



NOTABLE



BOOKS 1990

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This list has been compiled for the general reader and for librarians who work with adults. The titles were selected by the Notable Books Council of the American Library Association's Reference and Adult Services Division for their significant contribution to the expansion of knowledge or for the pleasure they can provide to adult readers. Titles were selected from books published from November 1988 through October 1989 that demonstrate wide general appeal and literary merit.

## FICTION

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👉 Atwood, Margaret. **Cat's Eye**. Doubleday. An artist's retrospective of childhood love and cruelty is exhibited and unified in the landscape of her past and present.

👉 Bausch, Richard. **Mr. Field's Daughter**. Simon & Schuster/Linden Press. A single father, desperate when his only daughter elopes with a drug addict, learns that possessiveness carried too far can have tragic consequences.

👉 Boyle, T. Coraghessan. **If the River Was Whiskey**. Viking. These lively, insightful stories portray thoroughly contemporary characters with pathos, irony and humor.

👉 Burgess, Anthony. **Any Old Iron**. Random. A colorful multigenerational tapestry of rich myth and history, with flashes of comedy, extends the Excalibur legend into the twentieth century.

👉 Busch, Frederick. **Absent Friends**. Knopf. Bleak vistas and a sense of estrangement are common to these 14 stories, so finely wrought that they resonate in memory.

👉 Casey, John. **Spartina**. Knopf. A rare combination of lyrical prose and stark realism reveals the complex relationships governing a New England fisherman's life.

☞ Desai, Anita. **Baumgartner's Bombay**. Knopf. Fleeing first from Nazi Germany and again from Calcutta during partition, Baumgartner establishes a contented, though eccentric existence in Bombay—until fate intervenes again.

☞ Gordon, Mary. **The Other Side**. Viking. As the stories of the gathering generations rise in her house, the dying matriarch, stone strong and inarticulate, waits for her husband's promise to be kept.

☞ Hamill, Pete. **Loving Women: A Novel of the Fifties**. Random. A fast-paced novel of a young man's coming of age in the 1950s. Love and loss, racism and brotherhood are among its central themes.

☞ Irving, John. **A Prayer for Owen Meany**. Morrow. Diminutive Owen Meany, believing himself to be God's instrument, unlocks life's mysteries for his closest friend in this imaginative mix of humor and tragedy.

☞ Ishiguro, Kazuo. **The Remains of the Day**. Knopf. In a journey of brilliant insight into British class and culture, Stevens, an English butler, faces the truth about himself and comes to terms with his own fallacies.

☞ Kingsolver, Barbara. **Homeland**. Harper. Family ties and the optimism that enables people to endure life's struggles are explored in this memorable collection of stories.

☞ Ozick, Cynthia. **The Shawl**. Knopf. Two stories—artfully and powerfully related—tell the horror of an infant's murder in a Nazi concentration camp and its haunting effects years later in Miami Beach.

☞ Schaeffer, Susan Fromberg. **Buffalo Afternoon**. Knopf. The psychic aftermath of the Vietnam War, graphically depicted in a narrative blend of realism and surrealism.

☞ Tan, Amy. **The Joy Luck Club**. Putnam. Common threads of chance and fate are woven intricately through stories of four Chinese mothers and their American daughters, revealing their struggle's for assimilation into American culture.

☞ Wilson, Robley. **Terrible Kisses**. Simon & Schuster. These charming stories remind us that love can be expressed in many unexpected ways. Sometimes it is unwelcome, often memorable and, occasionally, even indelible.

☞ Yehoshua, A. B. **Five Seasons**. Tr. by Hillel Halkin. Doubleday. A complex story set in Israel and Germany concerns a man's struggle to reclaim his ordinary life after the death of his wife.

## POETRY

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☞ Carver, Raymond. **A New Path to the Waterfall**. Atlantic Monthly Press. In a moving collection of poems, one of America's foremost short story writers struggles to accept his imminent death.

☞ **An Ear to the Ground: An Anthology of Contemporary American Poetry**. Ed. by Marie Harris and Kathleen Aguero. Univ. of Georgia. This anthology brings together the work of poets who represent the diverse backgrounds and voices of a multicultural nation.

☞ **Poets for Life: Seventy-six Poets Respond to AIDS**. Ed. by Michael Klein. Crown. Communicating a surprising range of emotions, these carefully selected poems celebrate the human spirit as they confront the reality of AIDS.

## NONFICTION

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☞ Bentsen, Cheryl. **Maasai Days**. Summit. An American woman who lived in Kenya for six years and became acquainted with members of the tribe pens an unsentimental portrait of the Maasai.

☞ Branch, Taylor. **Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954—63**. Simon & Schuster. An exhaustively researched, eloquently written account captures the social upheaval and powerful personalities of the early civil rights movement.

🏠 Conway, Jill Ker. **The Road from Coorain.** Knopf. Historian Conway's childhood and youth are inextricably bound to the Australian landscape as she faces personal tragedies and cultural barriers that lead her to leave her homeland.

🏠 Dorris, Michael. **The Broken Cord.** Harper. The author's adopted son, irreversibly damaged by his birth-mother's drinking, is the focus of this profoundly moving personal investigation of fetal alcohol syndrome.

🏠 Duberman, Martin Bauml. **Paul Robeson.** Knopf. Long ignored because of his Communist politics and the pervasive racism of American society, Robeson emerges from this detailed and well-rounded biography as a larger-than-life twentieth-century Renaissance man.

🏠 Friedman, Thomas L. **From Beirut to Jerusalem.** Farrar. A journalist draws on his personal experiences and historical insights in this intelligent analysis of the Middle East.

🏠 Hirsch, Kathleen. **Songs from the Alley.** Ticknor & Fields. Compassionate portraits of two young homeless women alternate with Boston social history, demonstrating that homelessness is much more than having no place to live.

🏠 Kidder, Tracy. **Among Schoolchildren.** Houghton. Observing a year in the life of a fifth-grade teacher, Kidder provides a picture of American education in microcosm.

🏠 Klüver, Billy, and Martin, Julie. **Ki Ki's Paris: Artists and Lovers, 1900—1930.** Abrams. Elegant black-and-white photographs capture the reality of the fabled world of Ki Ki's Montparnasse.

🏠 Takaki, Ronald. **Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans.** Little, Brown. The hopes, hardships and frustrations of Asian immigrants to the U.S. during the past century and a half are chronicled in this vivid account.

#### Notable Books 1990

Item no. A103

100 pamphlets, \$20

Also available as camera-ready sheets, \$10 per set.

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1990 International  
Literacy Year

Many of the books on this list are available in braille, talking books, or large type. Consult your Regional Library for the Blind.