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Booklover: Freedom of Speech

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- **Brain Mapping: An Encyclopedic Reference** (February 2015, 9780123970251, \$1344) is edited by **Arthur W. Toga** and “offers foundational information for students and researchers across neuroscience. With over 300 articles and a media-rich environment, this resource provides exhaustive coverage of the methods and systems involved in brain mapping. It fully links the data to disease (presenting side-by-side maps of healthy and diseased brains for direct comparisons), and offers data sets and fully annotated color images...”

ABC-CLIO also has a new title that may of interest:

- **American Civil War: A State-by-State Encyclopedia** (March 2015, 978-1-59884-528-0 \$189; eISBN: 9781598845297, call for pricing) is edited by **Dr. Spencer C. Tucker**. It is “intended for general-interest readers and high school and college students, **American Civil War: A State-by-State Encyclopedia** serves as a unique ready reference that documents the important contributions of each individual state to the American Civil War and underscores the similarities and differences between the states, both in the North and the South...”

H.W. Wilson has just published new edition of a title that many will recognize.

- The **American Book of Days** (February 2015, 978-1-61925-469-5, \$195) is in its fifth edition and “features 850 essays marking important anniversaries and the birthdays of history-making Americans throughout the 366 days of the year. All American holidays and pivotal moments are noted as readers can delve into fascinating and often overlooked accounts connected to otherwise familiar facts of American history. Cross-references and an extensive index make information easy to find, while expanded appendices feature historical documents...”

And lastly, **Oxford University Press** has just published a new edition of a standard research tool.

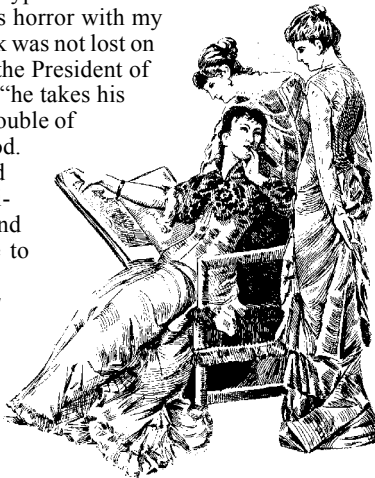
- **The Oxford Guide to Library Research**, 4th Edition (April 2015, 978-0-19-993106-4, £16.99) by **Thomas Mann** “provides a systematic overview of the best sources, both electronic and print, that go far beyond the coverage of Google and Wikipedia; demonstrates why brick-and-mortar research libraries are more important than ever; and teaches, with multiple concrete examples, how to find the best search terms to use in searching databases...”

Patrick Modiano was awarded the **2014 Noble Prize for Literature** in October “for the art of memory with which he has evoked the most ungraspable human destinies and uncovered the life-world of the occupation.” Soon after the announcement, I began searching for one of his books to read for “**Booklover**.” **Suspended Sentences: Three novellas**, was the choice I made for my holiday reading. Travel, parties, family, and general holiday activity did not afford me the time for delving into these three stories. Then the attack on the offices of the satirical magazine **Charlie Hebdo** located in Paris, France shocked the world. **Modiano** is described as an author who has spent his life examining the Nazi occupation and its effects on his country. Although this attack originated from a different type of extremist thinking, the timing of this horror with my interest in **Modiano’s** work was not lost on me. **Francois Hollande**, the President of France, said of **Modiano**: “he takes his readers right to the deep trouble of the occupation’s dark period. And he tries to understand how the events lead individuals to lose as well as find themselves.” It was time to read and so I began.

After Image, Suspended Sentences, and *Flowers of Ruin* are the translated titles for the three novellas. **Mark Polizzotti** is credited with the translation. In his introduction he describes, “A feeling of indirection pervades many of **Patrick Modiano’s** writings, and the three short novels in this volume are no exception. For all the specificity of detail — locations catalogued with loving precision, particular casts of light and shadow — one can’t escape a sense of haziness, as if everything were shrouded in gauze or viewed through a Vaseline lens. The narrative voice adds to this impression, the protagonists often placing themselves just to the side of the situation they’re describing. Like the prose in which they couch their stories, these narrators maintain a slight remorse, as if full engagement with one’s surroundings carried the threat of great pain, or mortal danger.”

Of the three, *After Image* particularly resonated with me. It is an out-of-focus story about a focal product. **Modiano** even confessed about his own writings: “The more obscure and mysterious things remained, the

more interested I became in them. I even looked for mystery where there was none.” The story begins simply: “I met Francis Jansen when I was nineteen, in the spring of 1964, and today I want to relate the little I know about him.” The illusive illustration of Jansen by the narrator sets up a page-turner where the reader is lead to believe that maybe in just the next paragraph all will be revealed. And it never is; the joy of reading the illusion, the mystery in itself, is the end game that **Modiano** sets up. Jansen is a photographer. He uses his Rolleiflex to capture a moment with minimum intrusion. When the narrator meets him Jansen has packed his life’s work into three leather suitcases and is moving to Mexico. The narrator offers to catalogue his photographs as he appreciates the documentary value of them and believes Jansen should be recognized at some point for this. A sense of déjà vu began to creep into my reading. The story line, albeit fiction, had a very familiar tone.



Finding Vivian Maier is a documentary released in 2013 about a young man’s discovery of the works of **Vivian Maier**. Bidding on a storage locker of vintage photographic material for a book he was writing for **Arcadia Publishing**, **John Maloof** discovers a box of negatives. **Maloof**

had become interested in the preservation of Chicago’s Northwest side where he lived and was writing about it with **Daniel Pogorzelski**. The box of negatives did not produce any material for their book *Portage Park*, but it provided the catalyst for **Maloof’s** immersion into finding **Vivian Maier**, the solitary nanny who took over 100,000 photographs of street life and left two storage lockers stuffed with clues to assist in the ultimate archiving, preservation, and presentation of her life’s work by **Maloof**. To connect you back to **Modiano’s** Jansen character — Jansen used a Rolleiflex, and, like **Maier**, he would capture street life in an intimate, minimally intrusive manner. **Patoche**, the narrator in *After Image*, describes Jansen’s work: “I only have to look at his photos to rediscover the quality he possessed in art as in life, which is so precious but so hard to acquire: keeping silent.” A description one might also bestow on **Maier’s** work. 🐾