

Summer reads

Academics, administrators and senior sector figures tell us about the two books they plan to take on holiday: a new must-read and a classic worthy of a second look

David Abulafia, professor of Mediterranean history, University of Cambridge
Ruth Scurr's **John Aubrey: My Own Life** (Chatto & Windus) brilliantly reconfigures the art of biography by using what are mainly his own words to create a diary of the life of this extraordinary 17th-century antiquary who wrote and wrote, and yet published very little indeed in his own lifetime. This year marks the 600th anniversary of the Portuguese conquest of Ceuta, and I shall return with profit and pleasure to Peter Russell's **Prince Henry 'the Navigator': A Life**, which exploded the myths about a national hero who, even when painted in darker colours, retains his fascination.

Geoffrey Alderman, professor of politics and contemporary history, University of Buckingham
For my new book, I'm looking forward to reading Herlinde Pauer-Studer and J. David Velleman's study, **Konrad Morgen: The Conscience of a Nazi Judge** (Palgrave Macmillan). Morgen was a judge attached to the SS courts, in charge of prosecuting crimes committed in Nazi concentration camps. But he actually managed to indict camp officers for murder, and even attempted to obtain an arrest warrant for Adolf Eichmann. Morgen is surely the nearest we get to a "good" Nazi. For my old favourite, I'm going to reread A. J. P. Taylor's **The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918**, first published in 1954. Besides being the book that confirmed Taylor's position as Britain's leading diplomatic historian of the post-1945 era, this incisive and eminently readable study has never been superseded. Nor ever will be.



Amir Alexander, adjunct associate professor in the department of history at the University of California, Los Angeles

I plan to reread Michel Foucault's **The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences**, which argues that different historical periods organise knowledge differently and thus produce different kinds of science. I read it for the first time 25 years ago, and it influenced everything I have done since. I also hope to get to Massimo Bucciantini and Michele Camerota's **Galileo's Telescope: A European Story** (Harvard University Press). The Galileo affair is endlessly fascinating because one can actually see the transformation of an old world and the emergence of a new one. By looking at Galileo's reception across Europe, this book adds a new dimension to the story.



Rebecca Boden, director of the Centre for Organisational Research, University of Roehampton

Brenda Murphy's delightful book **Brewing Identities: Globalisation, Guinness and the Production of Irishness** (Peter Lang) should convince the holidaying academic that work can be fun. Murphy travels the world, exploring the political economy of the velvet brew and its role in producing Irish national identity by interviewing the people who make it and sharing a pint with those who drink it. To return to earth, I'll turn to Machiavelli's **The Prince**, the classic exposition on how governing might involve not just following the rules but bending them in order to stay in power – how apposite for the modern academy.

2015

Chris Brink, vice-chancellor, Newcastle University, winner of Outstanding Leadership and Management Team, *Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards 2015* I'm a logician, and I'm afraid it shows, so this summer I will look over the fence into the world of rhetoric by reading Mark Forsyth's **The Elements of Eloquence: How to Turn the Perfect English Phrase** (Icon), which is about figures of speech, from anaphora to zeugma. I will also read **Red Dust Road**, the memoir of our professor of creative writing, Jackie Kay, on adoption, ethnicity and identity, because I remain intrigued by the question of why the British find diversity so difficult.

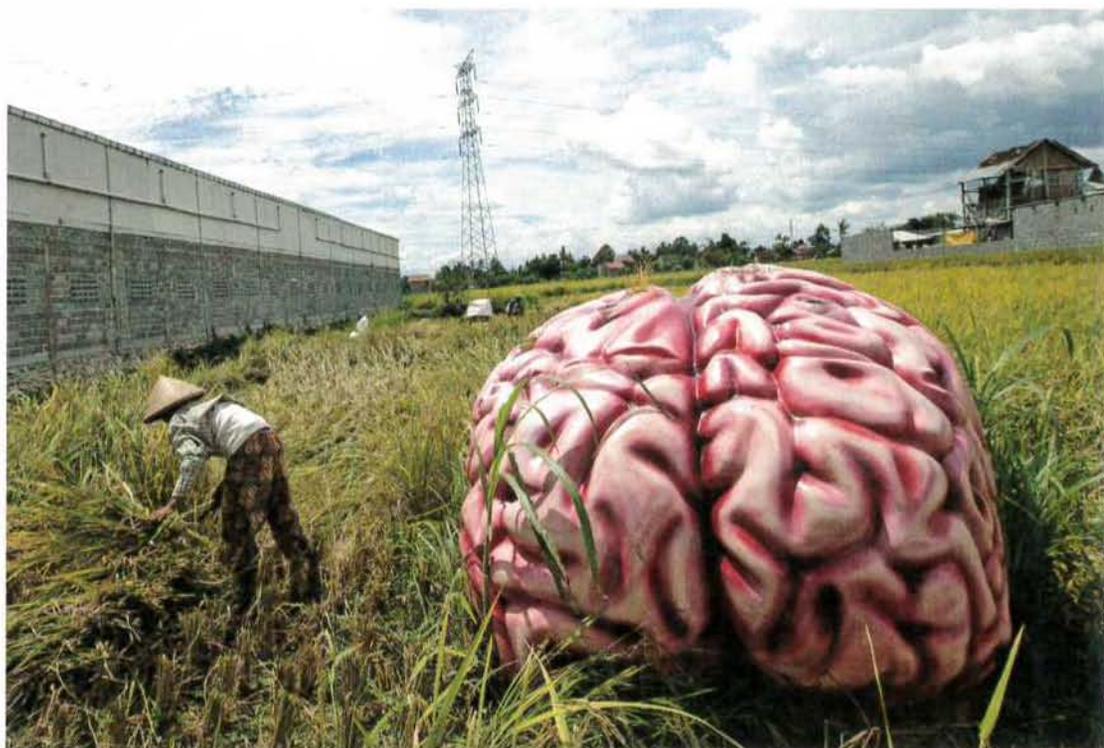
Joanna Bryson, reader in intelligent systems, University of Bath

There's a Japanese word for people like me with books stacked by their bed. Right now I'm working hardest on Martin Ford's **Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future** (Basic Books), which, although really interesting, hasn't yet convinced me that artificial intelligence rather than financial policy is to blame for our increasing income disparity. I started Joan Didion's memoir **Where I Was From** years ago to get in touch with my expat side, but it's really about how corruption explains California's success. I'll try again, but may switch to her fiction, as I did last summer when I read through **A Book of Common Prayer**.



Carina Buckley, learning skills tutor, library and learning services, Southampton Solent University

My old favourite is Arlie Russell Hochschild's **The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling**. In this groundbreaking study, Hochschild examined the emotions of flight attendants and considered where those emotions came from. Her focus on the corporate ownership of feelings and the clash with authenticity resonate strongly in this increasingly customer service-oriented world. My new book will be Rosemary Sullivan's **Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva** (HarperCollins), an account of the horrors of a nation seen through the tragedy of an individual. Alliluyeva was as much a victim of her father as any Gulag inmate, and Sullivan treats her with gentle but searching honesty.



Andy Clark, professor of logic and metaphysics, University of Edinburgh

In **After Phrenology: Neural Reuse and the Interactive Brain** (MIT Press), Michael L. Anderson displays the human brain as fundamentally an organ for the control of action. This alters how we should think about the role of neural regions, and raises important questions about the proper shape of the sciences of mind. Susan Hurley's **Consciousness in Action** is a wonderful, densely packed, roller-coaster ride of a book that presents a picture of the mind and self as inextricable from complex webs of perception and action. Published in 1998, it remains far ahead of its time.

Annie Cohen-Solal, senior associate researcher, Labex TransferS, École Normale Supérieure, Paris I will look forward to getting back to Jeremy Adelman's **Worldly Philosopher: The Odyssey of Albert O. Hirschman** (Princeton University Press), a magnificent investigation and an essential contribution to global research, written in most enjoyable prose. It unveils how Hirschman – a migrant and a “passeur” – forged new practical routes to economic development in Colombia. In the same line – namely a very innovative and unsurpassed document – my old favourite is James Agee and Walker Evans' **Let Us Now Praise Famous Men**, a book that I always keep by my bedside, a blunt report on deep poverty and the “invisible ones” of Alabama in the 1930s.



Michael Corballis, professor of psychology, University of Auckland, New Zealand

I am immersed in Michael S. Gazzaniga's **Tales from Both Sides of the Brain: A Life in Neuroscience** (HarperCollins), on the “split-brain” studies in the 1960s that created the left brain/right brain cult that is still with us. But it's not a scientific treatise or a polemic; it's a racy autobiographical account of the personal side of scientific life. On a related theme, I'll be checking back on Martin Gardner's 1964 classic, **The Ambidextrous Universe**, which set me off on the question of why the two hands and the two sides of the brain are at once so alike and yet so different.

Debby Cotton, professor of higher education pedagogy and head of educational development, Plymouth University

As an educational developer and sustainability researcher, I sometimes struggle to explain the importance of understanding how knowledge works in other disciplines. For this reason, I'll be delving into Harvey J. Graff's **Undisciplining Knowledge: Interdisciplinarity in the Twentieth Century** (Johns Hopkins University Press) – a book that explores the “myths, exaggerations and misunderstandings” that surround interdisciplinarity. Linked to this, I'll revisit Tony Becher and Paul R. Trowler's **Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines** – a fascinating study of social relationships within and between disciplines. Despite the diversification of higher education since the book was written, its insights remain as valid as ever.

Kerstin Dautenhahn, professor of artificial intelligence, University of Hertfordshire

I am looking forward in late summer to reading Murray Shanahan's **The Technological Singularity** (MIT Press), which promises to introduce possible scenarios and their consequences for a near (or far) future when intelligent machines may reach or go

Magna Carta and a rich commentary on England under King John will be the perfect accompaniment to a glass of Pimm's in a sunny English garden

beyond human abilities. Still for work, but also for pleasure, I would like to revisit Robert Jay Russell's **The Lemurs' Legacy: The Evolution of Power, Sex and Love**, to be reminded once again of the important animal origins and evolutionary history of human behaviour. Primatology, including the pioneering work of the late Alison Jolly, has significantly shaped my view of human and artificial intelligence since my student days.



Thomas Docherty, professor of English and of comparative literature, University of Warwick
As a one-time not-very-good mathematician, I'll be reading Cédric Villani's **Birth of a Theorem: A Mathematical Adventure** (Bodley Head). Villani is utterly cognisant of the centrality of chance and luck to even the most goal-oriented research. With a bit of that luck, perhaps I'll understand something of the Boltzmann equation (unlikely). I'll also be returning to Hannah Arendt's **Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought**, to learn from her brilliant analyses of tradition, authority and freedom, and how these all coincide with major crises in education and in culture. These essays, written between 1954 and 1968, are uncannily prescient engagements with issues that were in Arendt's future, but which constitute our present.

Edzard Ernst, emeritus professor of complementary medicine, University of Exeter
A devoted worshipper of Hitler, Joseph Goebbels became one of the main facilitators of Nazi evil. He abandoned all scruples and humanity for power and fame, thus causing the deaths of millions and eventually even killing himself, his wife and all six of his children. Peter Longerich's **Goebbels: A Biography** (Bodley Head) is a fascinating, chilling and exceedingly well-researched book. During difficult times, Kingsley Amis' **Lucky Jim** – a classic satire of British academia – often helped me to see the funny side of it all. It needs to be reread regularly, and hopefully it will cheer me up yet again while I am trying to digest Longerich's book.

Helen Fulton, professor of medieval literature, University of Bristol
From the flurry of books celebrating 800 years of the landmark document, I've earmarked the latest Penguin edition, in Latin and English, of **Magna Carta**. David Carpenter's translation and his rich commentary on England under the tyrannical reign of King John will be the perfect accompaniment to a glass of Pimm's in a sunny English garden. On holiday in France, I'll be returning to Saskia Sassen's **Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages**. A sociological account of nation-building starting with the Carolingian Empire, this compelling analysis has been a catalyst for my research on cities and globalisation in the Middle Ages.

John Gilbey lectures in IT service management, Aberystwyth University
Always on the lookout for something original in an academic text, I found it in John Warren's **The Nature of Crops: How We Came to Eat the Plants We Do** (CABI), an engagingly written look at the development of modern food crops, with reference to more than 50 examples that you have probably never thought hard about. An old favourite is Gilbert White's **The Natural History of Selborne**. In a series of letters, White presents his views – occasionally mistaken, but who can say otherwise? – of natural history from the perspective of an 18th-century country cleric observing the changes in his Hampshire parish. The sometimes flowery style may irk modern readers, but there is fine material here, offering a vivid picture of a place and time.

Les Gofton, teaching fellow in sociology, Durham University
The Fatal Shore is Robert Hughes' extraordinary account of the transportation of "undesirables" to Australia, Georgian England's attempt to deal with threats to property in a society with neither the means nor the will to create equitable methods of redistribution, and dominated by a class without the intellect or humanity to conceive a humane response. Tom Perchard's **After Django: Making Jazz in Postwar France** (University of Michigan Press) debunks the mythology of the French as civilised, sympathetic patrons of a black American art form, and instead offers a very





human story of artistic values twisted around personal ambitions and complex cultural and social contexts. Both are thrilling works of scholarship.

Elizabeth Greene, professor emerita of English, Queen's University, Canada

I want to read more James Merrill, and Langdon Hammer's **James Merrill: Life and Art** (Knopf), the first full-length biography, seems like a good start. Hammer "is interested in the ways the poet's life has been imagined and lived" and Merrill's life was a brilliant complement to his witty, formalist poetry. As robots become more prominent, it seems a good time to revisit Victoria Nelson's **The Secret Life of Puppets**, a magisterial yet funky discussion of puppets, robots – and humans. Beneath this wide-ranging examination of books and films lies Nelson's thesis that our worldview is in transition from Aristotelian to Platonic.

Neil Gregor, professor of modern European history, University of Southampton

I am currently enjoying Matthew Kelly's **Quartz and Feldspar: Dartmoor – A British Landscape in Modern Times** (Vintage), which surveys human encounters with, and action upon, the apparently timeless, immutable granite uplands of Devon and Cornwall since the late 18th century. Elegantly written, shrewdly observed, and a perfect read for those "staycationing" there in particular. For those seeking further shores, David Abulafia's fine 2008 book, **The Discovery of Mankind: Atlantic Encounters in the Age of Columbus**, demonstrates how England's colonialist history was – through commerce, travel, migration and war – always closely entwined with similar histories lived and played out in Europe and beyond.

Nick Hillman, director,

Higher Education Policy Institute

David Turner's **The Old Boys: The Decline and Rise of the Public School** (Yale University Press) is written with verve and punctures a number of misconceptions, including the idea that these schools were always strong academically. My own research looks at the relationship between public schools and the state, so I've enjoyed harrumphing each time Turner ignores it. I'm tempted to revisit **Jogging Round Majorca** by the journalist Gordon West. Published in 1929, it is a delightful account of a trip to this Balearic island in pre-tourist days, including travelling by mule. I have no intention of visiting the place, but can't help wondering if it could still be the peaceful haven that West describes.



Jeremy Holmes, chief operating officer, Universities UK

Simon Armitage, newly appointed professor of poetry at the University of Oxford, is good at wry, reflective commentary, drawing on local detail. His travelogue **Walking Away** (Faber & Faber) comes from walking England's southwest peninsula; we'll be on holiday in Cornwall so I'm anticipating slowing to his pace and his melancholic but strangely uplifting tone. My old favourite is Raymond Tallis' **Reflections of a Metaphysical Flâneur and Other Essays**. This collection of pieces from a

professor of geriatric medicine who became a philosopher is worth revisiting for its profound insights on consciousness and mortality, expressed with real-world relevance and considerable wit. I heard him speak years ago, and this is like the man: deeply intelligent, immensely likeable.

Aminul Hoque, lecturer in education, Goldsmiths, University of London

This summer I am looking forward to rereading Chris Kearney's **The Monkey's Mask: Identity, Memory, Narrative and Voice**. This insightful book takes a refreshingly original look at the identity "riddle" in our so-called globalised, postmodern and mass-mediated times. It grapples with the complexity and dynamism of identity and inspired me to explore my own multifaceted identity. I am also keen to read Jeremy Seabrook's **The Song of the Shirt: The High Price of Cheap Garments, from Blackburn to Bangladesh** (Hurst), which promises a critical examination of the global manufacturing industry by investigating the intertwined histories of workers in Bangladesh and Lancashire.

Sally Hunt, general secretary, University and College Union

Harry McShane: No Mean Fighter, McShane's autobiography written with Joan Smith, is a tale of poverty, politics and the struggle for a better life in shipbuilding Glasgow. This book encompasses the dawn of the 20th century, the First World War, the hunger marches and the developing political and industrial struggle through the life of one man, and it is an extraordinary story. The TUC report **Women and Casualisation: Women's Experiences of Job Insecurity** focuses the mind as it highlights how the growth of insecure work has impacted heavily on women with caring responsibilities. Via the experiences of 12 women, the study shows how those who need flexibility are increasingly marginalised in jobs with fluctuating hours, insecure contracts, low pay and no prospect of promotion.

Fiona Ingleby, research fellow in evolutionary genetics, University of Sussex

My travels and love of animals have made me passionate about conservation, so I'm about to start reading Beth Shapiro's **How to Clone a Mammoth: The Science of De-Extinction** (Princeton University Press). I'm hoping it will be a thought-provoking discussion of human intervention in nature and conservation efforts, rather than a manual for anyone wanting to create their own Jurassic Park. I'd also like to revisit Rachel Carson's **Silent Spring**, which I haven't read since my undergraduate degree. It seems particularly relevant at a time when politicians across the world are struggling to commit to helping the environment.

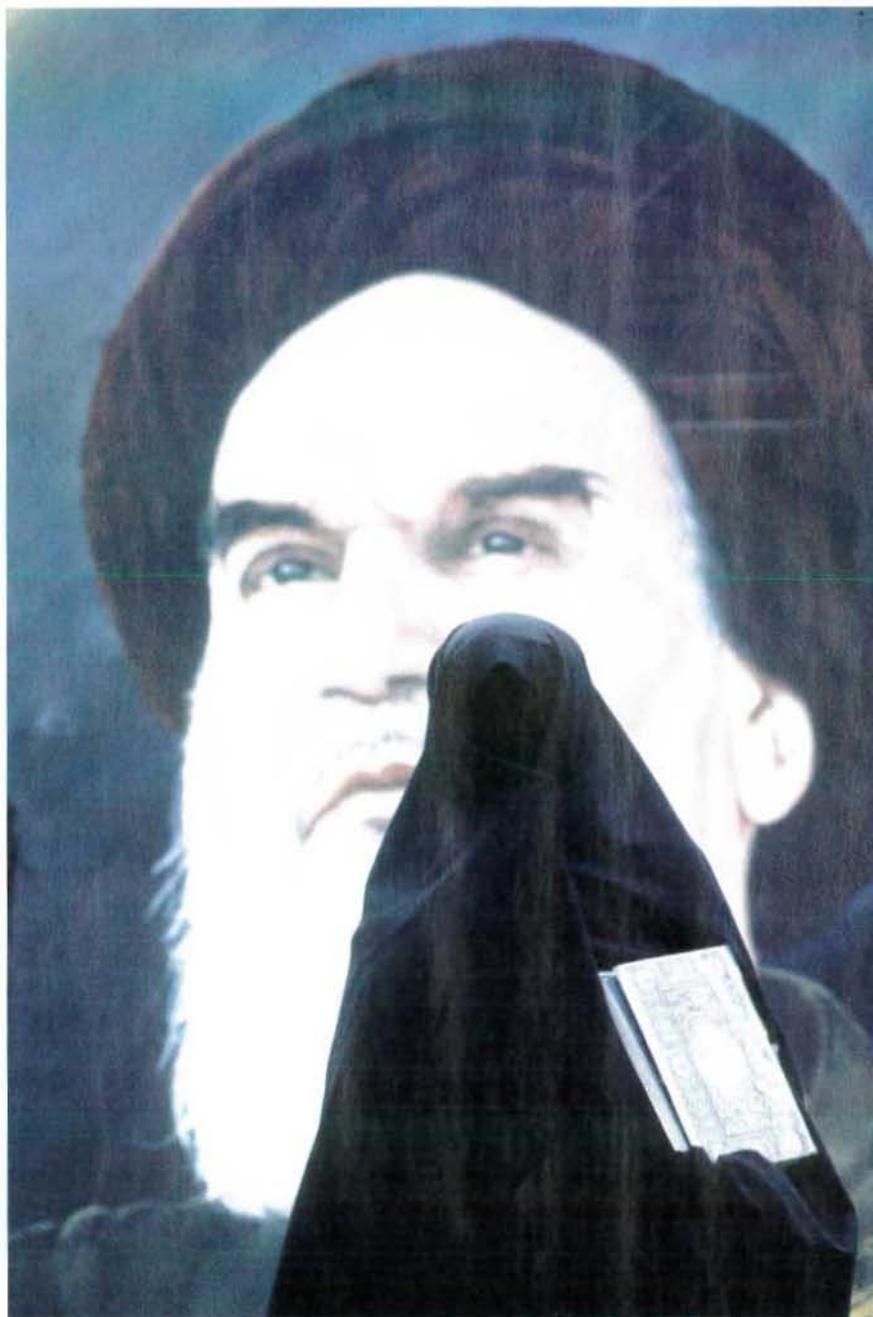
Fred Inglis, honorary professor of cultural history, University of Warwick

My first choice, Raymond Geuss' **Politics and the Imagination**, was little noticed on publication, but it is a miniature classic worthy of strenuous rereading. It is a

Xerxes is one of history's most vilified figures; a byword for autocracy, he enthralled and terrified the West for a generation

pungent and at times scornful call for realism in political theory, which is to say attention not to vapouring about rights and values, but to the hardness of action and context. My second choice is a novel, John Williams' **Augustus**, an epistolary fiction dramatising the great emperor's life in all its magnificence – a feat of astonishing learning and a dazzling example of how to write living history.

Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, professor of ancient Greek and Iranian studies, University of Edinburgh
Having just returned from Iran, I'm reading Richard Stoneman's **Xerxes: A Persian Life** (Yale University Press), the first attempt since Plutarch to write an Achaemenid royal biography. Xerxes is one of the most vilified figures in history; a byword for autocracy, he enthralled and terrified the West for a generation. Then I'll return to Baqer Moin's groundbreaking work **Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah**, a penetrating study of the radical and charismatic Imam. Khomeini is one of the most vilified figures in history; a byword for autocracy, he enthralled and terrified the West for a generation...*plus ça change*.



Henriette Louwerse, senior lecturer in Dutch, University of Sheffield, and chair of the Association for Low Countries Studies in the UK and Ireland
Exploring the Dutch Empire: Agents, Networks and Institutions, 1600-2000 (Bloomsbury), edited by Catia Antunes and Jos Gommans, examines the formal and informal heterogeneous networks that emerged with Dutch expansion overseas from the 17th century onwards. As a literary scholar, I am particularly interested in how these transnational and transcultural connections affected the identity and self-image of the Dutch. And since I will be travelling to Italy, France and the Netherlands over the summer, it seems fitting to revisit Louis Couperus' 1906 family saga **Old People and the Things That Pass**, about a *crime passionnel* committed in the Dutch East Indies and involving much, much travelling around Europe.

Karen McAulay, music and academic services librarian and postdoctoral researcher, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
I hope to read **Artistic Practice as Research in Music: Theory, Criticism, Practice** (Ashgate), edited by Mine Doğanatan-Dack. Two of the contributors, Celia Duffy and Stephen Broad, are my colleagues, and practice-based research is big on our agenda, so this will be stimulating. If there's time, I'll revisit Gerard Genette's **Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation (Literature, Culture, Theory)**. Paratext is really important in my own research. Before reading Genette, I had already drawn parallels between Walter Scott's *The Antiquary* and contemporary writing in Scottish music prefaces, so I was delighted to benefit from his thoughts on paratext in Scott's novels.

Lisa McKenzie, research fellow in the department of sociology, London School of Economics
It's been a tough year for those of us who fight inequality – and it became worse at 10pm on 7 May. I'm in need of dissent, rule-breaking, a bit of anarchy. So my perfect summer read is a book that has the words "rules" and "stupidity" in its title and critiques mindless bureaucracy: David Graeber's **The Utopia of Rules: On Technology,**



Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy (Melville House). I have read Richard Hoggart's 1957 book **The Uses of Literacy** many times. Hoggart was a working-class academic who wrote beautifully about a time I don't remember, but I have heard these stories and these narratives all my life. This book allows me to be who I am. In a place that is sometimes foreign.

David Palfreyman, bursar and fellow, New College, Oxford

James McKeen Cattell's **University Control** is a collection of essays on the management of US universities a century ago. The modern (1900s) university is lamented as an entity dominated by "a boss" (aka "the university

president"), supported by a network of "sub-bosses", and all beaver away to create "demoralisation" across the campus. *Plus ça change!* William Whyte's **Redbrick: A Social and Architectural History of Britain's Civic Universities** (Oxford University Press) is a magnificent review of the two-centuries-long evolution of the civics, from anti-Oxbridge University College London and King's College London via Manchester and Birmingham serving their local economies to Keele and Essex. The perceptive epilogue, "Redbrick since 1997" sees the civic returning to the future, an entity re-embedded in its local community.

Sandeep Parmar, lecturer in English, University of Liverpool

I'll be reading Langdon Hammer's **James Merrill: Life and Art** (Knopf). A major figure in post-war American poetry, and a formal and highly erudite poet, Merrill was the son of the co-founder of the brokerage firm Merrill Lynch. Born to wealth and privilege, he produced an enormous amount of poetry, including *The Changing Light at Sandover*, inspired by conversations with the dead via a Ouija board. Jahan Ramazani's **A Transnational Poetics** is foundational to a rethinking of poetry across shifting cultural ground (language, migration, genre, influence). And like all important scholarship, it opens up new forward paths on rereading.



Hillegonda Rietveld, professor of sonic culture, London South Bank University

Richard Middleton's **Studying Popular Music** does exactly what its title promises, in a well-considered manner. When it was first published in 1990, a reviewer asked why it is necessary to be so difficult about simple pleasures – yet Middleton shows that our pleasures are not so simple after all. A classic to revisit 25 years on. By contrast, **How to Write about Music: Excerpts from the 33 1/3 Series, Magazines, Books and Blogs with Advice from Industry-leading Writers** (Bloomsbury), edited by Marc Woodworth and Ally-Jane Grossan, provides a diverse set of experienced voices in different word lengths; ideal for travel conditions during the summer.



Like everybody else, I read *The Silence of the Lambs* when it was published. But why are today's students still so drawn to Clarice Starling?

Nicola Rollock, deputy director of the Centre for Research in Race and Education, University of Birmingham
 Top of my to-read list is Lauren A. Rivera's **Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs** (Princeton University Press). While understanding disadvantage is important, insufficient attention tends to be paid to how those who are privileged gain and retain their position and power; such analysis is crucial if we are truly to move to a more equal society. I hope to revisit bell hooks' **Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics**, which brings together an analysis of these three things in a way I had not hitherto known to be possible in academia. The combination of empirical evidence, critical reflection and personal observation spoke powerfully to me as a female academic of colour.



Ann Singleton, senior research fellow, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol and co-chair, Statewatch Trustees
 Migration, state policy and global economic transformations produce fascinating subject material. Understanding this dynamic field, the consequences for people's lives and related policy challenges requires meticulous documentation and rigorous critical thinking. Along with the critically essential work done by Statewatch (www.statewatch.org), two new books should be standard reading in this field. **Daughter of Good Fortune: A Twentieth-Century Chinese Peasant Memoir** (University of Washington Press) by Chen Huiqin with Shehong Chen, details the changing life of a woman and her family through the political and economic changes of the 20th century in China. **Global Migration Issues: Old Assumptions, New Dynamics** (Praeger), edited by Diego Acosta Arcarazo and Anja Wiesbrock, is another new and essential contribution.

Shlomo Sand, professor emeritus in history, Tel Aviv University, Israel
 I would like to highly recommend the new book by the demographer Emmanuel Todd, **Qui est Charlie? Sociologie d'une crise religieuse** (Seuil). This non-conformist scholar asserts that the mass demonstrations in France on 11 January, in response to the horrible massacre of 7 January, are more of an expression of rising Islamophobia in the (mainly ex-Catholic) middle class than they are a legitimate protest against terror. This summer I also plan to reread Benedict Anderson's classic work **Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism**. I doubt I could have written my latest books without this original researcher's theoretical breakthrough.

Peter J. Smith, reader in Renaissance literature, Nottingham Trent University
 Paul Edmondson's small but perfectly formed **Shakespeare** (Profile) is a charming and splendidly illuminating beginner's guide, not without some recondite gems. Who knew that Cardinal Cap Alley (next to the Globe) was "named after the shape and colour of the top of a penis"? Edmondson's playful fluency certainly convinced me that the pursuit of Shakespeare "is a justifiable hedonism". I've just reread Mary Douglas' **Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo**. First published in 1966, this classic of



anthropology famously asserts that “dirt is essentially disorder”, specific to particular cultures and therefore relative rather than absolute.

Claire Surr, professor of dementia studies, Leeds Beckett University

My summer read will be **The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry** (Oxford University Press), edited by K. W. M. Fulford et al. Texts such as this highlight the rich tapestry of ideas that result from interdisciplinary intersections of the study of health and illness. I would love to revisit Thomas S. Kuhn's **The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought**. This book on revolutionary scientific theory, which I first read as an undergraduate, was important in opening my eyes to the fact that knowledge is never independent of its temporal and cultural context, and the ripples created by new perspectives can have a wide-ranging impact beyond their immediate field.

Laurie Taylor, fellow, Birkbeck, University of London

An easy choice: Ruben Andersson's **Illegality, Inc: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe** (University of California Press) deservedly won this year's BBC Radio 4 *Thinking Allowed* Ethnography Award for its wholly original and thoroughly topical analysis of the self-generating nature of current migration policies. Meanwhile, as a corrective to the reductionist neuroscientists who claim to have discovered the precise cortical location of affection, I will be returning with delight to Roland Barthes' **A Lover's Discourse: Fragments** for a wonderful reminder of the deliciously irreducible complexity of love.

Marina Warner, professor of English and creative writing, Birkbeck, University of London

A new book: Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq's **Leg Over Leg** (New York University Press), by all accounts the finest, wildest, funniest and most surprising novel in Arabic, was first published in 1855; Humphrey Davies has just finished bringing us all four volumes in English – a tour de force of the translator's art. A classic/old favourite: the extraordinary and empathetic insights of Michel de Certeau in **The Practice of Everyday Life** keep coming back in these times when so many people are displaced, stripped of ordinary life and ordinary possessions and needing to find bearings in unfamiliar surroundings.

Andy Westwood, professor of politics, University of Winchester, and associate vice-president of public affairs, University of Manchester

First on my list is **More Human: Designing a World Where People Come First** (Ebury) by Steve Hilton, with Scott Bade and Jason Bade. Hilton is sometimes satirised – as Stewart Pearson in *The Thick of It* and via the spoof Twitter account @SteveHiltonGuru – and is



best known as David Cameron's former adviser. These days he teaches at Stanford University and runs a tech start-up. I once worked with him, and he was creative, provocative and interesting. I'm expecting his book to be the same. In light of the government's devolution agenda, I'll be revisiting Sir Peter Hall's **Cities in Civilisation** – his account of cities' often fleeting periods of intense innovation and creativity. By the time he reaches the 19th and 20th centuries, universities and learned societies begin to play a powerful role, with many of them established or expanded in these eras.

Joanna Williams, director, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Kent

The best book I've read this year is sociologist Jennie Bristow's **Baby Boomers and Generational Conflict** (Palgrave Macmillan). It sometimes seems as if the people born after the Second

World War are responsible for every social problem. In this engaging book, Bristow cuts through this divisive narrative with scholarly precision and explores the reality rather than the myths surrounding this key issue of our times. I will revisit a 1992 collection by the inspirational Camille Paglia, **Sex, Art, and American Culture: Essays**. Paglia's critique of feminism and the “modern sex war” is as vital today as when it was first published.

David Wilson, professor of criminology and founding director of the Centre for Applied Criminology, Birmingham City University

American “true crime” writing always seems so much better than our own, and the *Los Angeles Times* journalist Jill Leovy's **Ghettoside: Investigating a Homicide Epidemic** (Bodley Head), drawing on a decade's worth of her reporting on and with the homicide units of the Los Angeles Police Department, promises to reveal a great deal about American violence, gangs and murder. Like everybody else, I read Thomas Harris' novel **The Silence of the Lambs** when it was first published – nearly three decades ago. But why are today's students, as evidenced by their personal statements, still so drawn to Clarice Starling? ●



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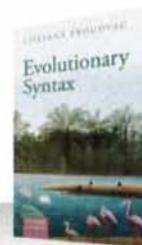
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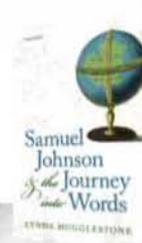
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