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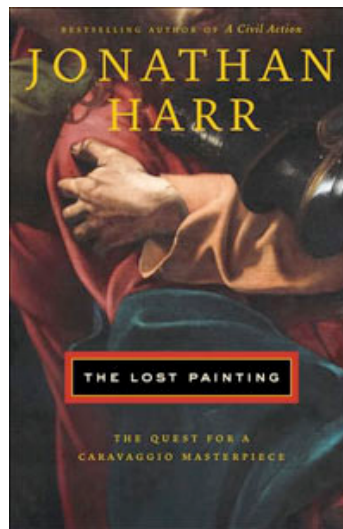
On My Bookshelf...

...An occasional glimpse at favorite book titles, as suggested by members of the Claremont McKenna College community.

Cindi Guimond, assistant director of academic affairs:

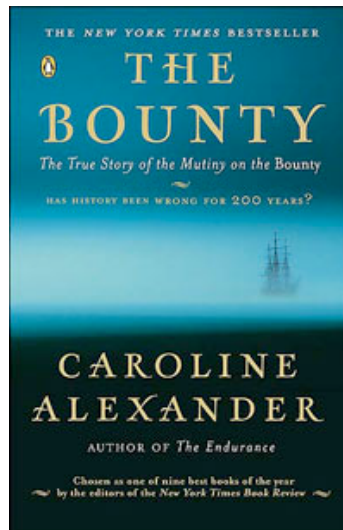
The Lost Painting: the Quest for a Caravaggio Masterpiece, by Jonathan Harr

"I was actually an art history minor in college—one of those individuals who dabbled in history because I cannot draw. *The Lost Painting* tells the provenance of a painting from its inception to its current home in the National Gallery of Ireland. It is a non-fiction book that reads like a novel. A fascinating tale."



The Bounty, by Caroline Alexander

"The first time I read *Mutiny on the Bounty*, I was sure that I wanted to run away to sea and sail with Fletcher Christian. Ms. Alexander's book allows the tomboy and adventurer in all of us to relive those days from the safety of our couch. Sail away on this adventure and indulge your inner longing for a long sea journey."



The Memory Keeper's Daughter, by Kim Edwards

"We all make mistakes in our lives, some larger than others. This is the story of heartbreak and joy when a doctor thinks he will be saving his family, only to lose himself in the process."

Bestiary by Robert Masello
(visiting instructor of literature)

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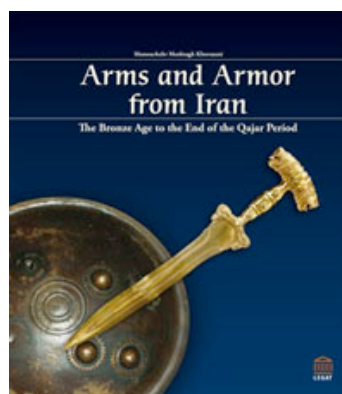
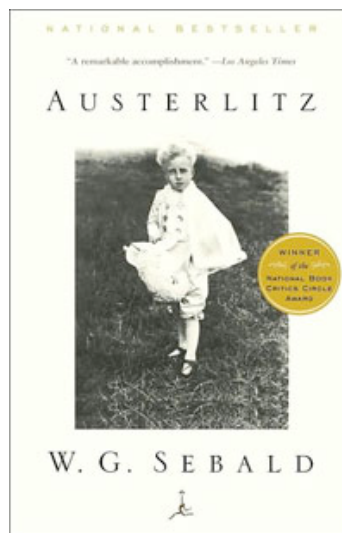
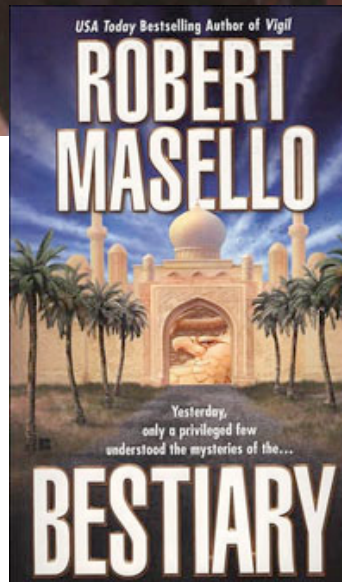
at CMC)

"Yes, CMC's very own screenwriter-in-residence has written a wonderful novel full of intrigue, fanciful beasts, both human and non-human, all leading to a mysterious manuscript."

John Meany, director of forensics

Austerlitz, by W.G. Sebald
"I am currently reading W.G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*, the story of the search for personal history and the coherence of memory. Through a series of extended conversations that take place over many years, the narrator engages a war orphan, Jacques Austerlitz, who had been sent from Prague to Britain in the KinderTransport of 1939. In a compelling monologue, the narrator reveals the struggle for memory, identity, and meaning amidst trauma. The extraordinarily detailed descriptions of architectural history, military fortifications, art, and zoology, among other topics, are contrasted with what is missing – the elements of personal identity and the mysteries of suppressed history.

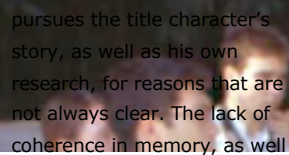
I suspect that I enjoy reading Sebald's texts (previously *The Emigrants* and *The Rings of Saturn*—they also address issues of isolation, suppressed or lost personal history, and the struggle to endure during great adversity) for the way in which they subtly and perhaps, strikingly, resist, as Austerlitz's narrator notes, 'the glowing clarity of logical thinking.' The error common to the novice debater, after all, is to convince oneself that the presentation of a concise and rational argument is sufficient to move a listener. Sebald recognizes that the authority of persuasion, hidden beliefs and confused emotions, may ultimately be more influential and revealing. The narrator



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pursues the title character's story, as well as his own research, for reasons that are not always clear. The lack of coherence in memory, as well

as simple conversation, interrupts and fragments the text. The author includes sketches, photographs of found art, and pictures that are as often enigmatic and distracting as they are enlightening.

Sebald makes the point that memory inexorably shapes one's life and that it is better to reveal, confront, engage, and learn that history. I highly recommend both Sebald and *Austerlitz*."

Doug Mullane, writing consultant, The Writing Center

Arms and Armor from Iran: The Bronze Age to the Qajar Period, by Manouchehr Moshtagh Khorasani

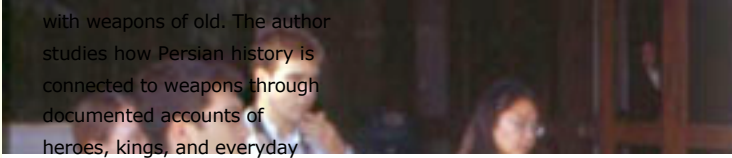
"A book that took nearly a decade to complete, *Arms and Armor from Iran* presents artifacts from 10 Iranian museums that have never been shown in any other book, and provides readers a window of opportunity to see the past as it has not been seen before. This is a large-scale, definitive study of Persian arms and armor, and possibly the most complete academic and scientific study of its kind available to the West.

How does one compile such a complex examination of Persian history in one text? The author's response was to write and organize nearly 800 pages of academic study and findings—referenced and cross-referenced—including an impressive photo catalogue of armaments that showcases the detailing in the steel, handles, pommels, and scabbards of shamshirs.

Far from being just about weapons, the book explores archaeological, metallurgical, social, and cultural components that are explicitly connected

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with weapons of old. The author studies how Persian history is connected to weapons through documented accounts of heroes, kings, and everyday people—reviewing not only the Persian Empire, but how these weapons relate to people in modern Iran.

Not to be forgotten are the plentiful short swords, knives, axes, spears, shields, bows and arrows, and armor of Iran's rich culture. One can understand much about Persian history simply by examining the iconography on all of the arms and armor, and by paying notice to the in-depth copy blocks accompanying each weapon.

Simply stated, *Arms and Armor from Iran* is the future of arms and armor study. Academic research and scientific investigation into history's cultural objects are the focus of this text, and anyone interested in any field of arms and armor would do well to take this piece of history and cherish it for the gem that it is.

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