

Kathleen's Recent Reads—June

Non-Fiction

First Principles: What America's Founders Learned from the Greeks and Romans and How That Shaped Our Country by Thomas E. Ricks

Ricks, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and visiting fellow in the History Department at Bowdoin College, examines the higher education system of the Revolutionary era, and the backgrounds of George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison in particular, drawing a direct line between the military and political philosophy of the founders, and the ancient classics and philosophers of the Enlightenment.

Fiction

And Now She's Gone by Rachel Howzell Hall

This fast-paced thriller follows a new private investigator through her first case, which proves to be anything but open and shut. Recommended for fans of Sue Grafton's Kinsey Millhone and Andrea Carter's Ben O'Keefe series.

The Truants by Kate Weinberg

Four college students fall under the spell of a charismatic professor, with disastrous results. Suspenseful and well-plotted, with homages to Agatha Christie, whose legacy is an integral part of the story. Try if you like the "Dark Academia" aesthetic, or Donna Tartt's *The Secret History*.

Audiobooks*

*available on cloudLibrary

The Murder of Roger Ackroyd by Agatha Christie

I have a confession: this is my first Agatha Christie! And what a great book to start with. The owner of an English country house is found murdered behind a locked door; which of the half dozen people with a motive to kill him is guilty? Hercule Poirot will find out! I especially enjoyed the narrator, who mastered that perfect blasé drawl heard in 30s and 40s films.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

This classic quest follows Santiago as he travels to Egypt in search of both his "personal legend" and a treasure, meeting many colorful characters along the way, and learning some valuable truths.

Exciting Times by Naoise Dolan

Ava, a rudderless young Irish woman travels to Hong Kong, where she supports herself teaching English to young Chinese children, and develops an "arrangement" with an English banker, only to find her life complicated by her feelings for a Chinese lawyer. Ava's charming wit and droll

reflections on the vagaries of English grammar—as foreign to her, as an Irishwoman, as to her Chinese students—had me laughing out loud.

Summer Secrets by Jane Green

Author Jane Green does not shy away from tackling difficult topics, and this book is no different. Journalist Cat Coombs finds the love of her life as a result of her drinking problem; she also loses her newly found birth family as a result of her drinking problem. An unflinching look at how substance abuse can destroy our relationships, with a healthy side of hope.

Who is Vera Kelly? By Rosalie Knecht

In 1962, Vera Kelly is recruited by the CIA and sent to Buenos Aires to surveil possible KGB activity. Somehow, her recruiters miss Vera's big secret: she's a lesbian. Being simultaneously undercover and in the closet contribute to an innately suspenseful, and the descriptions of the Cold War-era spycraft and a revolutionary plot only add to the thrill. This is a smart and fresh addition to the espionage genre.