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We Review the
Best of the Latest
Books

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[Arts & Photography / Drawing & Lettering / Guides](#)

[Calligraphic Drawing: A how-to guide and gallery exploring the art of the flourish](#) by Schin Loong (Rockport Publishers)

Masters of penmanship in the past advertised their copperplate skills by shaping their calligraphy and flourishes into elaborate pictorial designs. With **[Calligraphic Drawing](#)**, the art of the flourish is back.

[Calligraphic Drawing](#), written and illustrated by Schin Loong, is a hands-on guide to modern penmanship art, ranging from animals to people, to fantasy subjects and works that

combine pictures with writing. The text and how-tos move from the simplest to the most challenging designs, with steps to take readers through them and examples to inspire them.

Loong is the calligrapher and artist for Open Ink Stand Studio in Las Vegas. She has studied with numerous master penmen, including Michael Sull and Rosemary Buczek, and received her Fine Arts degree from the Ringling College of Art & Design. As a member of IAMPETH (The International Association of Master Penmen, Engrossers and Teachers of Handwriting) and The Fabulous Las Vegas Scribes, Schin has taught and presented at the College of Southern Nevada, Twig & Fig, Berkeley and Sahara West Library, Las Vegas.

Calligraphic Drawing guides readers on a journey toward mastering the magic, excitement, and pure flourishing fun of calligraphic drawing – the pictorial side of calligraphy. The basic steps for the strokes are simple, but as readers learn each new pattern and stroke, they watch their drawings develop into ever more complex and beautiful compositions.

*You now hold a book in
your hands which will help
guide you on your own
journey toward mastering
calligraphic drawing. ...
Your process may be
different from mine, but
that is what makes
flourished drawings so*

*special – each is unique to
the hand that created it. –
from the book*

Calligraphic Drawing is a book for designers, calligraphers, doodlers, and anyone who picks up a pen. Artist and author Loong brings a fresh approach to this age-old art form. She confidently takes readers through each step so they can create their own imagination and artistry.

Arts & Photography / Portraiture / Babies

First Moments: Newborn Portraits & Mom Stories by Brooke VanHoy (Amherst Media)

It's human nature to melt a little when we're confronted by the beauty of new life. Newborns are resilient yet fragile, wrinkled yet brand-new. Their soft skin, sweet expressions, and dependence upon us touch us at our very core. For these reasons, and many more, people gravitate toward newborns.

In **First Moments**, award-winning newborn and children's photographer Brooke VanHoy presents over 160 studio portraits of her smallest clients and provides stories about their new lives with their families. Readers will enjoy personal stories about the moment when couples realized they were becoming parents, the first time they felt the stirrings of life, and the first time they saw their child's face – plus a collection of thoughts about the parents' hopes and dreams for their little one's future.

Award-winning Brooke VanHoy, a member of the Professional

Photographers of America, Professional Photographers of North Carolina, and the American Society of Photographers, is a Photographic Craftsman and Certified Professional Photographer. Growing up, she says she always had a camera and wanted to work with kids. She went to school for elementary education, but when her oldest son was born, her hobby became her focus. VanHoy runs a successful photo studio near Winston-Salem.

VanHoy in [First Moments](#) presents a collection of some of her most cherished newborn portraits, paired with moms' memorable stories about pregnancy and meeting their little one for the first time.

Readers are able to:

- Discover personal stories about women's journeys from pregnancy, to labor, and beyond.
- Revel in beautiful, heartwarming newborn portraits.
- Relax and de-stress as they nurture their empathy.

Brooke is amazing at working with babies and new parents. Her creativity in customizing each session sets her apart from other newborn photographers. – Autumn Hunter, client

Brooke's ability to capture the tiniest of details on newborns is magical. Seeing the final result makes me want to keep

having babies! – Mallory Schiabac, mom of four

Brooke has an amazing talent for getting the best out of each and every client. Her work truly shines!
– Kristin Deavers, owner of Deavers Photography

[First Moments](#) celebrates the sweet innocence, tiny details, and unforgettable moments of the first months. Heartwarming, filled with world-class portraits, inspirational quotes, and remarkable stories, this book will appeal to readers of all ages, and it will be especially appreciated by expecting parents, new moms and dads, and anyone who loves babies.

Arts & Photography / Outdoors & Nature

[Visions of the Tallgrass: Prairie Photographs](#) by Harvey Payne with essays by James P. Ronda, photography by Harvey Payne, and a foreword by Geoffrey M. Standing Bear, with general editor B. Byron Price (**The Charles M. Russell Center Series on Art and Photography of the American West, Vol 33**: University of Oklahoma Press)

The photographs in this book ([Visions of the Tallgrass](#)) convey the visual beauty of the tallgrass prairie, a rare place threatened with extinction. You will view the same world my ancestors loved and fought to protect. Now it is

your turn to enjoy this land with us and to protect its sacred existence.

These photographs are placed in context by the prose of James P. Ronda, who connects the sounds, smells, and experience with the sights before you. For example, he describes witnessing a prairie fire as this powerful force spread across the land, with its unforgettable smoke and "a steady hissing sound that grew louder as the headfire grew closer." He intertwines the history of the tallgrass prairie with taking you out on a cold, crisp morning to join a day in the life of the birds, and out again on a hot, sunny afternoon to witness each species busily carrying out its mission. As he writes, you can feel yourself standing still or moving from place to place to examine up close or from afar this remarkable region. Here you can see and understand the powerful processes of nature in a majestic creation as diverse as any place in America. – from the foreword by Geoffrey M. Standing Bear, Principal Chief of the Osage Nation

In centuries long past, a vast swath of grassland swept down the center of North America, from Canada's Prairie Provinces to central Texas. This once-plentiful prairie has now all but disappeared. Humans have grazed, mowed, and plowed the plains, dammed the rivers, and imposed their will on the land and its creatures. Fortunately, some remnants have survived, including the Joseph H. Williams Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in northeastern Oklahoma. In [Visions of the Tallgrass](#), wildlife photographer Harvey Payne and historian James P. Ronda offer an intimate look at and into one of America's Last Great Places. Ronda is retired as Professor at the University of Tulsa, where he held the H. G. Barnard Chair of Western American History. He is widely recognized for his extensive scholarship on the Lewis and Clark expedition, including the pathbreaking *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians*. Payne is a renowned nature photographer. An Osage County rancher, land manager, lawyer, and judge, he played a pivotal role in the Preserve's creation in 1990, served as its Director until 2008, and now is its Community Relations-Coordinator.

Under the stewardship of The Nature Conservancy, which has overseen its restoration, the Preserve lives on as a fully functioning ecosystem. And for twenty-five years, Payne and Ronda have explored these lands, together and in solitude. Rendered in brilliant color and paired with Ronda's informative yet deeply personal commentary, Payne's photographs

open readers' eyes to the ever-changing world of the Tallgrass Preserve. In chapters focused on grass, sky, birds, bison, and fire, Ronda and Payne reveal that the 'Big Empty' is, in fact, teeming with life.

In the preface, Rhonda says that [Visions of the Tallgrass](#) portrays the lives of an astounding variety of creatures who call the Preserve home. Rather than shutting out the world beyond the prairie, Ronda and Payne found they could explore the larger world from within the Preserve's boundaries. They made their way into a complex set of interdependent ecosystems, shared by what lives above the prairie, on it, and beneath its surface. This is a place alive with bison, butterflies, and big bluestem grass. It is a place shaped by the primal forces of weather, fire, and grazing.

From this book's earliest beginnings, Payne and Ronda say they imagined it as a conversation between a photographer and a historian. That conversation began some thirty years ago. As their friendship grew, so did the reach and range of what they hoped to explore and perhaps share with others. The words and pictures are meant to talk to each other, sometimes in unison and sometimes in counterpoint. Sometimes they were in the field together; other times they worked each in his own solitary way. This book is neither a history of Osage County nor a recounting of the Preserve's origins. There is some history, some intense personal experiences, and an occasional reflection on the nature of nature. For Payne, [Visions of the](#)

[Tallgrass](#) celebrates an enduring devotion to photographing the prairie. For Ronda, the book traces the progress of Payne's prairie education over the past three decades.

The classic compositions of Harvey Payne's photographs have a subtle beauty that attests to the keen eye of a tallgrass prairie native. James Ronda's compelling prose, itself rich in imagery, beckons reader-viewers into the prairie world to learn interesting lessons on ecology and biodiversity. [Visions of the Tallgrass](#) is the result of a wonderful synergy between photographer and author.
– James W. Lish, author of *Winter's Hawk: Red-tails on the Southern Plains*

This is the kind of book you might buy as a gift but never actually give away because you opened it first. Payne's photographs and Ronda's writing will prevent you from simply skimming. Read this book if you are interested in prairies, history, or ecology, or if you simply need more beauty in your life. – Chris Helzer, Nebraska Director of Science, The Nature Conservancy

This book is a treat for those who know the tallgrass prairie as their own, and a revelation for those just learning of this magical landscape. – Joni L. Kinsey, author of Plain Pictures: Images of the American Prairie

Volume 33 in the Charles M. Russell Center series on *Art and Photography of the American West* is a visually stunning volume. Through interwoven images and words, [Visions of the Tallgrass](#) shows that our nation's grasslands are sacred ground, a priceless piece of our American past – and future. Audio / History / Medieval / Social & Cultural / Medicine

[Epidemics: Hate and Compassion from the Plague of Athens to AIDS, Audio CD – Audiobook, MP3 Audio, Unabridged, running time: 30 hours](#) by Samuel Kline Cohn Jr., narrated by David Colacci (Tantor Media, Inc.)

[Epidemics: Hate and Compassion from the Plague of Athens to AIDS, 1st edition, Hardcover](#) by Samuel K. Cohn Jr. (Oxford University Press)

By investigating thousands of descriptions of epidemics reaching back before the fifth-century-BCE Plague of Athens to the distrust and violence that erupted with Ebola in 2014, [Epidemics](#) challenges a dominant hypothesis in the study of epidemics, that invariably across time and space, epidemics provoked hatred, blaming of the 'other,' and victimizing bearers of

epidemic diseases, particularly when diseases were mysterious, without known cures or preventive measures, as with AIDS during the last two decades of the twentieth century.

However, scholars and public intellectuals, especially post-AIDS, have missed a fundamental aspect of the history of epidemics. Instead of sparking hatred and blame, the history of epidemics traced in [Epidemics](#) illustrates that more often epidemics inspired compassion and drew communities closer together. This study traces epidemics' socio-psychological consequences across time and discovers that epidemic diseases have more often unified societies across class, race, ethnicity, and religion, spurring self-sacrifice and compassion.

Author Samuel K. Cohn, Jr. is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Glasgow, an Honorary Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities at the University of Edinburgh, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. The narrator on the audio version, David Colacci, has been an actor and a director for over thirty years, and has worked as a narrator for over fifteen years.

- A study of the history of epidemics, stretching from the 5th century BCE to the 2014 Ebola crisis.
- Challenges the dominant hypothesis that epidemics invariably provoke hatred, blaming of the 'other', and victimizing bearers of epidemic diseases.

- Investigates thousands of descriptions of epidemics throughout history, including the Black Death, Cholera, Smallpox, and AIDS.
- Offers a new view of the Black Death and how short-lived were its effects of hate, violence, and division.

Epidemics, conceived in the influenza scare of 2009, is in itself a commemoration of all the deadliest plagues to have afflicted our species. ... covering the major infections from 430 BC, through the Black Death (1347-51) and syphilis (1494-5), to cholera (1832 onwards), smallpox in nineteenth-century America, plague in India since 1894, yellow fever (Southern USA), and the Great Influenza, with a coda on HIV/AIDS ... Cohn's aim is not just to tell their stories (although there are stories aplenty), but to tell them from a new perspective. – Anne Hardy, Times Literary Supplement

Epidemics overturns long-held beliefs about epidemics; now we know a way in which humanity has performed more humanely than we had previously thought.

Business & Investing / Management & Leadership

Reinventing Jobs: A 4-Step Approach for Applying Automation to Work by Ravin Jesuthasan & John W. Boudreau (Harvard Business Review Press)

Your organization has made the decision to adopt automation and artificial intelligence technologies. How, when, and where should you apply automation? Is it a stark choice between humans versus machines? How does one stay on top of these technological trends as work and automation continue to evolve?

With **Reinventing Jobs**, work and human capital experts Ravin Jesuthasan and John Boudreau present leaders with a new set of tools to answer these daunting questions. Transcending the endless debate about humans being replaced by machines, Jesuthasan and Boudreau show how smart leaders instead are optimizing human-automation combinations that are not only more efficient but also generate higher returns on improved performance.

Based on groundbreaking primary research, **Reinventing Jobs** provides an original, structured approach of four distinct steps – deconstruct, optimize, automate, and reconfigure – and numerous examples and practical advice for applying the four-step process.

"Simply asking which humans will be replaced by automation fails to take into account how work and automation will evolve. You can't solve the 'how to automate work' problem by thinking

only about automation replacing jobs," declare Jesuthasan, Managing Director at Willis Towers Watson, and Boudreau, professor and Research Director at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business and Center for Effective Organizations.

Jesuthasan and Boudreau show leaders how to continuously reexamine what a job really is and provide the tools for identifying the pivotal performance value of tasks within jobs and how these tasks should be reconstructed into new more optimal combinations.

In [Reinventing Jobs](#), Jesuthasan and Boudreau assert that the very nature of an organization will require rethinking, which means fundamental changes in the definition and execution of leadership. They also propose that everyone approach their own careers as a constant process of deconstruction and reinvention as advances in automation continue to challenge the very essence of 'human work'.

With numerous examples and practical advice for applying the four-step process, [Reinventing Jobs](#) gives leaders a more precise, planful, and actionable way to decide how, when, and where to apply and optimize work automation. [Reinventing Jobs](#) cuts through the hype and hysteria and shows leaders how to apply automation and

artificial intelligence in their organizations.

Jesuthasan and Boudreau are the clear-eyed guides every organization needs.

– Daniel H. Pink, author, *Drive and When*

In the age of the Internet of Things (IoT) and AI ...

[Reinventing Jobs](#) is a book ahead of its time and points the way to the

'humanization' of the enterprise. – Zhang Ruimin,

Chairman and CEO, Haier Group

Jesuthasan and Boudreau help us ask the right

questions when we're considering where and

when to automate. They recognize that automation

is not a simple 'rip and replace' of certain jobs

and tasks, but rather something that requires a

layered approach. – Jim Whitehurst, President and

CEO, Red Hat

This book provides an

excellent, much-needed

framework to guide the

collaboration necessary among CIOs, CHROs, and

other functional leaders to optimize work and the

application of automation in today's rapidly

changing environment. –

Ralph W. Brown, Chief

Technology Officer and

Senior Vice President,
Research & Development,
CableLabs

*A must-read for every
CEO. A most thoughtful
approach with examples
from numerous industries
that illustrate that
automation and workflow
optimization are critical to
competing effectively. –*

*Anthony G. Petrello,
Chairman, President, and
CEO, Nabors Industries*

Reinventing Jobs is a book
that CIOs, CHROs, and all
C-suite leaders should
read together. This four-
step framework takes the
guesswork out of building
your digital strategy and a
future-ready, engaged,
and agile workforce. –

*Diana McKenzie, Senior
Vice President and CIO,
Workday*

*Jesuthasan and Boudreau
bring an insightful and
practical approach to
dealing with one of the
most significant challenges
of the Fourth Industrial
Revolution. – Saadia*

*Zahidi, Head of Education,
Gender and Work and
member of the Executive
Committee, World
Economic Forum*

*Jesuthasan and Boudreau
offer a comprehensive
approach to transforming*

*work while enabling
organizations – and
individuals – to adapt and
thrive. – Alan May, Chief
People Officer, Hewlett
Packard Enterprise*

Reinventing Jobs gives original and
practical advice on how to optimize
human-machine work combinations.
The guiding framework gives leaders a
more precise and actionable way to
decide when and where to apply and
optimize work automation.

Children's Books / Ages 5-7 / Grades K-2
/ Holidays & Seasons / Poetry

**Four Seasons of Fun: Egg Hunts!
Fireworks! Pumpkins! Reindeer!** by
Pamela Duncan Edwards, illustrated by
Sylvie Daigneault (Sleeping Bear Press)

*Skipping, jumping, hearing
friends cheer,*

*Running, shouting, "Sunny
days are here!"*

*Flying a kite, watching it
dive,*

*Seeing it wheel as if it's
alive.*

*Hunting in ponds to find
pollywogs,*

*Marveling that tadpoles
turn into frogs. – from the
book*

Set against the backdrop of a
magnificent apple tree, **Four Seasons of
Fun** uses poetry to cycle through the

changes of the four seasons, showcasing popular indoor and outdoor activities. Beginning with springtime, rhyming couplets take young readers through seasonal activities such as kite flying in the spring, summertime picnicking, fall trick-or-treating, all the way to building snowmen in the winter, before cycling back to spring again. One verse in each season references a major holiday, including Easter and Christmas.

Author Pamela Duncan Edwards, a New York Times-bestselling author, has written more than seventy fiction and nonfiction picture books. Illustrator Sylvie Daigneault is originally from Montreal, Quebec, where she studied painting at L'Ecoles des Beaux-Arts. Her vivid and detailed imagery has been featured on packaging, posters, and in editorial work.

Each season is special in its own way, and everyone has their favorite. **Four Seasons of Fun: Egg Hunts! Fireworks! Pumpkins! Reindeer!** is told in rhyme with playful illustrations. This book will remind readers that there is something to look forward to every season of the year.

A rhyming look at all the fun to be had during a year of seasonal changes. An apple tree anchors the book, its branches visually portraying each of the seasons: "Glittering sunbeams make a golden crown / for a tree that is

wearing a blossom gown." – Kirkus Reviews

Four Seasons of Fun is a seasonal celebration in verse inviting young readers of all ages to take time to get out into nature and enjoy its many gifts.

Cooking, Food & Wine / Health / Guides

DIY Kombucha: Sparkling Homebrews Made Easy by Andrea Potter (**Urban Homesteader Hacks Series**: New Society Publishers)

Since the relatively recent introduction of kombucha onto North American supermarket shelves, this healthy sparkling beverage has exploded in popularity. But can it be brewed at home, with the same tasty, healthy results?

With **DIY Kombucha**, readers learn how to create refreshing, healthier drinks, from kombucha to herbal sodas, in their own kitchens.

Making kombucha and other fermented beverages really satisfies the culinary nerd in me. Creating tasty and inventive flavor combinations while learning more about food science and traditional cultural food and drink is what I will spend my life being fascinated with and will pass on to my daughter, so maybe she will pick up the good fermentation bug.

Brewing drinks and fermenting jars of food has also inspired me to study holistic nutrition, with specific interest in how microbes affect and largely comprise personal health. I have made it part of my life's work to understand and befriend the bacteria that support my health, as well as learning about the role of these invisible creatures in creating and maintaining cultural diversity, resulting in strong and resilient systems (both in the micro-world and in societal cultures).

The added benefit of environmental sustainability and independence in doing it yourself (vs. depending on corporations to supply food sustenance) means that the practice of brewing my own fermented drinks is not just a fad; it is woven into daily routines that enrich my life on many levels and so is here to stay. Making my own fermented foods and drinks is a microcultural practice that is fortified every time I share the knowledge passed on to me, or whenever I pass

along another SCOBY to a friend. – from the book

In [DIY Kombucha](#) author Andrea Potter does away with specialist jargon and expensive or hard-to-find equipment, showing how sparkling homebrews from kombucha to water kefir are definitely possible for just about anyone to make, and have fun doing it.

Potter is a Chef and Registered Holistic nutritionist.

Coverage includes:

- Basic fermentation science.
- Controlling fizz, acidity, and alcohol content.
- Secondary fermentation and adding flavours to the brew.
- Wild-fermented sodas, using a ginger bug (a wild yeast culture).
- Recipes for kombucha's honey-fed relative, Jun, as well as for water kefir.

[DIY Kombucha](#) answers key questions including "where does all that sugar go?", "do I need to get a sitter for it when I go on holiday?", and "does this SCOBY look normal?" and it includes a comprehensive troubleshooting guide to help readers keep brewing confidently and consistently.

This is a precious book written with a deep personal passion for the subject; more importantly, with the conscientiousness of a caring chef and teacher, as if present in your kitchen, walking you through every possible

nuance. This is how the world of food and health ought to be communicated. – Tony Minichiello Culinary Instructor/Co-Owner, Northwest Culinary Academy of Vancouver

Reading [DIY Kombucha](#) feels as if you are sitting in one of Andrea's classes. She brings her humor and openness to every section, making this book an easy read that is incredibly informative and entertaining. Even the most novice homebrewers will leave these pages feeling confident; at the same time, experienced brewers will find themselves taking notes. – Kate McLaughlin, R.H.N., Owner/Manager, Canadian School of Natural Nutrition – Vancouver Branch

What a wonderful book! Concise, yet comprehensive and certainly comforting to such as myself, who never had much confidence in their kombucha brewing skills. Now, with the deeper understanding this book provides, I feel confident to go way beyond the basics. Thank you, Andrea,

for this new empowerment! – Jenni Blackmore, author, Permaculture for the Rest of Us and Food Lover's Garden

With a perfect blend of personal stories, science, and recipes, author Andrea Potter tells you everything you need to know to brew not only kombucha, but other fermented beverages as well. Even though I've been brewing kombucha for several years myself, I still learned a few things, and I can't wait to try making beet cream soda and some of the other unique fermented drinks. – Deborah Niemann, ThriftyHomesteader.com, author, Homegrown and Handmade, Ecothrifty, and Raising Goats Naturally

Andrea Potter's book gives a detailed introduction to the process of making kombucha, as well as water kefir, honey-based jun, ginger beer and more. She thoroughly covers everything you need to know to get started, from equipment to sourcing ingredients, along with a primer on the science of

fermentation. With plenty of photos and step-by-step instructions, [DIY Kombucha](#) will help you successfully make fermented beverages in your own kitchen. – Victoria Redhed Miller, author, *Craft Distilling, From No-Knead to Sourdough and Pure Poultry*.

Andrea Potter has created a wonderful resource for beginning kombucha brewers and fermented beverage enthusiasts. She delves into the history of kombucha, its health benefits, and how to master the art of kombucha making. She goes through the process step by step and offers troubleshooting. Her book is beautifully curated with dozens of recipes including fermented beverages using medicinal herbs. It is sure to spark a love for creating your own kombucha. – Crystal Stevens author, *Grow Create Inspire and Worms at Work*

A straightforward, accessible, and highly visual how-to guide, [DIY Kombucha](#) is ideal for foodies, urban and rural homesteaders, and health-

motivated people – it's an essential addition to their DIY toolkit.

Cooking, Food & Wine / Planning / Guides

[Mix-and-Match Mama Meal Planner: Your Weekly Guide to Getting Dinner on the Table](#) by Shay Shull (Harvest House Publishers)

"What's for dinner?"

That famous phrase can make a woman's heart beat just a little faster. What's for dinner? What's for dinner? What is for dinner? Hmm...

Growing up, my mom put a hot meal on the table each and every night. It was always homemade, it was always delicious, and it was always spur-of-the-moment. My mom is famous for being in the middle of actually cooking our dinner (like ground beef was browning) and yet still not knowing what we were going to be having – a mere 15 minutes later! That is how my mom meal-planned. As she was cooking, she was planning.

Me? I need a very specific meal plan for the week. I need exact recipes, a solid grocery list, and a well-stocked pantry. I like

to prepare everything in advance so that on busy nights I know exactly what to reach for and exactly what to prepare.

I need a meal plan.

When I introduced "Meal-Planning Mondays" to my blog readers, the feedback was very positive. From single gals to newlyweds, from busy moms with small kids to retired couples, everyone agreed: Cooking isn't hard; it's deciding what to make that can be challenging. – from the book

The meal plans in [Mix-and-Match Mama Meal Planner](#) make the most of seasonal produce, never have lengthy directions or hard-to-find ingredients, and don't take a long time to prepare. Readers also find lists of pantry staples, tips and tricks for streamlining their cooking, and dozens of ideas to make dinner easy and delicious.

Shay Shull is the author of the *Mix and Match Mama* blog and several cookbooks including *Mix-and-Match Mama Eats*.

[Mix-and-Match Mama Meal Planner](#) is a weekly guide to getting dinner on the table divided by seasons. Each season includes four weeks of recipes – seven dinners, plus one sweet treat per week. Readers feel free to mix and match to fit

their own lives. For example, they can make Mondays sandwich night and Fridays soup night if that works best. This is the fun and freedom of meal planning.

Shay's recipes are simple, delicious, and perfect for busy parents. – Trista Sutter, star of The Bachelorette, season 1, and author of Happily Ever After

Shay's cookbooks are a must in my house! – Brandee Buble, author of O'Shae the Octopus and Jayde the Jaybird

Shay has mastered two things – being a great mom and cooking delicious meals for her family. – Sean Lowe, star of The Bachelor, season 17

Readers can spend less time in the kitchen and more time enjoying meals with their families with [Mix-and-Match Mama Meal Planner](#). This one's a keeper.

Crafts & Hobbies / Handicrafts / Guides

[Handmade: A Hands-On Guide: Make the Things You Use Every Day](#) by Asa Christiana (The Taunton Press)

Call it maker, handcrafted, or handmade, a new DIY movement has taken off big time. The common thread that ties makers to DIYers and handcrafters is the desire to build

something rather than buy it.

[Handmade](#) celebrates the movement and would-be makers with practical, doable projects that require only simple tools and techniques to complete.

Author Asa Christiana is the former chief editor of *Fine Woodworking*, the most respected woodworking magazine in the world. With a background in engineering, woodworking, and journalism, Christiana hit the ground running when he arrived at *Fine Woodworking* magazine in 2000, rising to become chief editor, a job he held for 8 years. Along the way, he helped launch StartWoodworking.com, a free website for beginning woodworkers.

There are 25 projects ... accessible yet doable with a modest collection of simple tools and made from all sorts of materials – concrete, leather, digital tools, Arduino, welding, casting, and printing. With complete instructions for stylish and useful projects, [Handmade](#) lets makers of all skill levels explore new materials and modes – and gain the confidence to dive in deeper.

Christiana says that arising out of 'hacker' culture and a new rebellion against passive consumption, the first self-proclaimed 'makers' emerged, at first reprogramming and transforming digital devices but soon using new digital tools like 3-D printers and laser cutters to create entirely new objects and devices. These new makers needed wood, metal, leather, and power tools to make their creations come to life,

and a rediscovery of traditional crafts soon followed.

Today, maker is a big umbrella with fuzzy edges, including both digital and analog modes, pros and hobbyists, practical projects and crazy stuff made for fun – with traditional crafts and trades somewhere around the perimeter. And making it all possible: the Internet, a mind-boggling matrix of connections and capabilities, where a worldwide community can explode exponentially, sharing in real time. Makers range from artisans who turn their nose up at the word to inventors and creators who embrace it, making things no one could have predicted. Tying them together is a sense of satisfaction a million years old.

Christiana says in [Handmade](#) that as a writer, he loves the irony of microcontrollers and the Web being used to fight back against the digital age.

Outside the maker world, the movement back toward a hands-on life is taking many forms. For some it's a return to home-cooked food with fresh ingredients, guided by YouTube; for others it's as simple as puzzles, adult coloring books, or wine-and-paint classes – each delivering a bygone sense of steady, satisfying handwork. What is different this time around is how non-judgmental makers are. The new movement is a celebration, and all are welcome.

In truth, he says he has never seen a division between remodeling his house

or making the stuff that goes in it, between taking an afternoon to build a funky desk with plywood and plumbing hardware or laboring for two months to craft a chair with fine hardwoods and traditional joinery.

I am often asked how a person can painlessly dive into making things by hand and tool. I can now simply and gratefully point them to [Handmade](#). – Nick Offerman

Inspiring and informative, [Handmade](#) invites readers to join the new hand-craft movement, to expand their creativity, to build rather than to buy. Perfect for the armies of people of all ages who want to dive into the movement but haven't summoned up the courage yet, the book will guarantee success for anyone who picks it up.

Law / Self-Help / Guides

[How to Win Your Personal Injury Claim](#), 10th edition by Joseph Matthews (Nolo)

When you've been hurt in an accident, the prospect of dealing with insurance companies and lawyers can feel daunting. But armed with the right strategy, anyone can handle a claim themselves – and save thousands of dollars in the process.

Author Joseph Matthews has been an attorney since 1971, and from 1975 to 1977 taught at the law school of the University of California, Berkeley.

[How to Win Your Personal Injury Claim](#)

guides readers through the insurance claim process, step by step. After almost any kind of accident, readers learn how to:

- Figure out what their claim is worth.
- Gather the right medical records and accident reports.
- Prepare an effective demand letter.
- Counter insurance company delay and other common tactics.
- Negotiate their way to a full and fair settlement.
- Stay on top of their case if they hire a lawyer.

This completely updated edition of [How to Win Your Personal Injury Claim](#)

includes the latest state-by-state lawsuit filing deadlines and small claims court limits.

Readers don't need any special training to handle most injury claims just patience, perseverance, and some basic information about how the insurance claims process works.

According to Matthews, it usually doesn't matter whether they were partly at fault for an accident as long as the accident was not mostly their fault. They can use this book if they have been injured or their vehicle or other property has been damaged in any sort of accident that occurred when they weren't at work. Even if they were injured on the job, if someone other than their employer or a coworker might be partly to blame, they can use this book to seek compensation.

The book explains what to do if the insurance company refuses to negotiate fairly.

Readers learn to handle nearly any type of accident situation, and to navigate most of the tricky parts of the insurance claims process. The book walks them through all the different parts of the process, with samples and examples of everything they might need to do. If the claim is too complicated for them to handle, they learn that from [How to Win Your Personal Injury Claim](#), too. And the book explains how to work with an attorney if it comes to that.

Reveals step-by-step how lawyers and insurance firms process personal injury claims, and the secret formulas used to pocket a hefty share of your settlement. – San Francisco Examiner
Finally a book that takes the mystery out of personal injury claims ... consumers can confidently handle claims against insurance companies and save the cost of legal fees. – Los Angeles Times

An essential purchase. – Library Journal

In easy-to-read terms, [How to Win Your Personal Injury Claim](#) shows readers how to protect their rights after an accident, put their best case together, and avoid the insurance company runaround.

Literature & Fiction / Thriller / Noir

[Inhuman Resources](#) by Pierre Lemaitre (MacLehose Press/Quercus)

[Inhuman Resources](#) is a dark story with a few splashes of black humor and a lot of sharp twists in its plot.

When Alain Delambre lost his job four years ago, he lost everything. Now in [Inhuman Resources](#) he's breaking all the rules for one last shot at the life he thinks he deserves.

Author Pierre Lemaitre has won several literary awards, including the prestigious Prix Goncourt, for his novel *Au revoir là-haut*, published in English as *The Great Swindle*. He also won the Crime Writers' Association International Dagger three times.

Alain is a fifty-seven-year-old former HR executive, drained by four years of hopeless unemployment. The only job offers he gets are for low-level, demoralizing positions. He has reached rock bottom and can see no way out. His life is affected by the inaction and the poverty, spreading to his relationship with his wife and two daughters as well as friends and ex-colleagues.

So in [Inhuman Resources](#) when a major company finally invites him in for an interview, Alain is ready to do anything – borrow money, shame his wife and his daughters, and even participate in the ultimate recruitment test: a role-playing game that involves taking hostages. Alain vows to commit body and soul in this struggle to regain his dignity. But if he had realized that the odds were

stacked against him from the beginning, he never would have tried to land the position. Now, his fury is limitless. And what began as a role-playing game could quickly become a bloodbath.

A really excellent suspense novelist. – Stephen King

This is a fine literary thriller told in a wry, educated style with sly references to everybody from Hawthorne to Mailer. The author also brings the special gloom of French existentialism to his narrative... A high-quality experience for readers with a taste for real pessimism. – Booklist

Lemaitre takes his sardonic skills to new heights with this dark, loopy thriller, which portrays the modern workplace as the last place a displaced soul would ever want to be. – Kirkus Reviews

... a pulsating serio-comic thriller – The Sunday Times
... an absorbing and highly entertaining read – Daily Express

For noir to be good, one must plunge one's head underwater and come out just shy of drowning. Pierre Lemaitre has dared everything here. – Le Parisien

[Inhuman Resources](#) reads well, there are some tragic-comic moments, black humor and quite a bit of insight into corporate life. Alain is a likeable character whose sins readers will be inclined to forgive due to extreme circumstances.

Outdoors & Nature / Field Guides / Natural History

[Birds of Central America: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama](#) by Andrew Vallely & Dale Dyer (**Princeton Field Guides**: Princeton University Press)

[Birds of Central America](#) is the first comprehensive field guide to the avifauna of the entire region, including Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Handy and compact, the book presents text and illustrations for 1,261 resident and migrant species, and information on all rare vagrants. Two hundred sixty detailed plates on convenient facing-page spreads depict differing ages and sexes for each species, with a special focus on geographic variation. The guide also contains up-to-date range maps and concise notes on distribution, habitat, behavior, and voice. An introduction provides a brief overview of the region's landscape, climate, and biogeography.

The culmination of more than a decade of research and field experience, [Birds of Central America](#) is an indispensable resource for all those interested in the bird life of this part of the world.

- Detailed information on the entire avifauna of Central America.
- 260 color plates.
- Range maps, text, and illustrations presented on convenient facing-page spreads.
- Up-to-date notes on distribution supported by an extensive bibliography.
- Special focus on geographic variation of bird species.

Andrew C. Vallely is a naturalist who has worked and traveled extensively in Central America. Dale Dyer is an ornithological illustrator who has contributed to many books on birds. Vallely and Dyer are currently field associates in the Department of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History.

The main species accounts treat 1194 species. An additional 67 species that are known from only a few records are listed with brief remarks and literature citations in the Hypothetical List. The geographic scope of [Birds of Central America](#) includes the seven countries that make up Central America: Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama, as well as various islands that are held as territories of those countries, including Isla del Coco.

Although far smaller in land area than its continental neighbors to the north and south, Central America is rightly famous as a 'biological crossroads' or mixing zone combining in its rich biota elements derived from both North and South America. Though the region occupies just 0.4% of the earth's land

surface, it harbors about 12.5% of total global bird species richness. The 1194 species that compose the core avifauna of Central America include 959 native breeding species (some augmented seasonally by Nearctic migrants), 219 Nearctic migrant species (nonbreeding residents and transients), 8 breeding visitors, and 5 nonnative (introduced) resident species. Of these, the native breeding species are the largest group, and of those, 112 species are endemic, or very nearly endemic to Central America, meaning that they are found nowhere else.

The list of bird species used in [Birds of Central America](#) closely follows the Checklist of North American Birds. In a small number of cases, families with few representative species in the region are shown adjacent to families of similar birds. Vallely and Dyer's arrangements of species within genera and families were shaped mainly by design and space considerations. On individual plates, species are grouped in arrangements that are intended to facilitate comparison for the purpose of identification to species.

Vallely and Dyer compiled range maps from published records, specimen data, and their own observations. Three base maps are used. These are northern Central America, southern Central America, and the entire Central American region. Isla del Coco, a remote, oceanic island, is not shown. Bird distributions in many parts of Central America are imperfectly known, and the range areas presented in [Birds of](#)

Central America represent an estimate of the actual range. Bird distributions are also dynamic, and several Central American species have undergone dramatic and well-documented changes in range area.

Each species account begins with a concise, general summary of the species global distribution. These are necessarily brief, and they encourage readers to consult other references for more detailed information on the global distribution of any particular species.

Next Valley and Dyer describe the distribution of the species in Central America. These remarks typically include abundance, seasonal status, elevational range, and a broad summary of geographic occurrence. Where appropriate, they mention occurrence on various islands and also patterns of vagrancy. For species that are rare, poorly known, of conservation concern, or for which new distributional information is available, they provide the province, district, or indigenous zone for published records, and also numbered references to these publications in the bibliography.

Vallely and Dyer use seven abundance categories from most to least numerous: abundant, very common, common, fairly common, uncommon, rare, and very rare. These terms refer to the observer's likelihood of encountering a given species in appropriate habitat within its main geographic range.

The **Identification** (ID) section provides a concise summary of field marks or

diagnostic characters for each species. The emphasis is on features that are useful in field identification.

The **Habits** section provides concise information on ecological and behavioral attributes. The emphasis is on traits or associations that might aid an observer in locating and identifying a species of interest. Vallely and Dyer typically first give the vegetation strata (floor, understory, midstory, or canopy) and habitat types in which a species is most likely to be found. They list first the habitats where the species is most often found, or where it can be found in the greatest abundance. Next, they give some indication of social behavior, for example, whether the species is likely to be encountered as solitary individuals or in pairs or groups. Where appropriate, they note whether a species routinely associates with other species in mixed flocks, in feeding assemblies or at roosts. They also note cases where a species is associated with more specialized social systems.

Voice. Knowledge of the sounds produced by birds is essential to effectively locating and identifying them. In the voice section they list and describe the most frequent vocal sounds (and in some cases nonvocal sounds or sonations) produced by the species. Where possible they point out differences that may be useful in distinguishing these from similar sounds given by other species.

Plumages illustrated. The aim is to facilitate identification to species and

also to present a visual summary of broad patterns of geographic variation in Central American birds. Birds of the same species can vary greatly in appearance as the result of many factors in addition to geography. These include sex, season, molt and wear, age (plumage maturation), polymorphism, and individual variation. For species that show significant differences in appearance related to sex, age, or season, these are mentioned in the ID section and the illustrations are labeled to indicate the plumage depicted.

[Birds of Central America](#) is the first comprehensive field guide to the birds of Central America. Handy and compact, it is an indispensable resource with beautiful color plates. Continued fieldwork in the region promises to refine our understanding, and a side benefit of the maps in the guide is that they may inspire observers to document and report their observations, especially when they do not agree with what is presented.

Professional & Technical / Clinical /
Biomedical Science / Engineering

[Prostate Cancer Imaging: An Engineering and Clinical Perspective, 1st edition](#) edited by Ayman El-Baz, Gyan Pareek & Jasjit S. Suri (CRC Press)

Prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed malignancy after skin cancer and the second leading cause of male cancer-related deaths in the United States after lung cancer. However, early detection of prostate cancer increases chances of patients'

survival. Generally, CAD systems analyze the prostate images in three steps: (i) prostate segmentation; (ii) prostate description or feature extraction, and (iii) classification of the prostate status.

[Prostate Cancer Imaging](#) is a comprehensive overview of the latest research, technologies and innovations in minimally invasive imaging of the prostate gland and prostate cancer imaging. A major focus is 3D image segmentation along with computer-aided-diagnosis techniques for prostate cancer. Also featured are automated segmentation methods featuring ultrasound and MRI techniques.

Editors are Ayman El-Baz, Gyan Pareek and Jasjit S. Suri. El-Baz is a Professor, University Scholar, and Chair of the Bioengineering Department at the University of Louisville, Kentucky. El-Baz was named a Coulter Fellow for his contributions to the field of biomedical translational research. Pareek is the Director of Minimally Invasive Urologic Surgery, and Assistant Professor of Surgery (Urology) at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. Pareek is the director of the Brown medical student urology course (URO-415). Pareek is a member of the urology staff at Rhode Island Hospital, Miriam Hospital, Providence VA Medical Center, and Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island. Suri is an innovator, scientist, visionary, industrialist, and internationally known world leader in biomedical engineering. The book has 59 contributors, a number of whom are world-class experts in the

field ranging from the US, Europe, and Asia.

[Prostate Cancer Imaging](#) covers novel strategies of the state-of-the-art approaches for automated noninvasive systems for early prostate cancer diagnostics. Current diagnosing of prostate carcinoma combines digital rectal examination (DRE), prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test, and needle biopsy. Each of these techniques has its own shortcomings. The biopsy is the most precise, but is a highly invasive, expensive, and painful method for detecting prostate cancer and determining its aggressiveness. Therefore accurate, highly sensitive and specific, but noninvasive diagnostic techniques are in significant demand. Today's CAD systems analyze images from various modalities, such as ultrasound, computed tomography (CT), and MRI, to detect and localize prostate cancer, as well as evaluate its size and extent.

[Prostate Cancer Imaging](#) helps advance scientific research within the broad field of early detection of prostate cancer. This book focuses on major trends and challenges in this area, and it identifies new techniques and their use in biomedical image analysis.

Religion & Spirituality / Christianity / New Testament

[**An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation, 2nd edition**](#) by David A. deSilva (IVP Academic)

[An Introduction to the New Testament](#) is different than other introductions; many introductions zero in on the historical contexts in which the New Testament literature was written. [An Introduction to the New Testament](#) goes farther – to give particular attention to the social, cultural, and rhetorical contexts of the New Testament authors and their writings.

Few introductions to the New Testament integrate instruction in exegetical and interpretive strategies with the customary considerations of authorship, dating, audience, and message. This introduction capitalizes on the opportunity, introducing students to a relevant facet of interpretation with each portion of New Testament literature. Rarely do introductions to the New Testament approach their task mindful of students preparing for ministry. [An Introduction to the New Testament](#) is explicit in doing so, recognizing as it does that the New Testament itself – in its parts and as a whole – is a pastoral resource. Each chapter on the New Testament literature closes with a discussion of implications for ministry formation. These integrative features alone would distinguish this introduction from others. But in addition, its pages brim with maps, photos, points of interest, and aids to learning. Separate chapters explore the historical and cultural environment of the New Testament era, the nature of the Gospels and the quest for the historical Jesus, and the life of Paul.

First published in 2004, David A. deSilva's comprehensive and carefully crafted introduction to the New Testament has been long established as an authoritative textbook and resource for students. This full-color **second edition** has been updated throughout with new scholarship and numerous images.

DeSilva is Trustees' Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Greek at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio. He is the author of over twenty-five books and an ordained elder in the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church.

In our current environment deSilva says he finds two rather different ways of reading and searching the Scriptures – one is hearing from God and the other is academic study of Scripture, that is, understanding the text in relation to its historical context. He finds neither position and neither result acceptable.

[An Introduction to the New Testament](#) seeks to nurture an integrated approach to Scripture, attending both to the methods and results of the academic, critical study of the New Testament and to the ways in which these texts continue to speak a word from the Lord about discipleship, community, and ministry.

DeSilva first takes a text-centered as opposed to phenomenon-centered approach. His focus remains on the texts that make up the New Testament (and, of course, on the situations envisioned by each text) rather than the broader phenomena behind the New Testament

that belong properly to early church history and Christian origins. He is interested primarily in the context, production, and message of each text, in the pastoral challenges each addresses, and in the way each author brings the revelation of God in Christ to bear on those challenges. There is thus no attempt to reconstruct the Jesus of history, though he does, of course, introduce the working principles of that important scholarly pursuit. There is no discussion of the history of the expansion of the church except insofar as such topics have bearing on reading and understanding particular New Testament texts.

Second, he gives a great deal of attention to a wide range of interpretative strategies that represent foundational skills in the scholarly study of the New Testament and that remain available and accessible for every student's exploration of the text. These Exegetical Skill sections appear in every chapter on a New Testament text. These sections not only open up new strategies for reading but also enable readers to interact more critically with commentaries and other literature written about the text (including devotional literature and sectarian propaganda).

Third, deSilva's discussion of the message of each text, and more particularly his reflections on how the text contributes to ministry formation, gives [An Introduction to the New Testament](#) a distinctive focus on the church (from the local congregation to

the global family of God) and the work of ministry (from the general ministry of all Christians to a variety of professional ministries). The New Testament texts are formative and transformative, a facet that often goes unexplored in New Testament introductions. Since he believes that hearing the text in its original pastoral context leads directly to the most fruitful explorations of how the text invites Christian leaders and workers in our age to en flesh its ideals anew, he close each chapter with a section on 'ministry formation.' These sections are intended (1) to keep readers mindful of the ways that careful study can connect with careful application (to close the gap between the two ends of the typical seminary curriculum, namely, biblical studies and practical theology) and (2) to stimulate thought and discussion about the primary value and purpose of these texts – shaping faithful disciples, supportive communities of faith, and ministry to the world.

This excellent introduction, which I use for my New Testament introduction classes, meets a special need. DeSilva's concern for ministry application is a valuable and unique feature, and his extensive proficiency in the ancient sources, already demonstrated in earlier works, makes him an especially trustworthy guide in this area. – Craig

S. Keener, Asbury
Theological Seminary

An ideal textbook for seminary students as well as for pastors.... Written by a reputable New Testament Scholar who reveals decades of teaching wisdom on every page. – Scot McKnight, Northern Seminary

I find it extremely difficult to imagine a more well-rounded, appropriate volume for encountering the New Testament writings as ancient yet contemporary texts about Christ and discipleship – that is, as Scripture. – Michael J. Gorman, St. Mary's Seminary & University

DeSilva's excellent discussions of socio-cultural issues, such as honor/shame dynamics and patronage, are essential for anyone wanting a historically based study of the New Testament grounded in the cultural values of the first century. – Karen H. Jobes, Wheaton College and Graduate School

Comprehensive and carefully crafted as well as beautifully illustrated, [**An Introduction to the New Testament**](#) is the

first choice for those convinced that a New Testament introduction should integrate scholarship and ministry.

Religion & Spirituality / Old Testament / Theology

Theological Themes of Psalms: The Theology of the Book of Psalms by Robert D. Bell (Wipf & Stock)

The pastor who seeks to preach expositionally through Psalms faces a daunting task, for the sermon series would take several years to complete and many of the sermons would seem repetitious because of similar psalms. To respond to this challenge, Robert D. Bell in [Theological Themes of Psalms](#) uses the book theology method to analyze the Book of Psalms into twenty-eight theological themes, providing the preacher with material for approximately a one-year series on the book.

Bell, who retired in 2017, has taught Old Testament and theology seminary courses at Bob Jones University (Greenville, South Carolina) since 1968.

Each chapter includes a list of applicable theological propositions that can be preached or taught to contemporary audiences. Then the chapter concludes by linking the topic to New Testament passages.

[Theological Themes of Psalms](#) contains over seventy tables, mainly charting the Hebrew terms used for a particular theme. Careful textual and exegetical notes provide guidance for translation and interpretation of many verses.

Furthermore, relevant Hebrew word studies inform theological understanding. Backing up the analysis are numerous references to Psalm commentaries, both classical and contemporary.

Biblical theology is the science that seeks to analyze what God has revealed in the holy Scriptures and then proclaims these theological truths in propositional form. These truths fall into three main categories: (1) God, (2) man, and (3) salvation. The Bible concentrates on four main theological propositions: (1) God has spoken to mankind; (2) Man has rebelled against his Creator and sinned; (3) God threatens and carries out judgments because of sin; but the good news is that (4) in compassion God has provided salvation for mankind.

It may appear that Psalms contains a miscellaneous collection of poems written over a long period by many different authors, but according to Bell, careful study reveals a unifying element: the Holy Spirit is the real Author behind a series of human poets who focused on one key topic with a related group of themes. Since Psalms focuses on worship and prayer, the theological truths about God (His attributes and works) abound in the book's poems. Furthermore, Psalms also presents truths about mankind. The psalmists set their hopes on what God has promised to do, the key event being the universal rule of the Messiah, who is God Himself as well as David's descendent.

A table charts [Theological Themes of Psalms](#)'s arrangement, referring first to the three main categories of theology mentioned above in the first paragraph. The next column divides the book according to the four main theological propositions. Next are 28 themes that run through Psalms; these are the chapter titles of the book.

The edition of the book of Psalms that has providentially come down to us has been divided into five groups, known as 'books.' Charts are presented in color to indicate how the books advance the themes introduced in Psalms 1 and 2, thus indicating the significance of these books for theology. Bell's work on themes in Psalms, therefore, has given some attention to these divisions (especially, statistically). A table lists the psalms, verses, and Hebrew words in each of the five books.

This helpful volume provides a comprehensive summary of twenty-eight key theological themes emphasized in the book of Psalms.... The treatment is thorough, well organized, and not lacking in practical application. This book will be of great benefit for those who wish to preach or teach thematically and theologically through the Psalter. – Richard A. Taylor, Senior Professor of Old Testament Studies, Dallas Theological Seminary

Pastors and teachers need two broad categories of books in their libraries: exegetical commentaries, and works that analyze the theological messages of the biblical books. Bell's book falls into the latter category, of which there is a general paucity. Analysis is a higher-order level of reasoning, and those who do it skillfully render a remarkable service to ministers of God's word to God's people. Bell's book is a valuable asset for such ministers. – J. Randolph Jaeggli, Bob Jones University Seminary

Well analyzed and organized, [Theological Themes of Psalms](#) is a real service to preachers and teachers who wish to present the Psalms in a thoughtful and logical manner. <>

Teaching & Learning / Language / English

[International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#) edited by Mario E. López-Gopar, with series editors Sue Garton & Fiona Copland (**International Perspectives on English Language Teaching Series**: Palgrave MacMillan)

... Where this volume is innovative is in the way in which it brings together theory and practice, putting meat on the bones of the theoretical

arguments and illustrating how these can be transferred to classroom across a wide variety of global contexts. This volume is also an excellent illustration of the breadth of issues that come under the CP umbrella....

[International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#), the eleventh volume in this series, is therefore a very welcome and timely addition, which represents a valuable contribution to this increasingly important area of ELT. We hope it will support and encourage an ever-greater number of English language teachers to find their critical voices and inspire their learners to question and challenge discriminatory practices, social inequalities and ideologies of power. – Sue Garton & Fiona Copeland, series editors' preface

[International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#) is an edited collection bringing to the forefront attempts to connect critical pedagogy and ELT (English Language Teaching) in different parts of the world. The authors of this collection write from their own experiences, giving the chapters nuanced understanding of the everyday struggles that teachers, teacher educators and researchers

face within different contexts. Throughout **[International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#)**, contributors connect micro-contexts (classrooms) with macro-contexts (world migration, politics and social issues) to demonstrate the impact and influences of pedagogy. In problematizing ELT and focusing on so-called 'peripheral' countries where educators have created their own critical pedagogies to respond to their own local realities, the contributors construct ELT in a way that goes beyond the typical ESL/EFL distinction.

Editor Mario E. López-Gopar is Professor in the Faculty of Languages of the Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, Mexico. The book has 21 contributors.

Although any glance at an international coursebook may suggest otherwise, English language teaching (ELT) does not take place in a social, economic or political vacuum. The common view that English holds the key to a better life leads to the ever-greater demand for English learning and at ever earlier ages and consequently to growing inequalities of access to English language education and increasing marginalization of those who are excluded from it.

According to Lopez-Gopar, the purpose of this edited collection is to bring to the forefront attempts to connect critical pedagogics and English Language Teaching (ELT) in different parts of the world. Despite the recognition and

theorization about the importance of critical pedagogies as a way to engage students in discussions regarding discriminatory practices, social inequality, identity negotiation, and issues of power, examples of actual classroom practices, both in language classrooms and teacher preparation programs, remain scarce. [International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#) attempts to introduce the readers to critical pedagogies that have been developed in different parts of the world.

The international perspective of [International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#) makes this collection unique in terms of its contextual constraints and possibilities as well as its deconstruction of 'ELT' that goes beyond the typical English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) distinction. According to the editor, in this book, ELT is brought closer to bilingual and multilingual arenas, in which ELT juxtaposes with 'othered' languages and cultures. Furthermore, the chapters in this collection connect micro-contexts (classrooms) with macro-contexts (e.g., world migration, politics, and social struggles). The authors of these chapters write from the trenches: their own classrooms, preparation programs, and contexts. This gives the chapters a nuanced description and understanding of the everyday struggles that teachers, teacher educators, and researchers face within different contexts. The chapters consequently ground critical pedagogies and show that change occurring in micro-contexts

can make a difference in other contexts around the world once they reach their audience who may reinvent their own critical pedagogies, notwithstanding any currently held distinctions such as inner-circle or periphery.

First, Lopez-Gopar provides attempts to define critical pedagogies; he incorporates the conceptualizations of critical pedagogies pertaining to contributors included in this book. Next, he presents the three historical waves of critical pedagogies identified by Porfilio and Ford, concluding that the chapters of the present collection are an intellectual bricolage of the ideas and works of the previous critical pedagogues. Finally, he briefly introduces the three sections of [International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#): (1) teaching beyond language, (2) dialoguing with teachers, and (3) questioning the critical. In each of the three sections, he provides a succinct description of each of the critical pedagogies 'reinvented' in this book.

In the first section, the authors provide examples of how they have reinvented critical pedagogies in their own classrooms by working with language learners. In these chapters, it is evident that linguistics-related goals are not the only goals. The authors in the four chapters comprising this section demonstrate how they engage their students in dialogue and tackle the inherent connections of language with politics, minoritized groups, and monoglossic language ideologies.

In the second section of [International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#), *Dialoguing with Teachers*, the authors narrate their attempts to engage both student teachers and practicing teachers in their critical pedagogies. This section is particularly important if one wants to see critical pedagogies come to life in different classrooms around the world. In the five chapters included in this section, the authors do not regard the student teachers and teachers as technicians who will later apply critical pedagogies in their classroom, but as reflective subjects who have been also reinventing their own critical stances.

The last section of [International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#) "Questioning the Critical," brings a critical perspective to the construct of critical pedagogy. The authors of these chapters present the contextual constraints and possibilities faced by teachers who want to reinvent critical pedagogies in their classroom. While drawing examples and illustrative detail from Chapters 2 to 12, the closing chapter situates critical studies in ELT such as those in this collection within qualitative research and more specifically PQR in such a way that the critical intentions of the chapters and of this collection as a whole are effectively reflected upon and summarized.

This new edited collection by Mario E. Lopez-Gopar connects critical pedagogies and English Language Teaching (ELT)

in different parts of the world by taking readers into classrooms where critical pedagogies are brought to life. The contributors move beyond theorization about the importance of critical pedagogies to provide solid cases of actual classroom practices. The international perspectives of this book are a welcome addition to the growing work in this key area of ELT. – Luciana C. de Oliveira, Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning in the School of Education and Human Development, University of Miami and President (2018-2019), TESOL International Association

Lopez-Gopar's timely and necessary collection engages in helpful detail with the 'pedagogies' in 'critical pedagogies,' artfully connecting everyday classroom practices across an impressively wide range of national and institutional contexts to the global-level complexities of the modern-day political landscape. – Suhanthie Motha, Associate Professor in the Department of

English, University of
Washington

As we witness increasing indignities and irrationalities in the world, one wonders if or how the teaching of English can make a difference. This important collection of critical ELT pedagogies demonstrates that language is always central to how we shape our individual and collective futures. – Brian Morgan, Associate Professor, ESL and Applied Linguistics, Glendon College, York University, Canada

The international accounts of critical pedagogy in this volume describe classroom practices that resist the inherently imperialistic, colonial and socially unjust foundations of ELT. Providing a rich array of examples, concepts and practical ideas, this collection is an exciting resource for teachers, teacher educators, and researchers committed to transforming ELT. This is a hopeful book, one that not only explains this social, political, cultural and economic stance to those just beginning to see

injustice, but also provides concrete examples of critical ELT pedagogy in varied sites that should encourage experimentation and innovation by readers. – Kelleen Toohey, Professor, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University Canada

A valuable contribution, [International Perspectives on Critical Pedagogies in ELT](#) should prove significant by problematizing ELT in order to move it away from its imperialistic agenda and impel it to work in favor of othered languages and peoples. This unique edited collection will appeal to teacher educators, in-service teachers working in the field as well as students and scholars of English language teaching, second language acquisition and language education policy. <>

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