



## Reading 2020

A collection by title and date of my reading for the year. A few details in each entry, but more than anything, this is a simple chronological record. You will find previous years' lists and my "Watching" list for Films and TV in my [DayBook directory](#).

1. The Body: A Guide for Occupants, Bill Bryson. Audible. Started 123119. Completed 011520.
2. No Safe Place (Kerry Kilcannon 1), Richard North Patterson. Completed 010720. [Highlights](#).
3. Falconer, John Cheever. Started 010820. Completed 010920. Ezekiel Farragut is in Falconer because he killed his brother, "fratricide." Why? Because his brother taunted him one time too many. Marcia: "But when you killed your brother I saw that I had underestimated my problems." [NYT review by Joan Didion](#) (1977). Farragut leaves Falconer, alive, in a body bag.
4. The Shadow in the Garden: A Biographer's Tale, James Atlas. Started 011020; completed 011320.
5. Protect and Defend (Kerry Kilcannon 2), Richard North Patterson. Started 011420. Completed 012620. Abortion, especially late stage. Also the Supreme Court. Bipartisanship. Partnership — and the lack of it — across the aisle.
6. America's Bitter Pill: Money, Politics, Back-Room Deals, and the Fight to Fix Our Broken Healthcare System, by Steven Brill. Audible. Started 012220. Completed 020720.  
A kind of income redistribution: "Money for the poor so they can buy the same product everyone else does at the same prices that makes everyone in the healthcare industry so rich." Ch 14, 12-minute mark). "Low back pain quality initiative." We spend \$85M per year. (Ch 24, 1 hour mark.)
7. Wolf Hall, Hilary Mantel. Started 012820. Completed 020720. "Oscar Wilde contended that if a book wasn't worth reading over and over again, it wasn't worth reading at all." (Michael Dirda, WaPo, upon reading "Unfinished Business: Notes of a Chronic Re-Reader," by Vivian Gornick.) "Now here, before we go to Winchester, we have time to spare, and what I think is, Rafe, we shall visit the Seymours.' He writes it down. Early September. Five days. Wolf Hall."
8. Balance of Power (Kerry Kilcannon 3), Richard North Patterson. Started 020820. Prevailing issue is gun control.
9. Uncanny Valley, Anna Weiner. Audible. Started 020920 and completed 021420.
10. The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse, Charlie Mackesy. Hardcover. Started and completed on 021520.
11. Bring Up the Bodies, Hilary Mantel. Started 021420 and completed 021920.
12. Marketing: A Love Story, Bernadette Jiwa. Kindle. Started 021920. Completed 022020.
13. Dog of the South, Charles Portis. Started 022120 and completed 022620.
14. How Will You Measure Your Life, Clayton Christensen. Audible. Started 021520. Completed 021920.
15. Break Shot: My First 21 Years, James Taylor. Audible Original. Started and finished 022120. Also interviewed by Malcolm Gladwell in Broken Records (Feb 25, 2020).
16. Upheaval: Turning Points for Nations in Crisis, Jared Diamond. Audible. Started 022120. Completed 030820. Recommended to Larry Bouman.
17. In Patagonia, Bruce Chatwin. Paperback. Completed 030320.
18. 97,196 Words: Essays, by Emmanuel Carrere. Hardcover. Started 030420 and completed 030520.
19. The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupery. Hardcover, started and completed 030620.
20. American Dirt, Jeanine Cummins. Kindle. Started 030720. Completed 031020.

21. Reckless Daughter: A Portrait of Joni Mitchell, David Yaffe. Audible. Started 031020. Completed 032020.
22. The Mirror and the Light, Hilary Mantel. Started 031120. Completed 032220. [Notes and highlights from my Kindle](#). Great article about the role of food in the books: [Wolfing it down with Hilary Mantel](#), from FT (and Peter Joos).
23. Coach: Lessons on the Game of Life, Michael Lewis. Audible. Started and finished 032220.
24. The Underground Railroad, Colson Whitehead. 2016. Kindle. Started 032320. Completed 032520. After the long reading of Mirror and the Light, this novel seemed short (300+ pp), and I made short work of it. But its vision and narrative also made it practically irresistible.
25. Leadership in Turbulent Times, Doris Kearns Goodwin. 2018. Audible. Started 032420. Completed 040820. "Counsel woven into the fabric of real life is wisdom." (Ch 5, 58:14) "He would prefer to simply frighten them out of the country, open the gates, let down the bars, scare them off. Emphasizing his intentions with a gesture of uplifted palms, as if shoos sheep from the paddock. 'They should be informed, however, that while no attempt will be made to hinder them if they voluntarily chose to leave, if they stay, they will be punished for their crimes.'" (Epilogue, 55:08)
26. Where the Crawdads Sing, Delia Owens. Kindle. Started 032620. Completed 032820.
27. Going to Ground: Simple Life on a Georgia Pond, Amy Blackmarr. Started 032920. Completed 033020. Paperback. I chose to reread this having seen it jump out at me from the bookshelf; I had it right beside Thoreau ...
28. The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, [Kate DiCamillo](#) (2006). Read on Kindle on 033120. [Ann Patchett on Why We Need Life-Changing Books Right Now](#), NYT 033020.
29. Inferno: The World at War, 1939-1945, Max Hastings. Started 040120. Completed 041020.
30. Time Is Tight: My Life, Note by Note, Booker T. Jones. Audible. Started 040920. "I dropped my clarinet, but picked it up before [the bully] got to it. Those jerks were cowards. They were jealous. They knew I'd never let go of my clarinet. Why me? With two hands, I'd have beat the shit out of them." (Ch 2, 23:56) Completed 042020.
31. Theodore Rex, Edmund Morris. Started rereading 041120. Completed 042120.
32. War and Peace, Leo Tolstoy. Heard on The New Yorker Radio Hour of a [reading group run by Yiyun Li](#). It's "the perfect book to read together for the duration of our necessary isolation." Started 0318. I began on 0422. Switched on Day 2 to the Pevear and Volokhonsky translation to match the preferred edition by Li. Abandoned 042620.
33. Civil War: Vol 1: Fort Sumter to Perryville, Shelby Foote. Audible. (These two books — War and Peace and all 3 vols of Civil War may take the rest of the year!) Started 042420. Completed 060320.
34. The Beach House, Mary Alice Monroe. Kindle. Started 042620. Completed 042920. Far from a deep read, but fun and at times a tear jerker. Cara, a self-made career ad agency account exec, gets laid off and agrees to visit her mother on the Isle of Palms. Beach house seems like it could have been Betty's family house when she was growing up. Cara meets Brett — both 40 or so — and he shows her the Lowcountry lifestyle. He's Doc Ford in a tour boat.
35. Every Drop of Blood: The Momentous Second Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln, Edward Achorn. Kindle. Started 043020. Completed 050420. [Kindle highlights](#).
36. Broken, Don Winslow. Kindle. "No matter you come into this world, you come out unbroken." Started 050520. [Janet Maslin in NYT](#): "The other showstopper in the collection is "The San Diego Zoo," dedicated to "Mr. Elmore Leonard" — although even Leonard himself rarely wrote anything as riotous as the opening sequence here, which proceeds from a priceless first line: 'No one knows how the chimp got the revolver.'" Completed 050720.
37. Second Best Thing (The): Marilyn, JFK and a night to remember, James L

- Swanson. Kindle. Light essay. I thought it was going to be fiction, but it's a loose essay based on photos by WH photographer Cecil Stoughton found in archives. Main title refers to marquee for birthday night. "Best Thing" was JFK. "Second" (with irony) was MM. "Lot 6191 in the 2010 auction of White House photographer Cecil Stoughton's archive —"Marilyn Monroe at JFK Party"—included twenty-three prints."
38. *The Splendid and the Vile (The): A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz*. Erik Larson. Kindle. Started 050820. [Author website](#). Completed 051520. Favorite passage: "You see," he drawled, "we're only interested in seeing that that Goddam sonofabitch Hitler gets licked." Loud laughter amplified by relief convulsed the table. (56%, in notes and highlights.)
  39. *The Burden of Proof*. Scott Turow. Hardcover. Completed 052220.
  40. *Civil War: A Narrative: Vol 2: Fredericksburg to Meridian*, Shelby Foote. Audible. Started 060420. Completed 072420.
  41. Grant, Ron Chernow. Kindle. Started 052520. Completed 061020. Whew. [Notes and highlights](#).
  42. *Hub Fans Bid Kid Adieu: John Updike on Ted Williams*. Hardcover. Read on 061120.
  43. *Gringos*, Charles Portis. Paperback. Finished on 061420.
  44. *Crossing to Safety*, Wallace Stegner. Finished 061920.
  45. *Just Looking*, John Updike. Hardcover. The prolific writer's first collection of essays about art. Started 061920. Complete 062120.
  46. *Wildlife*, Richard Ford. Hardcover. Started 062220. Completed 062420.
  47. *Barkskins*, Annie Proulx. Hardcover. Completed 070620.
  48. *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*. Garry Wills, 1992. Completed 070820. Notes in Google Doc for Civil War, V2.
  49. *Killer Angels: A Novel of the Civil War*, Michael Shaara. Kindle. Completed 071120.
  50. *True Grit*, Charles Portis. Kindle. Completed 071320. "Time just gets away from us. This ends my true account of how I avenged Frank Ross's blood over in the Choctaw Nation when snow was on the ground." (95%) [Kindle notes and highlights](#).
  51. *The Unfinished Odyssey of Robert Kennedy: A Biography*, by David Halberstam. Kindle.
  52. *Beethoven: The Universal Composer*, Edmund Morris. Started 071620. Building playlist in iTunes, also planning to visit Great Courses lecture series. Completed 071820.
  53. *Still Looking*, John Updike. Hardcover. Collection 2 of essays about American art. Most interesting to me are Eakins, Sargent, Winslow Homer. Completed 090720.
  54. *Outerbridge Reach*, Robert Stone. Library of America edition includes *Dog Soldiers* and *A Flag for Sunrise*. Started 072020.
  55. *Sea-Wife*, Amity Gaige. Kindle. Completed 072720.
  56. *Prodigal Summer*, Barbara Kingsolver. Kindle. Completed 080420.
  57. *Lonesome Dove*, Larry McMurtry. Hardcover. Started 081120. Completed 082320.
  58. *Streets of Laredo (Lonesome Dove 2)*, Larry McMurtry. Hardcover. Started 082620. Completed 083120. Just learned that Dead Man's Walk and Comanche Moon precede LD and SoL in chronological terms.
  59. *Hiroshima*, John Hersey. From *The New Yorker*, August 1946. Started 090220. Completed 090320.
  60. *The Abundance: Narrative Essays Old and New*. Annie Dillard. Paperback. Started 090120. Returned to it on 091220.
  61. *Fallout: The Hiroshima Cover-Up and the Reporter Who Revealed It to the World*, Lesley M.M. Blume. Kindle. Started 090420. Completed 090620.
  62. *The Spectator Bird*, Wallace Stegner. Paperback. Started 090820. Completed 091120.
  63. *Redhead by the Side of the Road*, Anne Tyler. Kindle. Started and completed on 091520. [Kindle Notes & Highlights](#).
  64. *Civil War: A Narrative: Vol 3: Red River to Appomattox*, Shelby Foote. Audible. Started 081120. Completed 092320.
  65. *Angle of Repose*, Wallace Stegner. Modern Library edition. Started 091620. Completed 092620.

66. Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln, Doris Kearns Goodwin. Audible, abridged version. Started 092520. Completed 100620.
67. The Good Lord Bird, James McBride. Kindle. Started 100520. Completed 101020.
68. How to Lead: Wisdom from the World's Greatest CEOs, Founders, and Game Changers. David M. Rubinstein. Audible. Started 100820. Completed 101820.
69. Bruno, Chief of Police, Martin Walker. Kindle. Started 101420. Completed 101620.
70. At Home: A Short History of Private Life, Bill Bryson. Kindle. Started 101820. Completed 102520.
71. On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft, Stephen King (2000). Started 102520. Completed Audible version 102920.
72. The Witch Elm, Tana French. Kindle. Started 102820. Completed 110220.  
[Kindle Notes & Highlights](#)
73. A Time for Mercy, John Grisham. Completed 110720. [Kindle Notes & Highlights](#).
74. Dark Vineyard (The): A Novel of the French Countryside (Bruno Chief of Police Book 2), Martin Walker. Started 110920. Completed 111220.  
[Kindle Notes & Highlights](#).
75. A Gentleman in Moscow, Amor Towles. Hardcover. Rereading. Started 111320. Completed 111720. Notes and quotes in Apple Notes.
76. A Promised Land, Barack Obama. Audible. Started 111720. "He walks too slowly, a languorous Hawaiian ambler. She's a get-to-the-point woman, in gait and gab. He's a politician. She has no use for the type. He gets tangled up in fancy talk. She cuts through the fluff. He smoked. She loathes the smell of cigarettes. Can this marriage be saved? We know, of course, that it can. We now have more than 1,100 pages on the extraordinary lives of Michelle and Barack Obama, as told by themselves. The two books — her "Becoming," published in 2018, and his "A Promised Land," out last month — broke sales records, almost single-handedly rescuing the bookstores of North America." (Timothy Egan in [NYT Op-Ed](#)) Completed 121120.
77. Dear Edward, Ann Napolitano. Kindle. Started 112220. Finished 112820.
78. The King at the Edge of the World: A Novel, Arthur Phillips. Started 121120. Completed 121920 (finally). [Kindle Notes & Highlights](#). [NYT review](#): ... "the book is a delightfully rich fruitcake and an old-fashioned pleasure to read; its plot is an intricate set of intersecting mechanisms and locks and keys, which, when they finally all fall into place, provide the reader with the gawping satisfaction of having been well and truly fooled. And then fooled again. That conjurer's panache of a reveal is achieved through cleverly withheld information, alluring blind alleys and pungent red herrings. Sentence by sentence, the book blends the leanness of a taut thriller with the marbled fatness of Elizabethan prose. Combining those two is quite the juggling act." (See illustration below.)
79. What Now? Ann Patchett. Audible. Started 121220. Completed 121520.
80. Looking for America: A Writer's Odyssey, Richard Rhodes. Paperback. Found it as I unpacked yet another box of books. First two essays about Utah and Nevada and the big Mississippi. Started 122020. Not sure I'll finish it soon, but in due time ...
81. Digging to America, Anne Tyler. Hardcover. Started 122320. Completed 122520. Dragged a bit — perhaps it was my reading that was dragging, but, hey — especially early as I attempted to keep apart all of the many families and family members. But once the focus — at least my focus — centered on Maryam, I came to appreciate the differences as well as the similarities of these people to people I know and imagine. The final scene, with Brad's and Bitsy's extended family leaving the arrival party to find Maryam is simple ... and moving. "Friday, August 15, 1997. The night the girls arrived."
82. Bel Canto, Ann Patchett. This time via Audible. Started 122620.
83. Themes and Variations: An Essay, David Sedaris. Kindle. Started and completed 122620.
84. The Overstory, Richard Powers. Kindle. Started 122620. Completed 123120. [Kindle highlights](#). "As [Mimi] shuttles her accumulated professional life to the parking lot, the man posts himself at the firm's

door, like the angel at Eden's east gate who kept the humans, poachers of one forbidden tree, from breaking back into the garden and eating the other fruit that would have solved everything." "In mounting excitement, he sees how he must win the case. Life will cook; the seas will rise. The planet's lungs will be ripped out. And the law will let this happen, because harm was never imminent enough. Imminent, at the speed of people, is too late. The law must judge imminent at the speed of trees."



The death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603. Paul Delaroche, 1828.

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