Notable Books
1986
This list has been compiled by the Notable Books Council of the American Library Association Reference and Adult Services Division. Books were chosen for significant contributions to expansion of knowledge or for the pleasure they provide to readers.

Atwood, Margaret. The Handmaid’s Tale. Houghton. In the futuristic world of Gilead, a feisty heroine chronicles her rebellion against a repressive, antiwoman society.

Baker, Will. Mountain Blood. Univ. of Georgia. Humorous and insightful recollections, yarns, and historical meditations about life in the mountainous mining and lumbering regions of the West in the early twentieth century.


Carter, Angela. Saints and Strangers. Viking. Eight fast-paced fictional explorations with historical and mythic overtones never fail to engage the imagination.


Critchfield, Richard. Those Days: An American Album. Doubleday/Anchor. This memoir of the author's midwestern family between 1880 and 1940 paints a resonant portrait of ordinary people who lived during great technological and cultural change.

Denby, Edwin. The Complete Poems. Random. Restrained and quietly elegant poems by a noted dance critic express his appreciation of the examined life and of the city solitudes that permit it.

Duras, Marguerite. *The War: A Memoir*. Tr. from the French by Barbara Bray. Pantheon. An account of Duras' agonizing wait for her prisoner-of-war husband is the major segment of these narratives set in Nazi-occupied France during World War II.

Erdrich, Louise. *The Beet Queen*. Holt. A bleak North Dakota landscape is the setting for a provocative novel about gutsy, underclass characters confronting poverty and abandonment.


Henley, Patricia. *Friday Night at Silver Star: Stories*. Graywolf. Survivors of the 1960s try to maintain a hippie life-style today.

Hersh, Seymour M. "The Target Is Destroyed": What Really Happened to Flight 007 and What America Knew About It. Random. A painstaking examination of Russia's destruction of Flight 007 on September 1, 1983, with important lessons to be learned by both the U.S. and the Soviet Union.


Ishiguro, Kazuo. *An Artist of the Floating World*. Putnam. The betrayal of the promise of youth is recalled as a dishonored artist struggles with changing values in war-wrecked Japan.

Jhabvala, Ruth Prawer. *Out of India*. Morrow. Stories selected by the author from previous collections present the panorama of Indian life from a Western perspective.


McFadden, Cyra. *Rain or Shine: A Family Memoir*. Knopf. A daughter's bittersweet account of growing up on the rodeo circuit and of her love-hate relationship with a father she could not please.


Parfit, Michael. *South Light: A Journey to the Last Continent*. Macmillan. The loneliness and the cold, the magnificence and the beauty—all are vividly captured in this record of a scientific expedition to Antarctica.

Pratt, Charles W. *In the Orchard*. Tidal Press. In this beautifully produced book, the poet creates a highly symbolized world where, Thoreau-like, he celebrates nature and a return to life's essential facts.

Price, Reynolds. *Kate Vaiden*. Atheneum. For almost 40 years, Kate ignored the son she abandoned as a baby; now, in an attempt to win his love, she tells her story.

Rosengarten, Theodore. Tomato: Portrait of a Cotton Planter; With the Journal of Thomas B. Chaplin (1822-1890). Morrow. The life of a typical plantation owner before and after the Civil War, described in his own journal and further reconstructed by an eminent historian.

Roszak, Theodore. The Cult of Information: The Folklore of Computers and the True Art of Thinking. Pantheon. Roszak warns of dangers that arise in education, politics, and the military when one loses the distinction between machines processing information and minds thinking.


Sperber, A. M. Murrow: His Life and Times. Freundlich; dist. by Kampmann. The story of a shy, melancholic man who became the voice of history for many Americans.

Stone, Robert. Children of Light. Knopf. Moviemaking is the frame for an intense novel of a love affair mired in drugs, alcohol, and madness.


Taylor, Peter. A Summons to Memphis. Knopf. Unresolved conflicts in a genteel southern family are unleashed when the elderly patriarch plans to marry a younger woman. A novel.