

Thursday, July 1, 2003



**Ryan Nyburg**  
Budget rack

## Reading speeds summer months

I read a lot. It's an addiction, really. I always have to be in the middle of a book the way some people aren't comfortable unless there's a beer in the fridge. I read the most during the summer, locked away in a dark, cool room, fervently flipping through the pages of my latest tome. Don't get me wrong, it's not that I don't like summer. I think it's fine, except for the heat and the sun and the humidity and the boredom. Otherwise it's just great.

So what does one read during the longest three months of the year? Here are my suggestions:

"My Last Sigh," by Luis Bunuel. This autobiography by the surrealist filmmaker is a must for anyone who wants to know about avant-garde film. Bunuel's life was an interesting one. Born in Spain, Bunuel fell in with the surrealist movement in Paris, created anti-fascist propaganda during the Spanish Civil War and eventually went on to direct a string of film classics from the 1940s through the 1970s. The book has been out of print in this country for years, and your best bet is finding it used.

"Dr. Bloodmoney," by Philip K. Dick. Dick has only recently begun to gain the respect he so well deserves as a writer of science fiction. Regulated for years to pulp writer status, he developed a cult following that has flourished after his death. The Vintage Books USA reprinting of the majority of his novels has only added fuel to the fire. This is one of his best, the story of a small town attempting to survive after nuclear war.

"Snow Crash," by Neal Stephenson. The high-paced story of a near-future America where everything, right down to the highways, is privatized; where information is the most valuable commodity and where the population spends its leisure time in a computer generated facsimile of life. Sound familiar?

"Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung," by Lester Bangs. A collection of writings from one of the first and best rock critics in America. Skip the introduction by Greil Marcus, the book's editor and a complete pompous twit, and get straight to the stuff by Bangs. A must for rock fans.

"How to Talk Dirty and Influence People," by Lenny Bruce. A priceless autobiography of one of America's most influential comedians. Bruce is as hard on himself as he is on everyone else. Essentially, he details how he changed the format of stand-up comedy from a form of cheap entertainment to a serious attack on American values.

"The Psychotronic Video Guide," by Michael J. Weldon. A meticulously researched collection of bizarre and off-beat films from the editor of the Psychotronic Video magazine. Odd for a film guide, it

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## Booking time for blockbusters

Book publishers are set to unleash a flurry of new literature to readers, including a guide to Portland by the author of 'Fight Club'

By **Ryan Nyburg**  
Freelance Reporter

The book publishing industry has a work schedule similar to the film industry's. Late winter and early spring are slow months, while the holiday season is huge and full of quality releases. Summer is for blockbusters. Here is a list of a few major releases slated for the summer months.

July 8 brings the latest from "Fight Club" author Chuck Palahniuk, "Fugitives and Refugees: A Walk in Portland, Oregon." Part autobiography and mostly travel guide, it is the first nonfiction work from the popular cult author and details the strange places and characters of his hometown.

Also appearing is "Underneath It All," the autobiography of Traci Lords. The notorious former porn star, who started acting in porn features while underage, talks about her abusive childhood in an Ohio mill town, her acting career in and out of pornography and her musical success as a singer and techno artist.

Another biographical account due out is "The Kennedy Curse" by Edward Klein. The book examines 150 years of tragedy in the family, tracing them from their Irish roots, through the lives of Joseph Kennedy and former President John F. Kennedy, and right up to the recent death of John F. Kennedy, Jr.

July 14 has plenty for mystery and thriller fans. Lawrence Sanders brings the latest in his Palm Beach, Fla.-based Archy McNally series of mysteries, "McNally's Dare." Robin Cook's latest medical thriller, "Seizure," is also scheduled for release.

In what promises to be one of the most controversial books of the summer, Jon Krakauer's "Under the Banner of Heaven" is due July 15. It details a double murder committed by two Mormon fundamentalists, laid against the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and its splinter groups.

Janet Evanovich's latest, "To the Nines," will be available, as will the latest exposé from former CIA operative Robert Baer, "Sleeping with the Devil: How Washington Sold Our Soul for Saudi Crude." Detailing how political and financial relationships with Saudi Arabia have left America vulnerable to terrorist attacks, the book promises to add some more gas to the current raging fire of political debate.

July 21 marks the release of "Naked Empire," the eighth installment in Terry Goodkind's popular "Sword of Truth" series. Dan Simmons brings "Ilium," a science fiction reworking of Homer's classic epic "Iliad," on July 22, and Harry Turtledove brings his latest alternate history novel, "American Empire: The Victorious Opposition," on the 29th.

Garrison Keillor fans can also rejoice as the Prairie Home Companion host's latest novel, "Love Me," is due out August 18. The novel deals with a New York City journalistic hotshot who loses his job and his wife, and is forced to move back to his home state of Minnesota, where he takes a job as an advice columnist.

August also brings a whole slew of other major releases, including



Eric Layton Emerald

the latest from mystery writer Faye Kellerman entitled "Street Dreams," DJ Wendy Williams' autobiography "Wendy's Got the Heat," Tom Clancy's new thriller "The Teeth of the Tiger" and the latest bit of macabre from crime writer Tess Gerritsen, called "Sinner."

A few big name releases are also expected in the fall, including the latest from John Grisham, Patricia Cornwell and Stephen King. All in all, plenty of fodder for literature fans, and enough reading to get anyone through the dog days of summer.

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## New albums serve insipid musical mush



Courtesy

Steely Dan's new album, "Everything Must Go" is their latest release since 2002.

By **Ryan Nyburg**  
Freelance Reporter

It is truly a terrible curse when one cares so deeply about musical quality. It means that whenever I find an album that offends my sensibilities, I am driven into a funk that often takes days to recover from. I sit around in my room, drinking diet soda and lighting matches for fun. It is truly a sad sight. Often the only thing that can exorcise my demons is a good solid rant about what I love and hate about recent albums. Here are a few rant-worthy titles.

### CD REVIEWS

Steely Dan — that irrepressible duo who swept the Grammys a few years back with 2000's "Two Against Nature," their first album in twenty years — is back again. This time, they offer "Everything Must Go," an insipid collection of tunes inspired by the vilest of musical bastardizations: soft jazz. Those simplistic rhythms, those bland solos, those weak, uninspiring arrangements. It makes my skin crawl just to think about it.

Soft jazz has infected this album like a bad case of the clap. Any semblance of life, soul or lyrical credibility is lost among the shallowness of the arrangements. The only song with any semblance of life to it is "Godwhacker," a track that almost becomes funky, with interesting lyrics, but only succeeds in pointing out the flaws in the rest of the album.

Next up on this hellish trail of mediocrity is "True Reflections," the first solo album by Dave Matthews Band violinist Boyd Tinsley. Solo albums by members of popular bands are rarely worth-

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