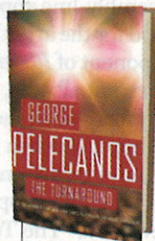


Poolside Seminars

Summer reading, from pulp to politics (when they're not one and the same).



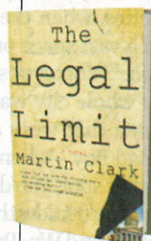
Guilt-Free Pulp



The Turnaround, by George Pelecanos (Little, Brown, August 1, \$24.99) A detective writer's detective writer, Pelecanos isn't the crime-fiction world's best-kept secret anymore, much to the chagrin of his devotees.



Alive in Necropolis, by Doug Dorst (Riverhead, July 17, \$25.95) This playful debut follows a first-year cop trying to police the citizens, and perhaps ghosts, of Colma, California, the tiny town where San Francisco buries its dead.

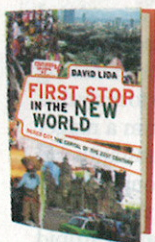


The Legal Limit, by Martin Clark (Knopf, July 8, \$24.95) Once called "the drinking man's John Grisham," Clark puts his experiences as a Virginia circuit-court judge into his latest thriller, about brothers caught up in a murder case.

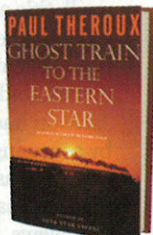


Red Lights, by Georges Simenon (NYRB Classics, \$14) Just the thing to take your mind off \$4 gas: a truly chilling road-trip novel about a couple on their way to Maine to collect the kids from camp—and the escaped con who joins them.

Armchair Tourism



First Stop in the New World, by David Lida (Riverhead, \$25.95) A wonderful trip through Mexico City, from its last cabaret to *pueco profundo* tacos to *Oooralee*, a magazine that makes *Star* look downright prudish.



Ghost Train to the Eastern Star, by Paul Theroux (Houghton Mifflin, August 18, \$28) The world-weary traveler revisits the near-endless pan-Eurasian journey he immortalized in 1975's *The Great Railway Bazaar*.



The Anglo Files, by Sarah Lyall (Norton, August 18, \$24.95) The opening anecdote (about an earl who drives a decrepit Jeep around his estate) sets the tone for this mischievous inquiry into why the British are different.



The Dud Avocado, by Elaine Dundy (NYRB Classics, \$14.95) It's almost 1960 when Sally Jay Gorce, our irrepressible heroine, lands in Paris, where she has her first affairs, learns how to lie, and survives a run-in with white-slavers.

Respectable Flings



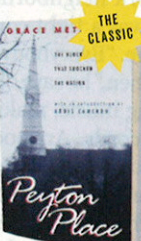
Train to Trieste, by Domnica Radulescu (Knopf, August 5, \$23.95) Mona Manoliu flees Eastern Bloc Romania and her shady love interest for Chicago, only to return decades later, in this geopolitical romance.



Whacked, by Jules Asner (Weinstein, \$23.95) Asner, the wife of director Steven Soderbergh and a former E! host, delivers a crowd-pleaser novel complete with celebrity gossip, conspiracy theories, and necrophilia.

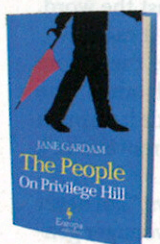


The Summer of Naked Swim Parties, by Jessica Anya Blau (Harper Perennial, \$13.95) Sadly, not a photo essay, but rather a witty account of the agonies and ecstasies of a girl coming of age in late-seventies California.

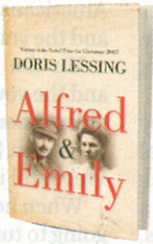


Peyton Place, by Grace Metalious (Northeastern University, \$17.95) This 1956 hit about the underside of a New England town is mild stuff today, but it's fun to spend the weekend with the book your mom hid from her parents.

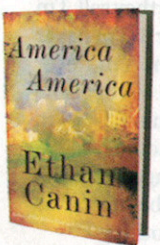
The Smart Stuff



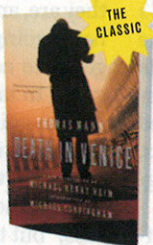
The People on Privilege Hill, by Jane Gardam (Europa, July 29, \$15.95) Subway-ride-length stories examine the turmoil below the surface in the lives of lonely, eccentric Brits. Flannery O'Connor without the menace.



Alfred and Emily, by Doris Lessing (HarperCollins, August 5, \$25.95) Lessing, who's pushing 90, first reimagines the paths her parents' lives might have taken if World War I hadn't happened, then unveils the sad reality.

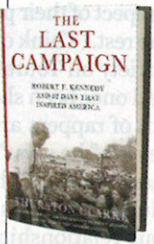


America America, by Ethan Canin (Random House, June 24, \$27) Finally, a meaty novel from the short-story writer: a scandal featuring a fictional candidate for the 1972 presidency, as witnessed by a rags-to-riches protégé out of Dickens.

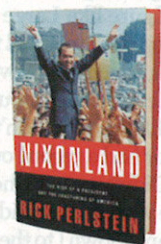


Death in Venice, by Thomas Mann (Harper Perennial, \$12.95) The euro is making Continental journeys full of erotic yearning less of a sure thing than they used to be. So live vicariously, yet again.

Political Primers



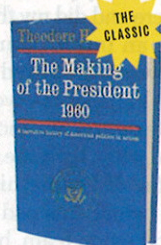
The Last Campaign: Robert F. Kennedy and 82 Days That Inspired America, by Thurston Clarke (Henry Holt, \$25) Piercing and painstakingly researched, it's political history written right.



Nixonland, by Rick Perlstein (Scribner, \$37.50) The title might make bleeding hearts skip a beat; Perlstein looks at how Tricky Dick fashioned his Silent Majority and how it still hasn't gone away.



Kafka Comes to America, by Steven Wax (Other Press, \$25.95) Wax was the lawyer for two modern-day Joseph K.'s—an attorney and a Sudanese relief worker arrested as suspected terrorists—and his twisted courtroom drama is long overdue.



The Making of the President 1960, by Theodore H. White (Barnes & Noble) White has been accused of "mythmaking" (the Camelot analogy, for one), but his account of Kennedy versus Nixon is beyond engaging.