



BEYOND THE BESTSELLERS

APRIL 2013 - NONFICTION

The Antidote: Happiness for People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking

Burkeman, Oliver - 2012 - 236.

158 BURKEMAN

Oliver Burkeman's *The Antidote: Happiness for People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking* is a handbook for what the English Romantic poet John Keats called "negative capability," or living with "uncertainties, mysteries, (and) doubts" without feeling miserable. Burkeman neatly explains why positive psychology often backfires and what philosophy and psychology have to say about the "negative path to happiness." From Stoicism to Eckhart Tolle, Buddhist non-attachment to the Museum of Failure, Burkeman explores a range of ideas and practices. In the tradition of other recent "immersion journalists" (like A. J. Jacobs), Burkeman actually visits his subjects when possible and tries the practices he writes about. For example, he takes a week long silent retreat at the Insight Meditation Society in Massachusetts, recreates psychologist Albert Ellis's "subway-station exercise" on the London Underground, and visits a cemetery in a Mexican village to experience The Day of the Dead. In the final chapter he offers "an interim status report" explaining how these experiences and approaches are working in his own life.

Highly recommended for fans of Barbara Ehrenreich's *Bright-Sided*, which offers a history of positive psychology in America and its impact on our economy and culture, readers who enjoy immersion journalism, and those skeptical of the recent spate of "happiness literature."

Exploring Britain's Castles: Celebrating Britain's Magnificent Architectural Legacy

Wood, Donna, editor - 2011 - 224 p.

728.81 EXPLORIN

This handsome book gives the history of Britain's castles, why and how they were built, and includes gorgeous photographs of each castle. The book covers the castles by region in England, Scotland and Wales, so that if you are going on a trip you can include some in your itinerary. Perhaps you'd like to plan a trip around visiting some castles? A castle is defined in the book as a "properly fortified military residence." These fascinating castles are enchanting to look at and also have intriguing histories.

Servants' Hall: A Real Life Upstairs, Downstairs Romance

Powell, Margaret - 2013 - 184 p.

942.9 POWELL

If you love "Downton Abbey" (or the earlier "Upstairs, Downstairs") and you wonder how accurate these period television shows are, then this is the book for you. Margaret Powell went into service as a kitchenmaid (like Daisy) in 1922 at the age of 15. By 1925 Margaret has gotten her first job as a cook for the Wardham family, and you'll hear all about under-parlourmaid Rose who eloped with the family's only son (sort of a role reversal of Lady Sybil and Mr. Bransom). Did Rose have the fairy tale life the servants all thought marrying up might offer? Margaret's reminiscences make the period after the Great War come

alive. She is no shrinking violet—she’s an independent thinker, but like her fellow female servants, her one goal is to find herself a husband. Her memories are witty, charming and painful, but always entertaining.

This book was originally published in England in 1979 as the sequel to her memoir *Below Stairs* (92 POWELL).

The Trivia Lover’s Guide to the World: Geography for the Lost and Found

Fuller, Gary.- 2012 - 270 p.

[910 FULL](#)

The author has a PhD in geography, was a geography professor for 35 years, and was a winning contestant on *Jeopardy!* He posits that geographic ignorance is widespread, but that geographic intelligence is necessary for us to understand how the world is organized. Here you’ll find 150 geography-based trivia questions with entertaining explanations of the answers. For example, without looking at a map or globe, which city is farthest west? Chicago, Denver, Reno, or Los Angeles? Or, which is the first foreign country you would encounter if you went due south from downtown Detroit? For all trivia fans or those who think they know their world.

Vivian Maier: Out of the Shadows

Cahan, Richard and Michael Williams, editors - 2012 - 287 p.

[779 MAIER](#)

Vivian Maier, celebrated amateur “nanny photographer,” was not discovered until after her lonely death in 2009. Her many, many photographs, which had by necessity been abandoned in storage and which she never shared, luckily found their way to auction and into the hands of discerning collectors. The short but thoughtful biographical sketch in “Out of the Shadow” introduces a “strong, smart, opinionated and painfully private” woman, who worked hard as a nanny and caretaker, but had few friends, and lived for her artistic journeys. Her perfectly framed black and white shots (primarily from her time in the Chicago area in the 50s, 60s, and 70s) document domestic life, suburban streets and happy beach scenes, as well as intimate portraits of a wide variety of city dwellers. She was drawn to and had a knack for getting up close to all sorts of people—from delicate old ladies in fancy hats, to disheveled folks sitting on street corners. Politically charged images from 1968 document her interest in the changing times, while abstract shots of light and shadow reveal her more introspective tendencies. An absorbing, pre-Instagram showcase of a very unique woman’s perspective on her world.

White Jacket Required

Weber, Jenna - 2013 - 208 p.

[641.5973 WEBER](#)

When Jenna Weber graduated from college there were no jobs to be found. Drawing on her desire to write about food and maybe pen some cookbooks, she decides to go to Le Cordon Bleu in Florida for culinary arts training to really understand what she’s writing about. Throughout her training in the baking and pastry program, she attempts to deal with the loss of her brother, finding jobs to pay the tuition and rent, and long distance relationships, but mostly to find her place in the world and be happy. Her story is not unlike many others, but it brings to mind that with a good attitude, good friends and family all things are possible. The author includes a few recipes that are simple and sound very tasty, such as Mexican cheesecake. She also started a blog at www.eatliverun.com. This book is a quick satisfying read that lets you know life is a great adventure.