

Off the Shelf

Recent books with Harvard connections

The Annotated *Little Women*, by Louisa May Alcott, edited by John Matteson, J.D. '86 (W.W. Norton, \$39.95). You've never seen a bigger *Little Women*. Alcott's Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer (*Eden's Outcasts*)—who combines a Columbia Ph.D. with his Harvard J.D., and now teaches English at John Jay College—covers the Alcotts' connection to the Marches, and provides more than you imagined anyone could know in hundreds of notes and illustrations (from Norman Rockwell to Elizabeth Taylor).

American Amnesia, by Jacob S. Hacker '94, G '02, and Paul Pierson (Simon & Schuster, \$28). A reminder, by political scientists at Yale and Berkeley, respectively, that the default posture toward government and the public sector need not be dismissive loathing. The authors suggest that "It takes government—a lot of government—for advanced societies to flourish," through the public-private alchemy of the mixed economy.

Thoreau's Wildflowers, edited by Geoff Wisner '80 (Yale, \$30). In time for New England spring (the official publication is timed for the vernal equinox), a selection of Henry David's botanical observations through the year, sensitively illustrated by Barry Moser's black-and-white illustrations that complement the texts without competing with them.

Smarter Faster Better, by Charles Duhigg, M.B.A. '03 (Random House, \$28). The *New York Times* man sets out to make you more productive. His high-speed scan of the literature and of workplaces takes you through an eight-step process, from motivation and making up teams through innovation and dealing with data. If you are not inspired, embrace your slackerdom.

Models for Movers, by Íde B. O'Carroll, Ed.M. '91 (Attic/Cork University Press, \$21 paper). At a time of migration crises and de-

monizing others, this twenty-fifth-anniversary edition of a book about Irish women moving to America in the twentieth century, based on oral histories at the Schlesinger Library, bears a simple message: they emigrated because they had to.

Shadow Cold War, by Jeremy Friedman, assistant professor of business administration (University of North Carolina, \$32.95). At a time when many Americans would struggle to identify the contending interests in, say, Syria, a young historian looks at the *other* Cold War, the Sino-Soviet competition to champion revolution in the Third World while the main U.S.-U.S.S.R. competition was chilling the developed world. Being reminded that those rivalries echo still, alongside new ones, is a salutary first step to untangling the messy present.

Thomas Hart Benton: Discoveries and Interpretations, by Henry Adams '71 (University of Missouri, \$50). The author, professor of art history at Case Western Reserve, collects his many essays on the artist whose work spanned everything from his iconic regionalist murals to his deep involvement with Jackson Pollock.

Landscapes & Gardens, by George Hargreaves, M.L.A. '79. et al. (Oro Editions, \$19.95 paper). A viewbook of projects by Hargreaves and co-principals in his eponymous landscape-architecture firm (he served as chair of the department at the Graduate School of Design). They are refreshingly unapologetic about their use of flowering perennials; the images of Stanford's science and engineering quad may prove trying for the inhabitants of New England schools during the winter.

The Planet Remade: How Geoengineering Could Change the World, by Oliver Morton (Princeton, \$29.95). The briefings editor at *The Economist* examines the science and politics of intervening in

the atmosphere to offset climate change—and puts into context the work of McKay professor of applied physics and professor of public policy David Keith, who was the subject of this magazine's July-August 2013 cover story, "Buffering the Sun."

A Passion for Society: How We Think About Human Suffering, by Iain Wilkinson and Arthur Kleinman, Rabb professor of anthropology and professor of psychiatry (University of California, \$65; \$29.95 paper). A moral argument and a critique of social science, aiming to move beyond the natural tendency to "see all human problems as those of individuals," and instead to



Thomas Hart Benton's *Roasting Ears*

broaden scholars' and citizens' field of view to encompass suffering on a social scale, and responses to it. Kleinman's essay "On Caregiving" appeared in the July-August 2010 issue.

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, by Matthew Desmond, Loeb associate professor of the social sciences (Crown, \$28). Inequality and poverty extend beyond the obvious economic metrics (low income, absence of wealth) to the brutal struggle for the basics of daily living, like housing. Desmond, a young sociologist whose fieldwork in Milwaukee was the subject of "Disrupted Lives," this magazine's January-February 2014 cover article, here details several of those lives in painful, novelistic detail. But it is all fact—and all twenty-first-century American.