Welcome to an exciting new season from Reaktion Books.

In The Good Brexiter’s Guide to English Lit, John Sutherland gives a sharply incisive, funny and wise analysis of the deep cultural roots of Britain’s imminent departure from the European Union. Oh, to be in Britain now that Brexit time is here . . . ?

Boria Sax’s Dinomania: Why We Love, Fear and Are Utterly Enchanted By Dinosaurs vividly brings to life the history of our fascination – scientific and imaginary – with the Earth’s long-departed saurian overlords.

Drawing is part of growing, and is central to how children come to know the world, themselves and others. Marilyn JS Goodman’s Children Draw: A Guide to Why, When and How Children Make Art is a lively and accessible exploration of the role of art in childhood.

Afghanistan has been a land of strategic and cultural significance for millennia, and yet our understanding of it is too often focused on the latest news story, shorn of this context. Jonathan L. Lee’s Afghanistan: A History from 1260 to the Present Day is a magisterial, and yet readable, history of this critical region.

The story of light tells the story of the universe. Five Photons: Remarkable Journeys of Light Across Space and Time, by James Geach, is a masterclass in clear and elegant science writing, illuminating the story of stars and black holes, of space and time, and ultimately, of everything.

Economics allows us to think about the material relations that exist between all people, and as a discipline it has engaged many of the world’s greatest thinkers. Yet it has an unenviable reputation for tedium and opacity. In Great Economic Thinkers: An Introduction, Jonathan Conlin and a range of outstanding contributors have recovered the so-called ‘dismal science’ for every reader who wishes to know what the best minds have thought about money and work, getting and spending.

Derek Sayer’s Prague: Crossroads of Europe, in our superb Cityscopes series, is a fascinating portrait of the history, culture and vibrant present of one of the world’s greatest cities.

And these are just a few highlights of an outstanding programme from Reaktion Books. We hope you explore further.

David Hayden, Managing Director
Michael R. Leaman, Publisher

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What is Nigel Farage’s favourite novel? Why do Brexiteers love Sherlock Holmes? Is Philip Larkin the best Brexit poet ever? Through the politically relevant side-road of English literature, John Sutherland quarries the great literary minds of English history to assemble the ultimate reading list for a nation about to depart from Europe.

What happened to Britain on 24 June 2016 shook the country to its roots. The Brexit vote changed Britain. But despite its referendum victory, Brexit is peculiarly hollow. It is an idea without political apparatus, without sustaining history, without field-tested ideology. Without thinkers. It is like Frankenstein waiting for the lightning bolt. In this irreverent and entertaining new guide, Sutherland suggests some stuffing for the ideological cavity at the heart of the Brexit cause. He looks for nationalist meaning in the works of William Shakespeare, Jane Austen and Thomas Hardy, in modern classics like The Queen and I and London Fields, and in the national anthem, school songs and great poetry of the country. Sutherland explores what Britain meant, means and will mean, and subtly shows how great literary works have a shaping influence on the world. Witty and insightful, and with a preface by John Crace, this book belongs on the shelves of all good Brexiteers and diehard Remoaners alike.

JOHN SUTHERLAND is Emeritus Lord Northcliffe Professor of Modern English Literature at University College London and the author of some thirty books, including A Little History of Literature (2013), How to Be Well Read (2014) and Orwell’s Nose: A Pathological Biography (Reaktion, 2017). He is a reviewer and essayist for The Times.
Dinomania
*Why We Love, Fear and Are Utterly Enchanted by Dinosaurs*  
BORIA SAX

At once reptilian and avian, dinosaurs enable us to imagine a world far beyond the usual boundaries of time, culture and physiology. We have envisioned them in diverse and contradictory ways, reflecting, in part, our changing conceptions of ourselves. Their discovery, around the start of the nineteenth century, was intimately tied to our awareness of geological time; their vast size and power called to mind railroads, battleships and factories, making dinosaurs, paradoxically, emblems of modernity. At the same time, their world was nature at its most pristine, and they simultaneously symbolized childhood innocence and wonder. Dinosaurs provided a sort of code that has enabled people to speak indirectly about the possibility of our own extinction. Not unlike humans today, dinosaurs seem both powerful – almost godly – and helpless in the face of cosmic forces even mightier than themselves.

*Dinomania* tells the story of our romance with the titanic saurians, from early stories that were inspired by their bones to the dinosaur theme parks of today. It concludes that, in our imaginations, dinosaurs are, and always have been, essentially dragons, and their contemporary representation is once again blending with the myth and legend from which it emerged at the start of the modern period.
Without any prompting, children intuitively develop a powerful impulse to draw. Beginning with their first scribbles, drawing is an activity that encompasses children’s expanding knowledge, changing perceptions and new experiences of themselves and their environment. It is a visual language that evolves as the child grows, and one in which feelings, ideas and emotions can all appear. As children draw they develop motor skills, a positive sense of identity, and faculties of problem-solving and critical thinking. And their drawings offer parents a window to see how children perceive themselves and the world around them.

Children Draw is a concise, richly illustrated book, aimed at parents and carers, that explores why children draw and the meaning and value of drawing for youngsters – from toddlers aged two to pre-adolescents aged twelve. Informed by psychology and practical teaching with children, it guides readers through the progressive stages and characteristics of drawing development as children grow and change mentally, physically, socially, emotionally and creatively. It offers parents tips about encouraging children to express their ideas visually, age-appropriate art materials, workspaces and different media, as well as suggestions for making an art museum visit more meaningful – not to mention more fun – for both parents and kids. Packed with many delightful examples of children’s art, Children Draw is an essential book for parents interested in their child’s art activities.

Marilyn JS Goodman is an art and museum education specialist who served as the first Director of Education for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the first Director of the Children’s Museum of Cincinnati, and Director of K-12 Art for the Worcester Public Schools. She has co-authored two books for children including Learning Through Art (1999) and Arteducarte: arte ecuatoriano para niños (2006).
The Anatomy of Riches
Sir Robert Paston’s Treasure
SPIKE BUCKLOW

‘Ranging in scope from family history and deep philosophical inquiry to personal conflict, exotic travel and the fate of Royalist gentry in the violence of civil war, this book offers an indispensable guide to the cosmos and the culture of early modern England and the wider universes which it desired, studied, collected and brought to life.’

– Simon Schaffer, Professor of History of Science, University of Cambridge

The Anatomy of Riches tells the story of one family’s long rise from rags to riches, and their rapid reversal of fortune. It focuses on the life of Sir Robert Paston, who experienced the family’s fall from grace at a time of momentous change, the beginning of the modern world.

The Paston wealth had brought luxuries from across the globe to an idyllic retreat in rural Norfolk. The family commissioned Europe’s finest craftsmen to enhance their rarities, and their lavish hospitality was famed throughout England. But the Civil War and plague tore the country apart, and peace-loving Sir Robert was assailed by what he called a ‘whirlpool of misadventures’, although he kept his faith and worked tirelessly to protect his wife and children. Encouraged by his friend Dr Thomas Browne, he even found time to pursue his interests, employing both an alchemist in search of the Philosopher’s Stone and an artist to capture his favourite treasures in an enigmatic still-life, The Paston Treasure.
Food on the Move
Dining on the Legendary Railway Journeys of the World
EDITED BY SHARON HUDGINS
With contributions by Adam Balic, Arjan den Boer, Judy Corser, Sharon Hudgins, Aparajita Mukhopadhyay, Diana Noyce, Merry White and Karl Zimmermann, and a foreword by James D. Porterfield

All aboard for a delicious ride on nine legendary railway journeys! Meals associated with train travel have been an important aspect of railway history for more than a century – from dinners in dining cars to lunches at station buffets to foods purchased from platform vendors. For many travellers, the experience of eating on a railway journey is often a highlight of the trip, a major part of the ‘romance of the rails’.

*Food on the Move* focuses on the culinary history of these famous journeys on five continents, from the earliest days of rail travel to the present. The engaging story and vivid illustrations invite readers to discover an array of railway feasts: haute cuisine in the elegant dining carriages of the *Orient Express*, American steak-and-eggs on the Santa Fe *Super Chief*, and home-cooked regional foods along the Trans-Siberian tracks. Readers will be tempted to eat their way across Canada’s vast interior and Australia’s dusty Outback; grab an infamous ‘British railway sandwich’ to munch on the *Flying Scotsman*; snack on spicy samosas on the Darjeeling Himalayan ‘Toy Train’; dine at high speed on Japan’s ‘Bullet Train’; and sip South African wines in a *Blue Train* luxury lounge car featuring windows of glass fused with gold dust.

Written by eight different authors who have travelled on those legendary lines, the book include recipes, from the dining cars and station eateries, taken from historical menus and contributed by contemporary chefs. *Food on the Move* is a veritable feast!

Jonathan L. Lee is a social and cultural historian and a leading authority on the history of Afghanistan. His previous books include The ‘Ancient Supremacy’: Bukhara, Afghanistan and the Battle for Balkh, 1732–1901 (1996) and Amazing Wonders of Afghanistan (2014).
Ukraine
*A Nation on the Borderland*
KARL SCHLÖGEL

The Euromaidan uprising in Kiev, followed by radical regime change, the annexation of the Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine, have shattered European security. The Western response to Russian aggression has been uncertain and hesitant in handling the unfamiliar yet large nation of Ukraine, a country with a complicated past, and one whose history is little known in the rest of Europe.

In *Ukraine: A Nation on the Borderland*, Karl Schlögel presents a picture of a country which lies on Europe’s borderland and in Russia’s shadow. In recent years, Ukraine has been faced, along with Western Europe, with the political conundrum resulting from Russia’s actions and the ongoing Information War. As well as exploring this present-day confrontation, Schlögel provides detailed, fascinating historical portraits of a panoply of Ukraine’s major cities: Lviv, Odessa, Czernowitz, Kiev, Kharkov, Donetsk, Dnepropetrovsk and Yalta – cities whose often troubled and war-torn histories are as varied as the nationalities and cultures which have made them what they are today, survivors with very particular identities and aspirations. Schlögel feels the pulse of life in these cities, analysing their more recent pasts and their challenges for the future.

KARL SCHLÖGEL is a historian and essayist and Professor Emeritus of the European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder), Germany. His many books include histories of Moscow, Berlin and St Petersburg, and he won the European Charles Veillon essay prize in 1990 and the prize of the Historisches Kolleg Munich in 2016.
Five Photons
Remarkable Journeys of Light
Across Space and Time
JAMES GEACH

‘With his elegant, supremely clear writing, Geach has succeeded at creating both a state-of-the-art cosmic overview and a rather wonderful meditation on the nature of our reality.’
– Caleb Scharf, author of The Zoomable Universe

‘Geach’s beautiful cosmic biography takes readers on a sweeping tour of all that was, is, and ever will be. Five Photons is as elegant as it is enlightening.’
– Lee Billings, author of Five Billion Years of Solitude

The story of the Universe is written in the light that travels through it – light that we can capture. Nearly everything we know about how the Universe works on its grandest scale comes from the analysis of the light – photons – that may have travelled nearly fourteen billion years from the Big Bang itself to reach us.

Have you ever wondered what is the most distant source of light we can see, or how a star shines? Did you know that black holes can blaze like cosmic beacons across intergalactic space, and that ancient radio waves might herald the ignition of the very first stars? Have you ever thought about what light really is?

Five Photons explains all with the tales of five fascinating astrophysical processes through the journeys of light across space and time. They are tales of quantum physics and general relativity, stars and black holes, dark matter and dark energy. Let yourself be swept away on a journey of discovery towards a deeper understanding of the Universe.

JAMES GEACH is a Royal Society University Research Fellow and Reader in Astrophysics at the Centre for Astrophysics Research at the University of Hertfordshire, specializing in observational cosmology and the formation and evolution of galaxies. He is the author of Galaxy: Mapping the Cosmos (Reaktion, 2014).
The last of the five naked-eye planets discovered in ancient times, Mercury has long been an elusive, enigmatic world. As seen from the Earth, it never emerges far from the Sun, and astronomers in the telescopic era found it challenging to work out such basic data as its rotation period, the inclination of its axis, and whether or not it possessed an atmosphere.

In this up-to-date and beautifully illustrated volume, William Sheehan brings our understanding of the planet into clear focus. He deftly traces the history from the earliest observations right up to the most recent explorations using radar and spacecraft. The planet has been surveyed in great detail, revealing vast volcanic plains, water-ice deposits in craters near the poles, and a remarkable core having the highest iron content of any body of the Solar System. A fascinating world in its own right, Mercury also holds important clues for scientists attempting to better understand the origin and evolution of the Earth.
Peter Gabriel is one of contemporary music’s great experimenters. From his work in the progressive group Genesis, through his pioneering solo albums, to his enthusiastic embrace of world music and new technologies, Gabriel has remained steadfastly consistent in his redefinition of music’s boundaries and influence: geographical, virtual and thematic.

At the heart of Paul Hegarty’s astute analysis is the idea of locatedness: what it means to be in a specific place at a given time, and to reflect on that time and the changes which inevitably occur. Gabriel’s work, Hegarty argues, can be understood as a series of reflections on the ‘where’ of being – and this includes politics, psychology, philosophy, psychogeography and inward reflection.

*Peter Gabriel* offers a nuanced and trenchant insight into this enigmatic musician and his works, an artist whose constant travelling – through identities, influences and media – defines him as one of modern culture’s truly global citizens.

**PAUL HEGARTY** is Professor of French and Francophone Studies at the University of Nottingham. He performs in the noise band Safe, and his previous publications include *Noise/Music: A History* (2007) and *Rumour and Radiation: Sound in Video Art* (2015).
For fifteen centuries, legends of King Arthur have inspired generations. In the misty past of a Britain under siege, half-remembered events became shrouded in ancient myth and folklore. The resulting tales were told and retold, until over time Arthur, Camelot, Avalon, the Round Table, the Holy Grail, Excalibur, Lancelot and Guinevere all became instantly recognizable icons. Along the way, Arthur’s life and times were recast in the mould of the hero’s journey: his miraculous conception at Tintagel through the magical intercession of his shaman guide, Merlin; the childhood deed of pulling the Sword from the Stone through which Arthur was anointed King; the Quest for the Holy Grail, the most sacred object in Christendom; the betrayal of Arthur by his wife and champion; and the apocalyptic battle between Good and Evil, ending with Arthur’s journey to the Otherworld.

Arthur: God and Hero in Avalon views Arthur in terms of comparative mythology, and argues that the Once and Future King remains relevant because his story speaks so eloquently about universal human needs and anxieties. The book discusses the tales of King Arthur, from the very earliest versions to the most recent film and television adaptations, and offers readers an insight into why Arthur remains so popular.

‘Dessert is a perfectly delightful romp through the history of puddings and cakes and custards, everything from syllabubs to strawberry ice cream. Bring a big spoon.’ – Ken Albala, Professor of History and Chair of Food Studies, University of the Pacific

Whether it’s a homemade strawberry shortcake in summer or a chef’s complex medley of sweets, dessert is the perfect ending to a meal. Most of us, even those who seldom indulge, have a favourite dessert. After all, sweet is one of the basic tastes and we seem to be hard-wired to like it. Yet while everyone has a taste for sweetness, not every culture enjoys a dessert course at the end of the meal. And desserts as we know them – the light sponge cakes, the ice creams, the steamed plum puddings – are neither as old nor as ubiquitous as many of us believe.

Jeri Quinzio traces the history of desserts and the way they, and the course itself, have evolved over time. The story begins before dessert was a separate course – when sweets and savouries were mixed on the table – and concludes in the present, when homely desserts are enjoying a revival, and as molecular gastronomists are creating desserts an alchemist would envy. Dessert is a truly indulgent read, for all those with a curious mind and a sweet tooth.

JERI QUINZIO is the author of Pudding (Reaktion, 2012) and Of Sugar and Snow: A History of Ice Cream Making (2009), which won the 2010 IACP Culinary History award. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Coffee is a global beverage: it is grown commercially on four continents and consumed enthusiastically in all seven. There is even an Italian espresso machine on the International Space Station. Coffee’s journey has taken it from the forests of Ethiopia to the fincas of Latin America, from Ottoman coffee houses to ‘Third Wave’ cafés, and from the simple coffee pot to the capsule machine. In *Coffee: A Global History*, Jonathan Morris explains how the world acquired a taste for coffee, yet why coffee tastes so different throughout the world.

Morris discusses who drank coffee, as well as why and where, how it was prepared and what it tasted like. He identifies the regions and ways in which coffee was grown, who worked the farms and who owned them, and how the beans were processed, traded and transported. He also analyses the businesses behind coffee – the brokers, roasters and machine manufacturers – and dissects the geopolitics linking producers to consumers. Written in an engaging style and featuring wonderful recipes, stories and facts, this book will fascinate foodies, food historians and the many people who regard the humble coffee bean as a staple of modern life.

JONATHAN MORRIS is Research Professor at the University of Hertfordshire. He is a historian of consumption and consumer societies, co-editor of *Coffee: The Comprehensive Guide to the Bean, the Beverage and the Industry* (2013), and a judge for the Speciality Coffee Association’s Best Product in Show awards.
Great Economic Thinkers
An Introduction – from Adam Smith to Amartya Sen
EDITED BY JONATHAN CONLIN
Introduction by D'Maris Coffman, Professor in Economics and Finance of the Built Environment, University College London.
With contributions by Michelle Baddeley, Victoria Bateman, Emmanuelle Bénicourt, Katia Caldari, Jonathan Conlin, Mário Graça Moura, Karen Horn, Helen Paul, Joseph Persky, Paul Prew and Scott Scheall

Great Economic Thinkers presents an accessible introduction to the lives and works of the most influential economists of modern times. Free from confusing jargon and equations, the book describes and discusses key economic concepts – from the role played by the division of labour to wages and rents, cognitive biases, saving, entrepreneurship, game theory, liberalism, laissez-faire and welfare economics – showing how they have come to shape how we see ourselves and our society today.


If you’ve ever wanted to find out more about the theorists who gave us the ‘invisible hand’, Keynesianism, ‘creative destruction’, behavioural economics and other concepts, this book is the perfect place to start.

JONATHAN CONLIN is Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Southampton. His books include Tales of Two Cities: Paris, London and the Making of the Modern City (2013), Evolution and the Victorians (2014) and Adam Smith (Reaktion, 2016).
Since 2010 Greece’s social and economic conditions have been irreversibly transformed, a result of austerity measures imposed by the European troika and successive Greek governments. These stringent restructuring programmes were intended to make it possible for Greece to avoid default and improve its debt position, and to reconfigure its economy to escape forever the burden of past structural deficiencies. Eight years later, none of these targets have been met. If the programmes were doomed to fail from the start, as many claim, what were the real objectives of such devastating austerity?

Pavlos Roufos answers this key question by setting the story in its historical context. Analysing the creation of the Eurozone, its ‘glorious’ years, and today’s threat to its existence, he locates the development and management of the Greek crisis in terms of both the particularities of Greek society and economy and the overall architecture of the monetary union. He also illuminates the social movements that emerged in Greece in response to the crisis, focusing on what both the crisis managers and many of their critics presented as a given: that a happy future is a thing of the past.
‘Vast Expanses is thought-provoking, intelligent, entertaining, and yet still compact. It could be read in a graduate seminar or on a beach holiday. Professor Rozwadowski has written a great book on an important subject, and it is anything but a dry history!’ – Kurk Dorsey, Associate Professor of History at the University of New Hampshire and author of Whales and Nations: Environmental Diplomacy on the High Seas

Vast Expanses is a cultural, environmental and geopolitical history that examines the relationship between humans and oceans, reaching back across geological and evolutionary time and exploring different cultures around the globe.

Our ancient connections with the sea have developed and multiplied with industrialization and globalization, a trajectory that runs counter to Western depictions of the ocean as a place remote from and immune to human influence. This book argues that knowledge about the ocean – discovered through work and play, scientific investigation, and also through the ambitions people have harboured for the sea – has played a central role in defining our relationship with this vast, trackless and opaque place. It has helped people exploit marine resources, control ocean space, extend imperial or national power, and attempt to refashion the sea into a more tractable arena for human activity.

An understanding of the ocean has animated and strengthened connections between people and their seas. To comprehend this history we must address questions of how, by whom and why knowledge of the ocean was created and used, in both the past and the present; through this, we can forge a healthier relationship with the sea for the future.

In *North Pole*, Michael Bravo explains how visions of the North Pole have been supremely important to the world’s cultures and political leaders, from Alexander the Great to neo-Hindu nationalists. Tracing poles and polarity back to sacred ancient civilizations, this book explores how the idea of a North Pole has given rise to utopias, satires, fantasies, paradoxes and nationalist ideologies, from the Renaissance to the Third Reich.

The Victorian conceit of the polar regions as a vast empty wilderness, and the preserve of white males battling against the elements, was far from the only polar vision. Michael Bravo shows an alternative set of pictures, of a habitable Arctic criss-crossed by densely connected networks of Inuit routes, rich and dense in cultural meanings. In Western and Eastern cultures, theories of a sacred North Pole abound. Visions of paradise and a lost Eden have mingled freely with the imperial visions of Europe and the United States. Forebodings of failure and catastrophe have been companions to tales of conquest and redemption. Michael Bravo shows that visions of a sacred or living pole can help humanity understand its twenty-first-century predicament, but only by understanding the pole’s deeper history.
Thirty years ago Prague was a closed book to most Westerners. Today it is Europe’s fifth most-visited city, surpassed only by London, Paris, Istanbul and Rome. With a stunning natural location on the Vltava river and a spectacular potpourri of Romanesque rotundas, Gothic towers, Renaissance palaces, Baroque churches, Art Nouveau cafés, Cubist apartment buildings, Modernist villas and postmodern architectural showpieces, Prague may well be Europe’s most beautiful capital city.

Behind the beauty lies a turbulent and often violent history. Located at the uneasy centre of the continent, Prague has been a crossroads of cultures for more than a millennium. From the religious wars of the Middle Ages and the nationalist struggles of the nineteenth century to the modern conflicts of Fascism, Communism and democracy, Prague’s past is a saga of the forces that have shaped Europe. Derek Sayer provides an expert and very readable guide to the complexities of this colourful history, while reflecting upon sides of the present-day city tourists seldom see – from a model interwar Modernist villa colony to Europe’s biggest Vietnamese market – and presenting listings of what to see, hear and do and where to eat, drink and shop.
Chicago
From Vision to Metropolis
WHET MOSER

Chicago has been called the ‘most American of cities’ and the ‘great American city’. Not the biggest or the most powerful; neither the richest, prettiest nor best – but the most American. How did it become that? And what does it even mean?

At its heart, Chicago is America’s great hub. It began as a trading post, which grew into a market for the east to purchase the goods of the west, sprouting the still-largest rail interchange in America. As people began to trade virtual representations of those goods – futures – the city became a centre of finance and law. And as people studied the city’s growth and its economy, it became a nucleus of intellect, with the University of Chicago’s pioneering sociologists shaping how cities at home and abroad would come to understand themselves.

Whet Moser’s book reveals how the city grew into a metropolis over its social, urban, cultural and sometimes scandalous history. He also traces the development of and current changes in its neighbourhoods: Chicago is famous for them, and infamous for the segregation between them. Moser takes readers from the very beginnings of the city as an idea, a vision in the minds of its first explorers, to the global city it has become – and offers a local’s perspective on the best and most interesting aspects of Chicago to visitors today.

WHET MOSER is an associate editor at Chicago magazine and a former associate editor at the Chicago Reader.
Company Curiosities
Nature, Culture and the East India Company, 1600–1874
ARTHUR MACGREGOR

‘Company Curiosities significantly enhances our understanding of colonial collecting in India and the presentation of these collections in Britain.’
– Felix Driver, Professor of Human Geography at University of London

For nearly three hundred years, the East India Company dominated British trade and relations with Asia. It made handsome profits for shareholders but also provided collectors in Europe with natural specimens and man-made rarities that were prized for their scientific, aesthetic or cultural value. An array of administrators, soldiers and surveyors spent much of their lives attempting to inventory and to comprehend India’s vast country, its teeming populations and its myriad rituals and wildlife: nearly forty species of mammals and over 120 species of birds were discovered in the Katmandu valley alone; astonishing wall paintings from the fifth century were unearthed in caves at Ajanta; and spectacular fossil fauna arrived from the Siwalik Hills.

Company Curiosities: Nature, Culture and the East India Company, 1600–1874 offers the first ever overview of the remarkable role of the East India Company and its servants in collecting and showcasing a treasure-house of natural specimens and man-made objects – craft materials, paintings and sculptures, weapons, costumes, jewels and ornaments – that established the look and the feel of India for those who had never ventured abroad. Arthur MacGregor tells the stories behind the remarkable discoveries and collections, and those responsible for them, and their impact on natural science, commerce and industry, and personal taste.

ARTHUR MACGREGOR is a former archaeologist and was Senior Curator at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. He is a founding editor of the Journal of the History of Collections and the author of Bone, Antler, Ivory and Horn (1985), Curiosity and Enlightenment: Collectors and Collections from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century (2007) and Animal Encounters (Reaktion, 2012).

October History
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In *Sex in the World of Myth*, David Leeming argues that sex is as important in myths as it is in our lives. Myths are our cultural dreams, and sex is pervasive in all mythologies because it has obsessed and confused us like nothing else – what’s more, sexual myths, like all myths, can serve many purposes. The reproductive acts of the ancient Greek goddess Gaia perhaps reflect a pre-Olympian matriarchal social system. The tales of the unbridled sexual deeds of the Polynesian Maui, and many others, speak to a natural fascination with the power and mystery of sexual drives.

Leeming demonstrates how even when such myths are meant to elicit laughter or titillation, the participation in them of sacred heroes and deities means they are in some sense religious – partial answers to the nature of existence in general, and human sexuality in particular.
'Dainotto’s *The Mafia: A Cultural History* offers something unique in the somewhat overcrowded category of books about the Mafia and its pop culture representations: a Sicilian intellectual’s historically informed yet personal perspective on the enduring appeal of organized crime stories.'

– *PopMatters*

What makes Tony Soprano so likeable? Why would we rather leave the cannoli and take the gun? Do we truly want *Scarface*’s Tony Montana to succeed? Is Michael Corleone a misunderstood hero or a despicable villain?

In *The Mafia*, now available in paperback, Roberto M. Dainotto traces the complex and fascinating development of the Mafia: its rural beginnings in western Sicily; its growth into what has been aptly described as a global multinational of crime; and its parallel evolution in music, print and on the big screen. The book probes the tension between the real Mafia – its brutal and often violent reality – and how we imagine it to be: a mythical assembly of codes of honour, family values and chivalric masochism. Rather than dismissing such stereotypes as untrue, Dainotto sets out to understand what needs and desires, material and psychic longings, are satisfied by our Mafia fantasies.

Exploring the rich array of films, books, television, music and even video games portraying and inspired by the Mafia, this book offers not only a social, economic and political history but a new way of understanding our enduring fascination with what lurs behind the sinister *omertà* of the family business.

Born in Sicily, ROBERTO M. DAINOTTO is Professor of Romance Studies and of Literature at Duke University, North Carolina, and author of *Europe (in Theory)* (2007).
What really happened on the first Thanksgiving? How did a British drinking song become the national anthem of the United States? And what makes Superman so darned American? Every tradition, even the noblest and most cherished, has a history, and nowhere more so than in the USA, which was born with a relative indifference, if not hostility, to the past. Most Americans would be surprised to learn just how recent – and controversial – the origins of their traditions are, as well as how those origins are often related to the trauma of the Civil War and to fears for American identity stemming from immigration and socialism.

Inventing American Tradition explores a wide range of beloved traditions, including political symbols, holidays, lifestyles and fictional characters, and looks at the people who conceived of and adapted them into the forms familiar to Americans – and the innumerable people around the world influenced by American culture – today.

What emerges is the realization that all traditions are invented by particular people at particular times for particular reasons, and that the process of ‘traditioning’ is forever ongoing.

JACK DAVID ELLER is a former Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Community College of Denver. He is the author of numerous books, including Cultural Anthropology: Global Forces, Local Lives (2016), Culture and Diversity in the United States (2015) and Cruel Creeds, Virtuous Violence: Religious Violence across Culture and History (2010).
Sublime madness and ennui: melancholy is a condition of imbalance, chaotic and desolate, and a keystone of modern Western thought. In *Angels in Mourning*, Roger Bartra explores how three lucid European thinkers – Immanuel Kant, Max Weber and Walter Benjamin – addressed the irrational and the dolorous, drawing attention to some apparently marginal aspects of their work in order to illuminate the way in which they gazed into the darkness.

It is not obvious why melancholy should find such a prominent space in our society. Why did this threatening expression of langour and disorder gain such a foothold at the heart of a European culture guided by the light of rationalism? In this surprising and insightful study, Bartra considers this question through investigations of Kant, Weber and Benjamin, and suggests that one explanation may lie in the blossoming of Romanticism, that deep-seated protest against the Enlightenment and the capitalist order.

ROGER BARTRA is Emeritus Researcher at Mexico’s National Autonomous University and Honorary Research Fellow at Birkbeck College, University of London. His publications include *Anthropology of the Brain* (2014) and *The Imaginary Networks of Political Power* (2013).
Darkness divides opinion. Some are frightened of the dark, or at least prefer to avoid it, and there are many who dislike what it appears to stand for. Others are drawn to its strange domain, delighting in its uncertainties, lured by all the associations of folklore and legend, by the call of the mysterious and of the unknown. The history of attitudes to what we cannot quite make out, in all its physical and metaphorical manifestations, challenges the notion that the world is possible to fully comprehend.

Nina Edwards explores darkness as both physical feature and cultural image, through themes of sight, blindness, consciousness, dreams, fear of the dark, night blindness, and the in-between states of dusk or fog, twilight and dawn, the point or period of obscuration and clarification. Taking readers through different historical periods, she interrogates humanity’s various attempts to harness and suppress the dark, from our early use of fire to the later discovery of electricity. She reveals how the idea of darkness pervades art, literature, religion and every aspect of our everyday language.

*Darkness: A Cultural History* shows us how darkness has fed our imagination. Whether a shifting concept or real physical presence, it always conveys complex meaning.
The rose is the world’s favourite flower – and always has been. It is the greatest floral symbol of love and romance the world over, and touches people’s hearts at many points in their lives as the flower most often chosen to celebrate significant milestones – weddings, anniversaries, births and deaths. This book traces the journey of the rose across the centuries, from battles to bouquets, charting its botanical, religious, literary and artistic history.

From Cleopatra’s rose-petal-filled bed to Nijinsky’s Spectre de la rose, from the highly prized attar of rose oil so beloved by the ancient Persians to top-brand perfume labels today, and from Shakespearean myths about the Wars of the Roses to the significance of Queen Elizabeth I’s embroidered dresses, Rose encapsulates the story of what makes this botanical family so loved. Using historical, literary and botanical sources from the world’s major rose-growing nations, with vibrant illustrations from across the centuries and tales of medieval best-sellers, nurserymen’s rivalries and changing tastes in the flower bed, Rose will be a delight to read for both the gardener and non-gardener alike.
Elegant and beautiful, rich in history and supremely useful, birches have played an extraordinary yet largely unrecognized part in shaping both our natural environment and the material culture and beliefs of millions of people around the world.

For thousands of years they have given people of the northern forests and beyond raw materials in the form of leaves, twigs, branches and bark, as well as wood and sap, not simply to survive but to flourish and express their identity in practical and spiritual ways. Tough, waterproof and flexible, birch bark has been used for everything from basketry and clothing to housing and transport, musical instruments and medicines, as well as a means to communicate and record sacred beliefs: some of our most ancient Buddhist texts and other historic documents are written on birch bark. Birches have not only shaped regional cultures – creating, for example, the Native American wigwam and the birch-bark canoe – but continue to supply raw materials of global economic importance today.

*Birch* explores the multiple uses of these versatile trees as well as the ancient beliefs and folklore with which they are associated. Richly illustrated, this book presents a fascinating overview of their cultural and ecological significance, from botany to literature and art, as Anna Lewington looks both at the history of birches and what the future may hold in store for them.

**ANNA LEWINGTON** is an ethnobotonist and writer, specializing in the importance of plants to people. Her previous publications include *Plants for People* (2003) and *Ancient Trees: Trees that Live for a Thousand Years* (2013). She lives in Dorset.
Mark Twain
KEVIN J. HAYES

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, born on 30 November 1835 in Monroe County, Missouri, was never one to let the facts get in the way of a good story. A natural-born storyteller, as Mark Twain he freely adapted the incidents of his life and the tales he heard as a youth to embellish his fiction, as well as his travel writing and autobiography. However, this presents a problem to the modern biographer: in accounts of Twain’s life, how does one tell what is true and what is just a colourful yarn?

In this new account of a gifted, charismatic character, Kevin J. Hayes reviews Twain’s life, from his early journalism to his masterpiece Huckleberry Finn, from the travelogue Life on the Mississippi to his final work, the sprawling, episodic Mark Twain’s Autobiography, and the public-speaking engagements that took him around the world. Synthesizing new information and sifting through the evidence, Mark Twain is a fresh, clear-sighted account of a crucial American writer.

KEVIN J. HAYES is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Central Oklahoma, currently living and working in Toledo, Ohio. He is the author of many books including The Road to Monticello: The Life and Mind of Thomas Jefferson (2008), Edgar Allan Poe (Reaktion, 2009), George Washington: A Life in Books (2017) and Herman Melville (Reaktion, 2017).
As generations of readers have struggled to appreciate, understanding the relationship of Faulkner's life to his art is not a matter of discovering the 'man behind the myth'; it is of learning how the man created the myth.

Kirk Curnutt is Professor and Chair of English at Troy University, Alabama. His most recent books include Reading Hemingway’s ‘To Have and Have Not’ (2017) and American Literature in Transition, 1970–1980 (2018).
Arthur Rimbaud
SETH WHIDDEN

Before he had turned 21, Arthur Rimbaud (1854–1891) had upended the house of French poetry and left it in shambles. What makes Rimbaud’s poetry important, argues Seth Whidden, is part of what makes his life so compelling: rebellion, audacity, creativity and exploration.

Almost all of Rimbaud’s poems were written between the ages of fifteen and twenty. Against the backdrop of the crumbling Second Empire and the tumultuous Paris Commune, the poet took centuries-old traditions of French versification and picked them apart with an unmatched knowledge of how they fitted together. Combining sensuality with pastoral, parody, political satire, fable, eroticism and mystery, Rimbaud’s works range from traditional verse forms to prose-poetry and include the two first free-verse poems written in French.

By situating Rimbaud’s later writing in Africa as part of a continuum that spans his entire life, this book offers a corrective to the traditional split between his life as a poet and his life afterwards. Written for general readers and students of literature alike, Arthur Rimbaud presents the original damned poet who continues to captivate readers, artists and writers all over the world.

SETH WHIDDEN is Professor of French at the University of Oxford and editor of Nineteenth-century French Studies. His publications include Leaving Parnassus: The Lyric Subject in Verlaine and Rimbaud (2007) and Authority in Crisis in French Literature, 1850–1880 (2014). For ten years he served as co-editor of Parade sauvage, the scholarly journal of Rimbaud studies.
Few authors have led lives as interesting as the French novelist and travel writer Pierre Loti (1850–1923) – nor have they worked harder to make it appear even more romantic than it already was. As a career officer in the French navy, Loti participated in expeditions that took him to places that even today seem exotic to Westerners. For four decades he published a series of novels, travelogues and autobiographical narratives, some of which went through hundreds of editions in France and were translated into dozens of languages around the world.

With financial and artistic success came notoriety, which Loti delighted in enhancing by staging elaborate costume balls – to which he invited the photographic press. He was also sought out by some of the artistically inclined royalty of the day, including Princess Alice of Monaco and Queen Elizabeth of Romania, and the beloved actress Sarah Bernhardt had him write plays for her.

The parties and titled nobility hurt his standing as a serious author in his last years, but they take nothing away from the best work of an artist whom Henry James hailed as a ‘remarkable genius’. Willa Cather confessed that she ‘would swoon with joy if anyone saw traces of Loti in her work’. The extravagances of his often very public private life make his biography as astonishing as his art.
How could a vegetable be so beloved, so universal, and at the same time so disdained? One of the oldest crops in the world, cabbage has provided European and Asian peoples with vitamins A and C, and even with babies – according to folk tales about infants found ‘under a cabbage leaf’, that is. It has appeared in senators’ speeches in ancient Rome and the luggage of South Korean astronauts. Cabbage is both a badge of poverty and an emblem of national pride; a food derided as cheap, common and crass, and an essential ingredient in iconic dishes from sauerkraut to kimchi. Cabbage is easy to grow because it contains sulphurous compounds that repel insect pests in the wild – and human diners indoors who smell its distinctive aroma. We can’t live without cabbage, but we don’t want to stand downwind of it.

In this lively book, Meg Muckenhoupt traces cabbage’s culinary paradox, exploring the cultural and chemical basis for its smelly reputation and enduring popularity. Filled with fascinating facts and recipes for everything from French cabbage soup to sauerkraut chocolate cake, Cabbage is essential reading for both food lovers and historians around the globe.

MEG MUCKENHOUPT writes about ecology, travel, history and food. She has appeared on NPR’s Radio Boston and WCVB’s Chronicle, and her work has been featured in the Boston Globe, the Boston Phoenix, Boston Magazine and the Time Out Boston guide. She is the author of Boston Gardens and Green Spaces (2010) and lives in Lexington, Massachusetts.
Monsters under Glass explores our enduring fascination with hothouses and exotic blooms, from their rise in ancient times, through the Victorian vogue for plant collecting, to the present day.

Our interest in hothouses can be traced back to the Roman emperor Tiberius, but it was in the early nineteenth century that a boom in exotic plant collecting and new glasshouse technologies stimulated the imagination of novelists, poets and artists, and the hothouse entered the creative language in a highly charged way. Decadent writers in England and on the Continent – including Charles Baudelaire and Oscar Wilde – transformed the notion of the hothouse from a functional object to a powerful metaphor, of metropolitan life, sexuality and being, replete with a dark underside of decay and death; of consciousness itself, nurtured and dissected under glass.

In this beautifully illustrated, wide-ranging and vivid study, Jane Desmarais charts the history and influence of these humid, tropical worlds and their creations, providing a steamy window on our recent past.
Sardine
TREVOR DAY

The sardine is a paradoxical fish. Seemingly insignificant, its exploitation has made fortunes for some and, when stocks have collapsed, caused hardship for many. Its status has shifted from utilitarian food to a gourmet’s delight. Trevor Day – diver, fish-watcher and marine conservationist – travels across four continents to meet the sardine in its natural environment, and he traces the fish’s journey from minuscule egg to item on the dinner plate. Sardine interweaves the story of the fish with the rise and fall of fishing industries. The sardine is a barometer for the health of oceans, with lessons for us all about our stewardship of the seas.

Day takes a scientifically and culturally wide-ranging look at the cluster of fish species called sardines, their relationship with other marine creatures and, in turn, with us. Elite predators feast on sardines, yet these silvery slivers are fast-breeding and opportunistic enough to survive their hunters. Whether swimming free as a shoaling fish at the mercy of predators, or tightly packed in tins – an image used frequently as a metaphor for overcrowding – sardines represent conformity and vulnerability. The biography that emerges will beguile readers fascinated with marine life, as well as anyone who has eaten this familiar yet under-appreciated fish.

Few animals elicit such a profoundly honest response of horror, fear and fright as the bedbug. Uninvited, bedbugs invade your privacy; they enter your bed, leave their marks and take away your bodily fluid – blood. From fossils to ancient Greek theatre, modern horror fiction and the bitter battles of recent scientific research, *Bedbug* investigates the animal’s natural history and examines how ordinary people, travellers, artists and scientists have experienced and confronted bedbugs over the centuries.

Klaus Reinhardt explores how the fear of bedbugs has been institutionalized, leading not only to the development of pest control and research laboratories but to bedbugs becoming the Other, used to represent personal enemies, denigrate social classes and characterize parasitical villains. With a mix of amusing, repulsive and illuminating illustrations, *Bedbug* informs, entertains and even pledges for tolerance for a surprising and profoundly misunderstood insect.

Klaus Reinhardt is Professor of Applied Zoology at Technische Universität Dresden in Germany, and Fellow and former Vice President of the Royal Entomological Society of London. He has worked on the biology of bedbugs for fifteen years and is also the editor of *Literarische Wanzen* (Literary Bugs, 2014).
The Destruction of Art
*Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution*
DARIO GAMBONI
*With a new preface*

‘Well-illustrated . . . Gamboni brings together a great deal of fascinating information.’ – *The Independent*

‘Erudite and entertaining, Gamboni’s book is an excellent guide to the outrageous in art.’
– *Glasgow Herald*

In January 2006 a man tried to break Marcel Duchamp’s *Fountain* sculpture with a small hammer. The sculpted foot of Michelangelo’s *David* was damaged in 1991 by a purportedly mentally ill artist. Each such incident confronts us with the unsettling dynamic between destruction and art. Renowned art historian Dario Gamboni is the first to tackle this weighty issue in depth.

Starting with the sweeping obliteration of architecture and art under the Communist regimes of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc, Gamboni investigates other instances of destruction around the globe, uncovering a surprisingly widespread phenomenon. As he demonstrates through analyses of nineteenth- and twentieth-century incidents in the U.S. and Europe, a complex relationship exists between the evolution of modern art and a long history of iconoclasm. Gamboni probes the concept of artists’ rights, the power of political protest and the ways in which iconoclasm offers a unique interpretation of society’s relationship to art and material culture.

This compelling and thought-provoking study, now in B-format paperback and with a new preface by the author, forces us to rethink the ways in which we interact with art and its power to shock or subdue.

DARIO GAMBONI is Professor of Art History at the University of Geneva. He has written widely in the field of art history, and his books include *Potential Images: Ambiguity and Indeterminacy in Modern Art* (2002) and *Paul Gauguin: The Mysterious Centre of Thought* (2014), both published by Reaktion Books.
‘Victor I. Stoichita is an art historian with a tremendous range, and has brewed together optics and metaphysics, phantasmagoria and propaganda, Plato and Warhol to conjure meaning out of shadows in his engagingly original study.’
– Marina Warner, International Books of the Year, Times Literary Supplement

‘Discriminating, inspired interrogation . . . dazzling analysis.’ – Tate Magazine

‘Ambitious and a pleasure to read . . . a thoroughly worthwhile book.’
– Times Higher Education Supplement

In this investigative tour de force, now available in a new format edition, Victor I. Stoichita untangles the history of one of the most enduring technical and symbolic challenges to confront Western artists: the depiction and meanings of shadows.

Stoichita’s compelling account of the shadow and Western art draws on texts by Renaissance artist-authors such as Vasari and Cennini, folk and fairy tales, classical myths, works by van Eyck, Poussin, Malevich, De Chirico, Picasso and other masters, German Expressionist cinema, photography and child psychology. It is a wholly original investigation of a subject that for centuries has challenged the very meaning of art as representation.
The rise of modern sport in the mid-nineteenth century coincided with the emergence of photography as a new image-making medium, and both practices developed in parallel. Although early technological limitations restricted the possibilities for capturing sporting action, many early photographers nonetheless embraced sport as a powerful subject for their work, a trend that has continued throughout history.

Photography and Sport traces the close relationship between photography and sport, from its beginnings to the present day. Taking a unique thematic approach, Mike O’Mahony describes the early sporting images, the impact of technological developments on sports photography, and the establishment of new visual conventions for the representation of sport in the popular illustrated journals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He examines the use of images of sport for commercial and advertising purposes, the gender politics of sporting practices, and the photographic representation of both the sports spectator and of non-professional sport, exploring their impact on wider socio-political issues along the way.

Featuring some of the most significant sports photography of the last 150 years, this in-depth history will appeal to cultural historians, sports fans and all those with an interest in the history of sport or photography.

MIKE O’MAHONY is Professor of History of Art and Visual Culture at the University of Bristol. He is the author of Sport in the USSR (2006), Sergei Eisenstein (2008) and Olympic Visions (2012), all published by Reaktion Books.
‘Ted Harrison’s central thesis that Elvis has been much more heavily and successfully commercialised in death than in life is convincing . . . It is original. And its most compelling line is that the reason Elvis has been so brilliantly marketed after his death is because he was so badly handled in his lifetime.’ – The Spectator

‘A thorough examination of Elvis’s cultural afterlife’ – Daily Telegraph

Elvis Aaron Presley is more popular today than ever, yet he died nearly forty years ago. His music is constantly remixed and re-released to a new generation of fans, and his image thrives in popular art and culture. Elvis’s Graceland home and Tupelo birthplace have become places of pilgrimage. His relics command astounding prices at auction. Around the world it is estimated that there are 200,000 Elvis impersonators paying tribute to their hero. Elvis is the subject of some truly astonishing rumours and legends, including the one that he never actually died. Ted Harrison asks what lies behind the remarkable resurrection in popular culture of the King of Rock ’n’ Roll.

The Death and Resurrection of Elvis Presley, now available in paperback, tells the story of Elvis after Elvis. It shows how his estate, which was pillaged by his manager, was saved through the business acumen and financial vision of his ex-wife Priscilla Presley. It explores a spiritual dimension to the Elvis revival, wherein fans create a fantasy quasi-religion through which they blend and confuse Elvis and Jesus. In the growing myth of Elvis, Harrison identifies a vibrant synthesis between money and faith, unique to the modern age, but reminiscent of the early centuries of Christianity. Underpinning the whole story is Elvis’s extraordinary charisma, thousands of fans simply having a lot of fun, and ultimately some great, enduring music. This is a must-read for the many millions of loyal followers, as well as those who are more critical of the King.

Ted Harrison is a British writer, artist and broadcaster. He is the author of many books, including Diana: Myth and Reality (2006) and Remembrance Today: Poppies, Grief and Heroism (Reaktion, 2012), and produced the award-winning BBC documentary Elvis and the Presleytarians with the late John Peel.
Rattling Spears
A History of Indigenous Australian Art
IAN MCLEAN

‘[Rattling Spears] constitutes the best, most comprehensive, accessible and detailed survey of a complex and beguiling field of study that I have yet come across. It is an outstanding achievement.’ – Sydney Review of Books

‘This is the first book to provide comprehensive coverage of the unfolding of indigenous art across time and place, across styles and borders, and across cultures . . . Clearly organized and well written, the content is theoretical and factual, and McLean supports the discussion with excellent illustrations. One of the most important publications on the topic to date. Highly recommended.’ – Choice

Large, bold and colourful, Indigenous Australian art has made an indelible impression on the contemporary imagination. But it is controversial, dividing the stakeholders from those who smell a scam. Whether the artists are victims or victors, there is no denying their impact in the media and on the art world and collectors worldwide. How did Australian art become the most successful indigenous form in the world? How did its artists escape the ethnographic and souvenir markets to become players in an art world to which they had previously been denied access? Finely illustrated, and now available in paperback, this full historical account makes you question everything you were taught about contemporary art.

IAN MCLEAN is Senior Research Professor of Contemporary Art at the University of Wollongong and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Western Australia. His previous books include Double Desire: Transculturation and Indigenous Art (2014), How Aborigines Invented the Idea of Contemporary Art (2011) and White Aborigines: Identity Politics in Australian Art (2009).
Before his death in 2002, Michael Camille was Professor of Art History at the University of Chicago. His books include Mirror in Parchment (Reaktion, 1998) and The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-making in Medieval Art (1989).

What do they all mean – the lascivious ape, autophagic dragons, pot-bellied heads, harp-playing asses, arse-kissing priests and somersaulting jongleurs to be found protruding from the edges of medieval buildings and in the margins of illuminated manuscripts? Now available in a new hardback edition, Michael Camille’s Image on the Edge explores that riotous realm of marginal art, so often explained away as mere decoration or zany doodles, where resistance to social constraints flourished.

Medieval image-makers focused attention on the underside of society, the excluded and the ejected. Peasants, servants, prostitutes and beggars all found their place, along with knights and clerics, engaged in impudent antics in the margins of prayer-books or, as gargoyles, on the outsides of churches. Camille brings us to an understanding of how marginality functioned in medieval culture and shows us just how scandalous, subversive and amazing the art of the time could be.

'A handsome, entertaining account of the peculiar fashion for grotesque, obscene and humorous presences on the margins of medieval illuminated manuscripts.' – Times Higher Education

'If the study of medieval art is not to remain an esoteric and elitist discipline then more books like this must be written.' – Burlington Magazine

'Camille’s polymathic essays undoubtedly will provoke such studies and will expand the field of questions we ask . . . and in this he will have made a valuable contribution.' – Oxford Art Journal
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