

*Dealer*), identifying the probability of beating the house became a lifelong challenge. Here, he gives a biographical summation (think Richard Feynman's *Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!*) of his quest to prove the aphorism "the house always wins" is flawed. While some rules (physics) are immutable, almost anything that is devised by humans has a weak point, be it gambling, insurance, or finance. The problem for Thorp, and everyone else, is that, once discovered, the rules can and will be altered. This may require changing strategy or finding new opportunity. For Thorp, this meant moving from card counting to hedge funds. As the author describes his efforts, it is easy to oversimplify. There is a lot of brain power at work and the application of high-level math skills. The lesson is that intelligence with diligence can overcome a disadvantage.

**VERDICT** A mixed message—illuminating for the mathematically inclined, and cautionary for would-be gamblers and day traders.—Steven Silkunas, Fernandina Beach, FL

**Wolfe, Alexandra. *Valley of the Gods:***

***A Silicon Valley Story.* S. & S. Jan. 2017.**

**272p. ISBN 9781476778945. \$27;**

**ebk. ISBN 9781476778969. BUS**

Wolfe (staff reporter, the *Wall Street Journal*) was intrigued by the number of young people who are attracted to Silicon Valley each year to start businesses, calling it a badge of honor to have unsuccessfully tried a new venture. She decided to follow several of these individuals in their quests and here attempts to document their trials and tribulations in working through the process of starting a business. Peter Thiel, cofounder of PayPal and partner of the Founders Fund, set up a program to get students to drop out of college, concentrate on computer coding, and come up with a business idea that, with the assistance of his organization, could prosper. Wolfe follows three members of Thiel's "20 Under 20" fellowship program who have been given \$100,000 each to come up with new innovations. The cooperative ventures they participate in portray an interesting subculture. Thiel's ideas are credited with inspiring this book, but the cultural aspects go beyond him.

**VERDICT** Wolfe incorporates useful information about these young people and their lifestyles that can be adopted generally.—Littleton Maxwell, Robins Sch. of Business, Univ. of Richmond

## EDUCATION

**Hoey, J. Kelly. *Build Your Dream Network:***

***Forging Powerful Relationships in a Hyper-***

***Connected World.* TarcherPerigee. Jan. 2017.**

**256p. illus. notes. ISBN 9780143111481.**

**\$23; ebk. ISBN 9781101992791. CAREERS**

Gone are the days of filing business cards away in a Rolodex. With today's average job tenure lasting less than five years, people are relying on their networks for new job leads more than ever. But how do you build your network in the digital age? Columnist and investor Hoey guides readers through the answer. Networking isn't confined to the workplace (instead, think weddings or subway cars). With the help of the Internet, it also doesn't need to start face to face. Hoey provides examples of digital networking, suggesting ways to connect through various platforms, nurturing those relationships, and taking them offline. Her advice also includes being selective with networking and committee obligations and how to know when to pass on an opportunity. Interspersed with the easy-to-grasp advice are peer interviews that add depth to the guidance, many times proving that a quick conversation about a simple idea can launch a career or life-changing decision when the right people are around. **VERDICT** A smart, modern guide to networking etiquette for readers at any stage in their careers.—Jennifer Clifton, Indiana State Lib., Indianapolis

## HISTORY

**Barron, James. *The One-Cent Magenta:***

***Inside the Quest To Own the Most Valuable***

***Stamp in the World.* Algonquin. Mar. 2017.**

**224p. notes. ISBN 9781616205188. \$23.95;**

**ebk. ISBN 9781616207175. HIST**

Once a popular hobby, stamp collecting now has a smaller but passionate following. *New York Times* journalist Barron (*Piano: The Making of a Steinway Grand*) tells the story of philately through an unassuming but extremely valuable stamp. This one-cent magenta, printed in British Guiana in 1856, was forgotten until 1873. The stamp's value comes from uniqueness rather than beauty or a printing error, since there is only one remaining in the world. Similar to Tracy Kidder's *House*, this microhistory uses one object as a gateway to an examination of a larger idea. Tracing the one-cent magenta's changing ownership and increasing value, Barron explores what drives people to collect stamps in particular and unusual items in general, describing them and the world of stamp collecting in all their idiosyncratic glory. **VERDICT** Readers of history, microhistory, and narrative nonfiction, and those with an interest in stamps, will appreciate this absorbing tale of the rarefied world of high-stakes philately.—Laurie Unger Skinner, Coll. of Lake Cty., Waukegan, IL

**Colwell, Chip. *Plundered Skulls and***

***Stolen Spirits: Inside the Fight To***

***Reclaim Native America's Culture.* Univ. of**

**Chicago. Mar. 2017. 336p. illus. notes.**

**index. ISBN 9780226298993. \$30. HIST**

During the 1800s, museums and universities amassed collections of cultural artifacts and remains of "exotic peoples," including Native Americans and Native Hawaiians. The federal government acknowledged that the remains of some Native Americans were being violated through the passage of the Antiquities Act of 1906, but the legislation proved largely symbolic. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) finally gained Native peoples the right to have their sacred objects and remains of ancestors returned to them. Since its passage, NAGPRA has been criticized by some researchers who argue that the law has impaired scientific study by denying access to research materials. Colwell (senior curator of anthropology, Denver Museum of Nature and Science) has been caught in the maelstrom caused by NAGPRA as he had to find a way to protect his museum's collection while also meeting the legal and moral obligations to various Native communities. He demonstrates that the repatriation is not as simple as weighing freedom of religion vs. intellectual freedom, as there are even conflicts among Native groups over who is the rightful recipient of items or remains. **VERDICT** This work is highly recommended for readers interested in Native American studies or museums.—John R. Burch, Campbellsville Univ. Lib., KY

**★Englund, Will. *March 1917: On the Brink of War and Revolution.* Norton.**

**Mar. 2017. 416p. illus. notes. bibliog.**

**index. ISBN 9780393292084. \$27.95;**

**ebk. ISBN 9780393292091. HIST**

In March 1917, World War I in Europe had sputtered to a stalemate. Few thought that the war would be over soon. However, that month altered the conflict's trajectory with the ouster of Nicholas II of Russia and the galvanizing of prowar forces within the United States. Journalist Englund, most recently Moscow correspondent for *The Washington Post*, ties these two events together in this debut book. The author maintains that when Russian liberals seized control, this event led to another ally for the Americans. As Englund narrates, because Russia was now democratic, the United States could trust her as a force of good in the defeat of autocratic Germany. This book nicely details both the political arena and the submerged social currents. It also adds to the knowledge base about this time period which has been described in Adam Tooze's *The Deluge*, Marc Ferro's *The Russian Revolution of February 1917*, and Ross Kennedy's *The Will To Believe*. **VERDICT** Recommended for those eager to learn about

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→ CONTINUED FROM P. 111

ISBN 9781566894715. pap. \$16.95. POETRY  
A finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and the Lambda Literary Award for her second collection, *Discipline*, Martin (English, Univ. of Pittsburgh) returns with a new collection of poems exploring the current state of the human condition.

Parker, Morgan. *There Are More Beautiful Things Than Beyoncé*. Tin House. Feb. 2017. 80p. ISBN 9781941040539. pap. \$14.95; ebk. ISBN 9781941040546. POETRY  
In this book of poems about more than Beyoncé but also crucially about Beyoncé, poet Parker considers history and the future, performance and interiority, humor and tragedy, politics and art.

Trimble, Jacqueline. *American Happiness*. NewSouth. 2016. 80p. ISBN 9781588383273. \$21.95. POETRY  
From Alabama State University's Trimble comes this varied new collection of poems, which considers Andy Griffith,

→ CONTINUED FROM P. 108

watershed moments in history and all readers interested in World War I.—Jacob Sherman, John Peace Lib., Univ. of Texas at San Antonio

Kiernan, Ben. *Viet Nam: A History from Earliest Times to the Present*. Oxford Univ. Mar. 2017. 648p. illus. maps. notes. index. ISBN 9780195160765. \$34.95. HIST  
Kiernan (history, Yale Univ.; *Genocide and Resistance in Southeast Asia*) offers a comprehensive overview of Vietnamese history from prehistoric times to the 21st century. The author organizes Vietnam's history into six chronological parts based broadly on the political organization of the era (chiefdoms, provinces, kingdoms, regions, colonies, republics). A distinctive quality of this work is its inclusion of environmental and linguistic history. The author effectively explains how geography and changing weather patterns (droughts, etc.) impacted historical development and demonstrates how changes in language over time provides information about Vietnam's past, covering similar terrain as Christopher Goscha's *Vietnam: A New History*. While Kiernan provides more thorough coverage of Vietnam's early history before French colonization, Goscha supplies a more detailed accounting of the French colonial period (1862–1954). Both works competently address Vietnam's ethnic and religious diversity. **VERDICT** Essential for all students of Vietnamese history. Extensive descriptions of Vietnam's relations with its neighbors also makes this

coyotes, and the death of parents (among other things).

## THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE

*Dream a World Anew: The African American Experience and the Shaping of America*. Smithsonian. 2016. 288p. ed. by Kinshasha Holman Conwill. ISBN 9781588345684. \$40. FINE ARTS

An image-rich coffee-table book that celebrates the opening of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, highlighting key objects from the collection and profiles of influential figures. (LJ 9/1/16)

Kendrick, Kathleen. *Official Guide to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture*. Smithsonian. Apr. 2017. 160p. photos.



ISBN 9781588345936. pap. \$14.95. FINE ARTS  
This photo-filled guide offers a comprehensive tour of the museum, from its grounds and architecture to its collection and organization.

Wilson, Mabel O. *Begin with the Past: Building the National Museum of African American History and Culture*. Smithsonian. 2016. 144p. ISBN 9781588345691. \$29.95. ARCH

The origin story of the museum, this history contextualizes the institution as visitors see it today, describing how, after its official establishment in 2003, its director was chosen, site selected, building designed, collection gathered, and exhibitions produced.

Molly McArdle is Brooklyn Magazine's books editor and a regular contributor to *Travel + Leisure*

valuable reading for those interested in Chinese or Southeast Asian history.—Joshua Wallace, Tarleton State Univ. Lib. Stephenville, TX

O'Connell, Aaron B. *Our Latest Longest War: Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan*. Univ. of Chicago. Apr. 2017. 400p. maps. notes. ISBN 9780226265650. \$30. HIST  
The subtitle of this new collection of well-written essays accurately sums up its main thesis. Despite billions of dollars spent during the years that the United States actively fought against Taliban and al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan (2001–14), the ultimate result was a stalemate and the withdrawal of forces at the end. O'Connell's (*Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps*) compilation, authored by a mix of military personnel and academics, seeks to understand and explain the myriad factors that influenced the country during its time in Afghanistan. Lurking in the background are the lessons learned, rightly or wrongly, from the U.S. experience in Vietnam. But perhaps most important is the fundamental difference in worldview between an American culture steeped in the philosophical traditions of the West and an Afghan culture, in which this point of view was vaguely understood. Ultimately, the U.S. military and civilian leadership were unable to comprehend the Afghani people and thus unable to win their hearts and minds effectively. Perhaps no occupying force would have been any more successful. **VERDICT** A vital contribution toward understanding

the Afghanistan War. Recommended for all collections.—Ed Goedeken, Iowa State Univ. Lib., Ames

Pryor, Elizabeth Brown. *Six Encounters with Lincoln: A President Confronts Democracy and Its Demons*. Viking. Feb. 2017. 496p. illus. notes. bibliog. index. ISBN 9780670025909. \$30; ebk. ISBN 9780735222793. HIST  
Pryor (*Reading the Man*) does the impossible in this insightful, lucid book by teaching us something new about 16th U.S. President Abraham Lincoln (1809–65). Using new primary sources that reveal personal encounters with the president, the author points to the ambitions and partisanship that drove Lincoln throughout his life and the often contradictory, conflicted, and convulsive politics and problems of a democracy beset by overbearing self interests, weak federal institutions, vainglorious men, and incompetent military leadership. Pryor scores Lincoln for his constricted understanding of military matters, bungling of the Fort Sumter crisis, misreading of supposed Southern Unionism, and sometimes unprincipled partisanship, among other failures. She argues that Lincoln did not grow into and remake the presidency as many scholars have insisted, and that his speeches belied his inability to communicate clearly and effectively. The man Pryor reimagines is at once complicated, conflicted, and consequential. **VERDICT** One might argue that by pulling away the shroud of sanctification