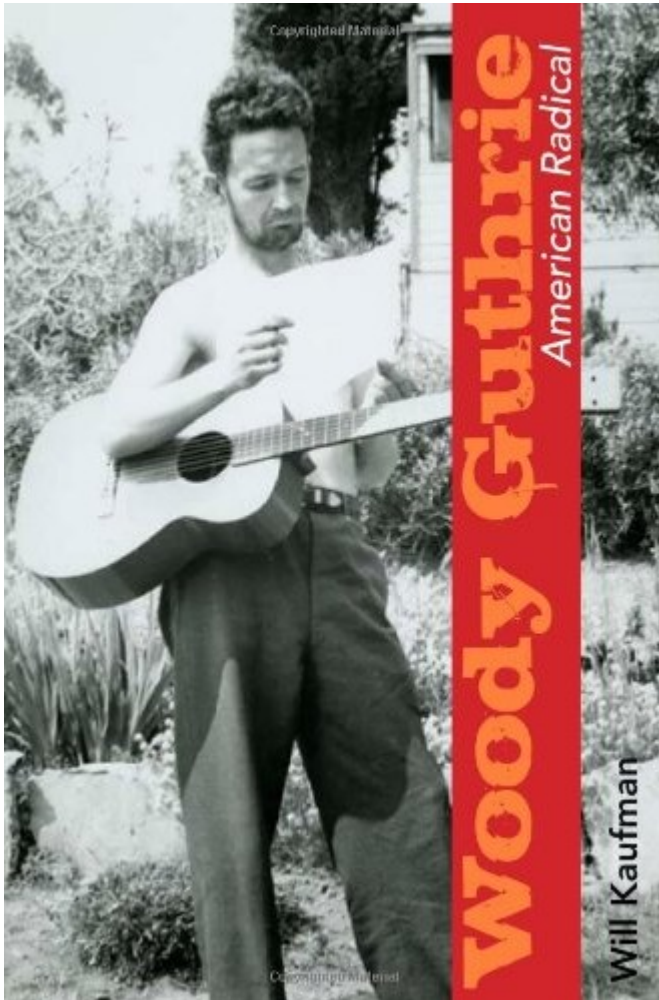


Summer reading list

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

July 1, 2011

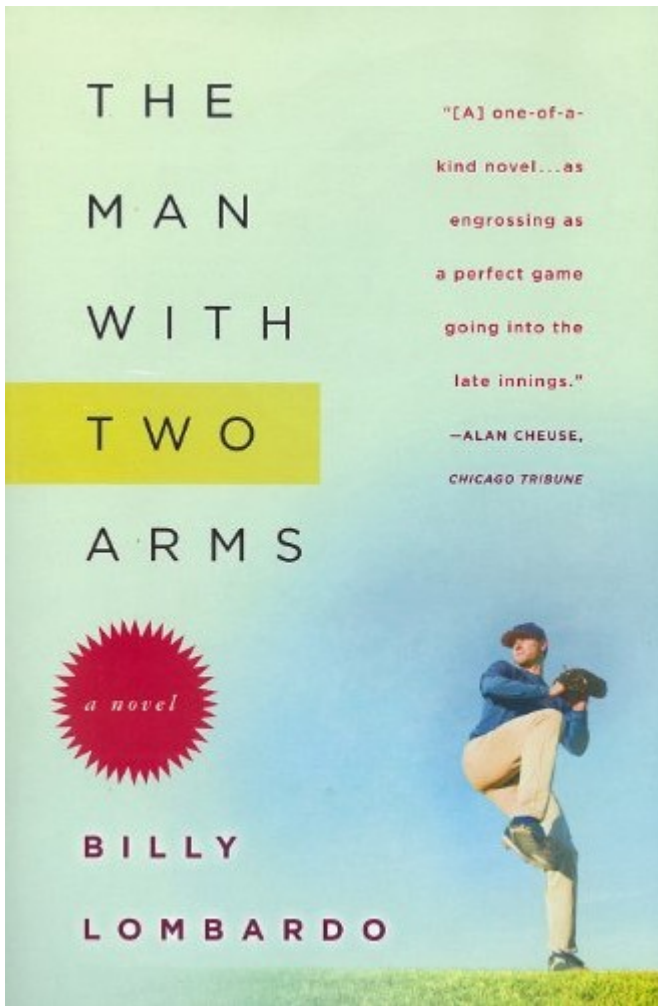
In Review



Woody Guthrie

by Will Kaufman

University of Illinois Press



The Man With Two Arms

by Billy Lombardo
Overlook TP

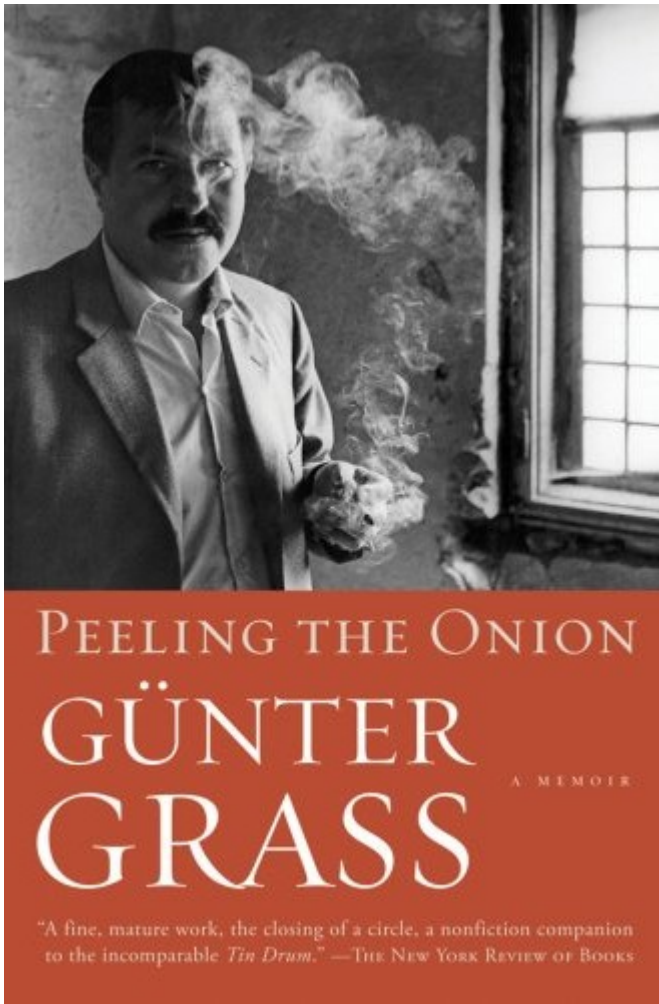
THE BALLOONISTS BY EULA BISS



The Balloonists

by Eula Biss

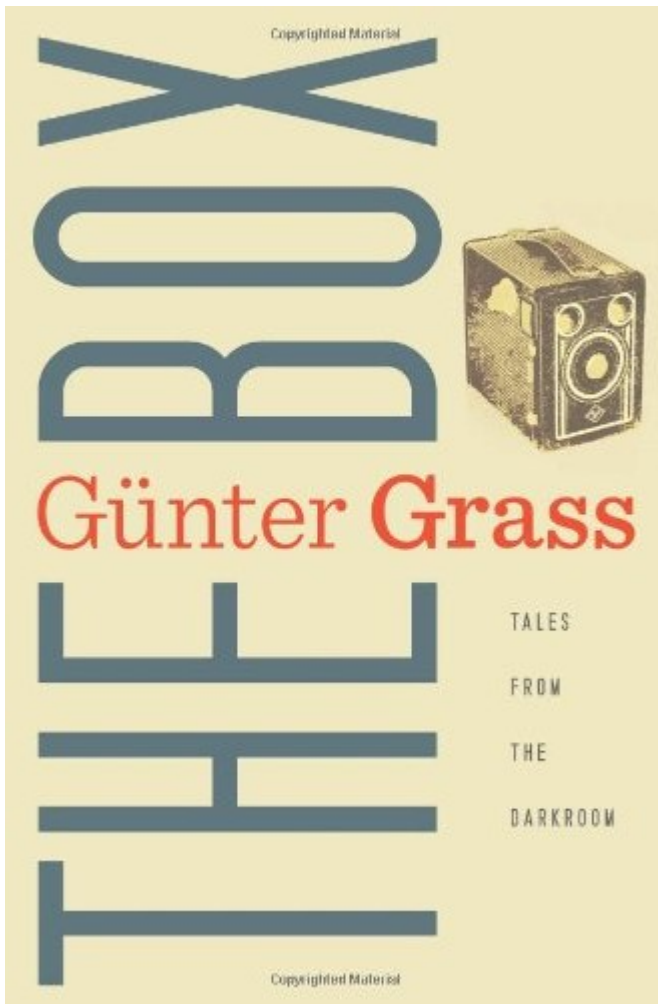
Hanging Loose Press



Peeling the Onion

by Günter Grass

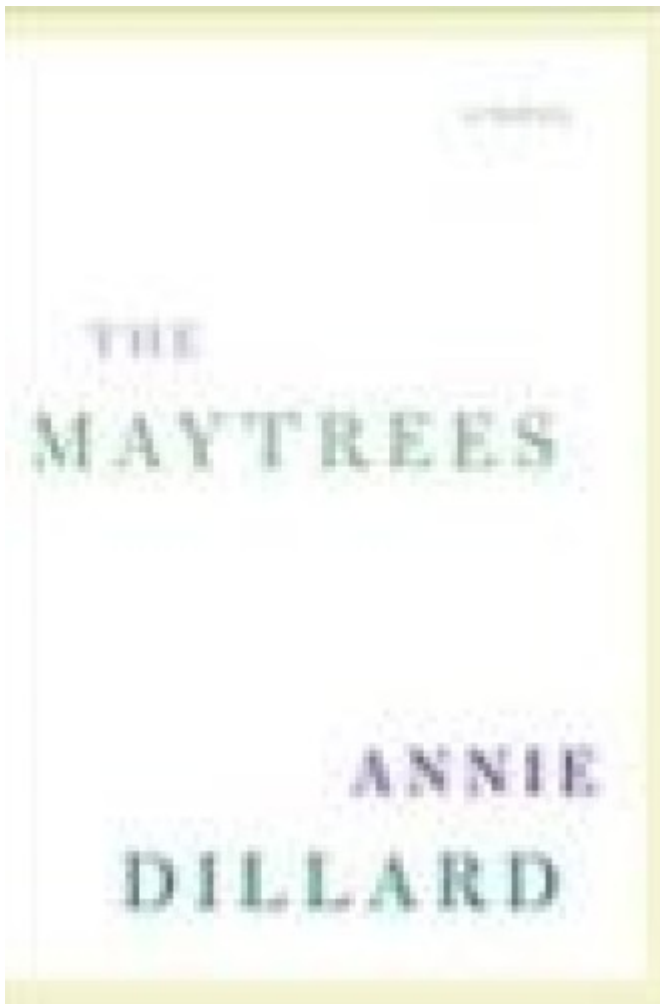
Mariner



The Box

by Günter Grass

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt



The Maytrees

by Annie Dillard
HarperCollins

What are you hoping to read this summer? We posed this question to the Century staff, a group of people with diverse tastes and interests. Along with commenting on our choices, feel free to post your own in the comments. --Ed.

Woody Guthrie: American Radical, by Will Kaufman. I love musician biographies; Humphrey Carpenter's of Benjamin Britten is the most fascinating book I've read in years. I also love Guthrie's music--he's so much funnier and sharper-edged than the earnest troubadours who mimicked him in the 60s--and I'll read anything about politics.

The Man With Two Arms, by Billy Lombardo. Lombardo's story collection/novella hybrid *How to Hold a Woman* is a modest but devastating depiction of a troubled marriage. His latest is about Chicago and baseball, and I can't believe I haven't read it yet.

The Balloonists, by Eula Biss. Last summer I spent a couple days at a lily-white beach town on the Jersey shore, where I read Biss's *Notes From No Man's Land*, an astonishingly wise set of meditative essays on race. Now I want to read her earlier collection, which I expect will be less focused but no less provocative and gorgeously written.

Peeling the Onion and *The Box*, by Günter Grass. The third volume of Grass's memoirs will soon be translated into English. Guess I'd better get cracking on the first two--his Danzig Trilogy pretty much blew my mind.

The Maytrees, by Annie Dillard. I've been putting this one off ever since I heard Dillard [tell Scott Simon](#) that after ten years work on this novel, she's afraid she literally, physically can't write or type anymore. I haven't been ready to read my last Annie Dillard book, but it might be time.