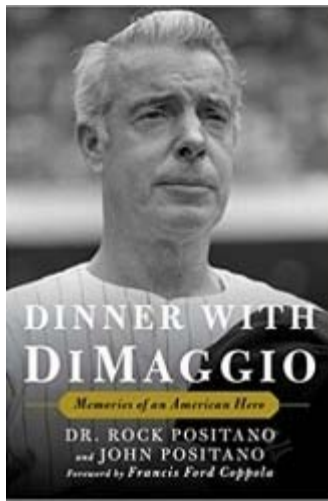
BookFilter: The Real Joe DiMaggio, Are Aliens Really Out There, A Great New Mystery Series & More!

05/11/2017 05:36 pm ET

Hey Book Lovers! Welcome to our latest Top Picks Of The Week! 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. Then let us know what you think about the newsletter and when it arrives in your box!

What we're reading:

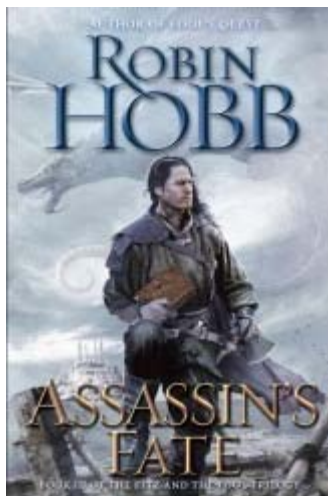
- DINNER WITH DIMAGGIO by Dr. Rock Positano and John Positano (**memoir, sports**)
- ASSASSIN'S FATE by Robin Hobb (**fantasy**)
- RISING STAR: THE MAKING OF BARACK OBAMA by David Garrow (**biography, current events**)
- ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE by Gail Honeyman (**fiction, romance**)
- SOCCERMATICS by David Sumpter (**sports, science**)
- A RISING MAN by Abir Mukherjee (**mystery**)
- ALIENS: ON THE SEARCH FOR E.T. edited by Jim Al-Khalili (**science**)
- HOUSE OF NAMES by Colm Toibin (**fiction**)
- BANGKOK by Leela Punyaratabandhu (**cookbook**)
- FATHER AND SON by E.O. Plauen (**comics**)



DINNER WITH DIMAGGIO by Dr. Rock Positano and John Positano

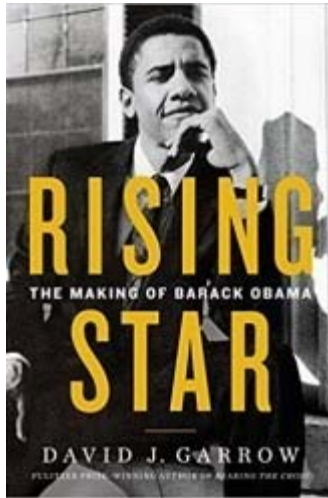
My favorite story about the enigmatic Yankee Clipper involves the Simon & Garfunkel song "Mrs. Robinson." It famously name-checked Joe DiMaggio, who met Paul Simon and awkwardly asked him what the hell it meant and was it criticizing him? Simon assured him it wasn't and DiMaggio was mollified. A little. Always insisting on being introduced last at Yankee Stadium -- and always as "the greatest living Yankee" -- DiMaggio came from a very different era, when celebrities weren't expected to pour out their hearts. The Italian was especially private, which made his marriage to Marilyn Monroe all the more of a train wreck. He kept the world at arm's length. But this memoir of a long-time friend promising to offer a more intimate, albeit warm and hardly dishy look at what the man was really like...at least later in life...when his guard was down...sort of.... [Read More.](#)

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ASSASSIN'S FATE by Robin Hobb

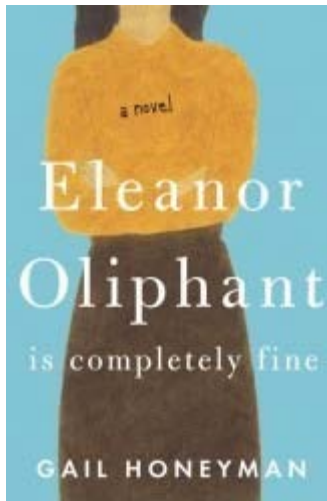
Sitting at the top of my to-do list is diving into this final book in the Fitz and the Fool trilogy by Robin Hobb. It's the work set in a fantasy world Hobb has been acclaimed for developing for decades now. The first book was a great way into the world for a reader like me who hasn't been following it. Volume two sped up the action but continued to develop characters in intriguing fashion. Now comes the finale and I can't wait....
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RISING STAR: THE MAKING OF BARACK OBAMA by David Garrow

Pulitzer Prize winner David J. Garrow is set to out-LBJ good ole Robert Caro with this doorstopper of a novel. (By the way, since I assume most sane people will read this in digital form, what do we call it? A byte-buster?) It's more than 1400 pages long and it only takes Barack Obama up to running for President. (Caro is still ahead of Garrow in page count, but who knows how many pages it'll take the author to cover those tumultuous eight years?) "Rising Star" has made some headlines (Obama had other girlfriends before meeting Michelle!) and some backbiting from other writers. Whether it's a rough draft of history, a useful source for future historians or a boondoggle, only time will tell. But for the moment, anyone with a serious interest in Obama will have to start reading....[Read More.](#)

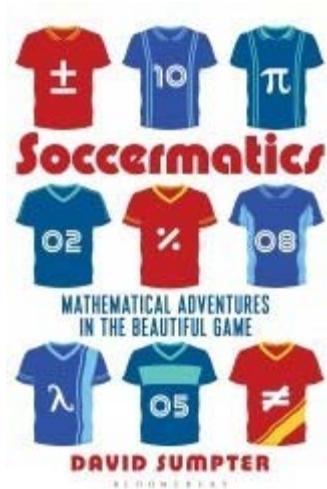
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ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE by Gail Honeyman

If Oprah was still personally trumpeting books, this would be right up her alley. A quirky, lovable heroine with a scarred childhood and a lonely life. A warm and yes kind of smelly IT guy. An adorable senior citizen who brings them all together the day he takes a tumble on the sidewalk. Inspirational, sweet and well-reviewed....
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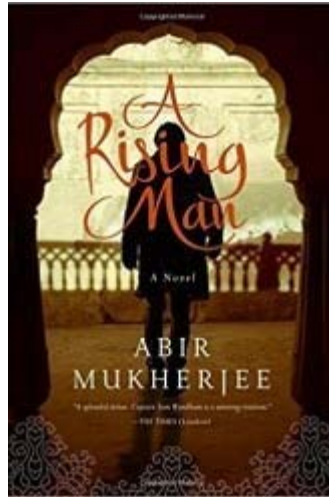


SOCCEMATICS by David Sumpter

The beautiful game meets...math? Apparently, soccer can be appreciated even more when you add in a dash of mathematics. if you love football, this can lead you to a love of math, or at least a great new way of understanding the game on a deeper level. If you love math, you'll find it applied cleverly to the real world

variables of sports. If you really love football and math, well I assume you've already rushed out to buy this....
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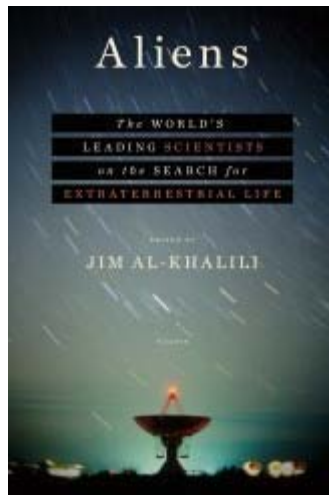
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A RISING MAN by Abir Mukherjee

This checks pretty much every box in our "should we read this mystery" checklist. First, it launches a new series. Second, it's set in the past in another country, in this case Calcutta in 1919. Third, it was a hit overseas (in London). Fourth, the trades (Publishers Weekly, Library Journal, etc.) have praised it.... Read More.

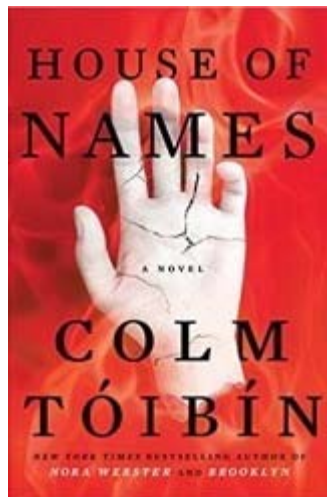
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ALIENS: ON THE SEARCH FOR E.T. edited by Jim Al-Khalili

This wide-ranging collection of essays by top scientists has multiple personalities, but I enjoyed them all. Some pieces are amusingly silly, like a run-down of how aliens are depicted in movies and a drollly straightforward recitation of the basics about some of the most famous claims of close encounters. Others are vaguely speculative about science. And most are rooted in the latest facts and offer intelligent summaries of what we know, why it's silly (or smart) to listen for radio signals, why studying the consciousness of the octopus is good practice for understanding aliens and so on. I'm not sure who the audience might be for this, but as a sci-fi reading buff who enjoys hearing the latest discoveries in science, I was right at home.... Read More.

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HOUSE OF NAMES by Colm Toibin

Author Colm Toibin (the delightful bestseller "Brooklyn") explores Greek tragedy by daring to give voice to Clytemnestra, who put an early kibosh on polyamory when she murdered her husband and his war trophy of a second lover, Cassandra. (In fairness to Agamemnon, Clytemnestra had taken a lover herself. In fairness to *her*, Agamemnon had killed her first husband and then raped Clytemnestra and forced her to marry him. Hey, it's a tragedy!) Toibin promises to bring a modern sensibility to one of drama's oldest stories.... Read More.

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BANGKOK by Leela Punyaratabandhu

The author of "Simple Thai Food" follows up that hit with this ambitious and very readable celebration of Bangkok. It includes more than 100 recipes and Punyaratabandhu's evocative writing about Thailand acclaimed as well above the usual cookbook standard.... [Read More.](#)

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FATHER AND SON by E.O. Plauen

This acclaimed German comic strip flourished for three or so years in the mid-1930s, a simple and sweet (and mostly wordless) celebration of a father and son's many antics. Its author was despised by the Nazis for satirizing Hitler and others. Blackballed, he continued to work under pseudonyms, but in 1940 (after WW II had begun) sealed his fate by diving back into political satire. Plauen's legacy remains this influential and

thoroughly unpolitical work, but the tragic nature of his death by suicide in 1944 (just as he was about to be condemned to death) adds a plaintive note to what should be a strip much better known in the West.... Read More.

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