

THE FOREIGN SERVICE GROUP

- Central Texas -

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The Third Annual Fun Festival Luncheon

Tuesday 13 December 2011

A short list to match the theme of the December luncheon.

**Backstabbing for Beginners, My Crash Course in International Diplomacy*, Michael Soussan, Nation Books, New York City, 2008, 352 pgs

**Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void*, Mary Roach, Norton, New York City, 2010, 334 pgs

(Absolutely applicable to taking a Foreign Service family overseas for the first time.)

**Shut Up, I'm Talking: And Other Diplomacy Lessons I Learned in the Israeli Government - A Memoir*, Gregory Levey, Free Press, New York City, 2008, 288 pgs

**Holidays in Heck*, P.J. O'Rourke, Atlantic Monthly Press, New York City, 2011, 265 pgs

(Do not confuse this book with Holiday in Hell, by the same author. Many Foreign Service families with young children will relate to this book with great sympathy.)

**The Darwin Awards: Countdown to Extinction*, Wendy Northcutt, Plume Penguin, New York City, 2011, 310 pgs

(Do not confuse this book with The Darwin Awards: Evolution in Action, by the same author. The jury is out on the usefulness of this book for studying for the Foreign Service Exam.)

**I Was Told There'd Be Cake: Essays by Sloane Crosley*, Riverhead Books, New York City, 2008, 230 pgs

(Did Sloan get her idea at the end of her first tour after comparing it to what her FS recruiter hinted at? Was she ever an FSO?)

More Information Than You Require, John Hodgman, Riverhead Books, New York City, 2008, 656 pgs

(Not true if you are preparing for the FS exam.)

**The Millionaire's Handbook: How to Look and Act Like a Millionaire Even if You're Not*, Vicky Oliver, Skyhouse Publishing, New York City, 2011, 267 pgs

**Theories of International Politics and Zombies*, Daniel W. Drezne, Princeton University Press, New York City, 2011, 153 pgs

(L.H. Gelb, past president of the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote "The book is fun.")

Inside a U.S. Embassy: Diplomacy at Work (rev 2011)

(This is a well-written, serious book except for one section, "Taking the Foreign Service Officer Test," on pgs 221-226, which includes a bit of humor. The real information is on the bottom of page 224 and on page 225.)

A short list of selected titles for gifting:

Modernist Cuisine: The Art and Science of Cooking, Nathan Myhrvold with Chris Young & Maxine Bilet, The Cooking Lab, Spi Har/PA edition, Washington, 2011, 2,438 pgs

Larousse Gastronomique, Prosper Montague, ed., Clarkson Potter, New York City, 2001, 1350 pgs

**Forks Over Knives: The Plant Based Way to Health*, Gene Stone, ed., The Experiment, New York City, 2011, 224 pgs

Note: also in a highly recommended DVD

**A History of the World in 100 Objects*, Neil MacGregor, Viking, New York City, 2011, 1736 pgs

**Magical Mathematics*, Persi Diaconis & Ron Graham, Princeton University Press, New York City, 2011, 244 pgs

**George F Kennan: An American Life*, John Lewis Gaddis, Penguin, New York City, 2011, 800 pgs

**Steve Jobs*, Walter Isaacson, Simon & Schuster, New York City, 2011, 656 pgs

**Other People's Money*, Justin Cartwright, Bloomsbury, USA, 2011, 273 pgs

The Louvre: All the Paintings, Erich Lessing & Vincent Peomarede, with a DVD of all the 3,022 paintings in the permanent display, Black Dog & Leventhal Publishing, New York City, 2011, 784 pgs

**The Fat Years*, Chan Koonchung, Michael S. Duke, translator, Doubleday, New York City, 2011, 266 pgs

* This book is available as an e-book.

A DVD set of *The West Wing*

Several years ago the Sundance Film Festival asked both major American political parties what film best represented how the U.S. government really works. This multi-year television series was chosen by both parties.

Two journals

The Economist, The Foreign Service Journal

Interesting writers who write interesting columns and books

Jagdish Bhagwati, Stewart Brand, Richard Florida, Thomas Friedman, Walter Isaacson, Parag Khanna, Paul Krugman, Kishore Mahbubani, Amartya Sen, Nassim Nicholas Taleb