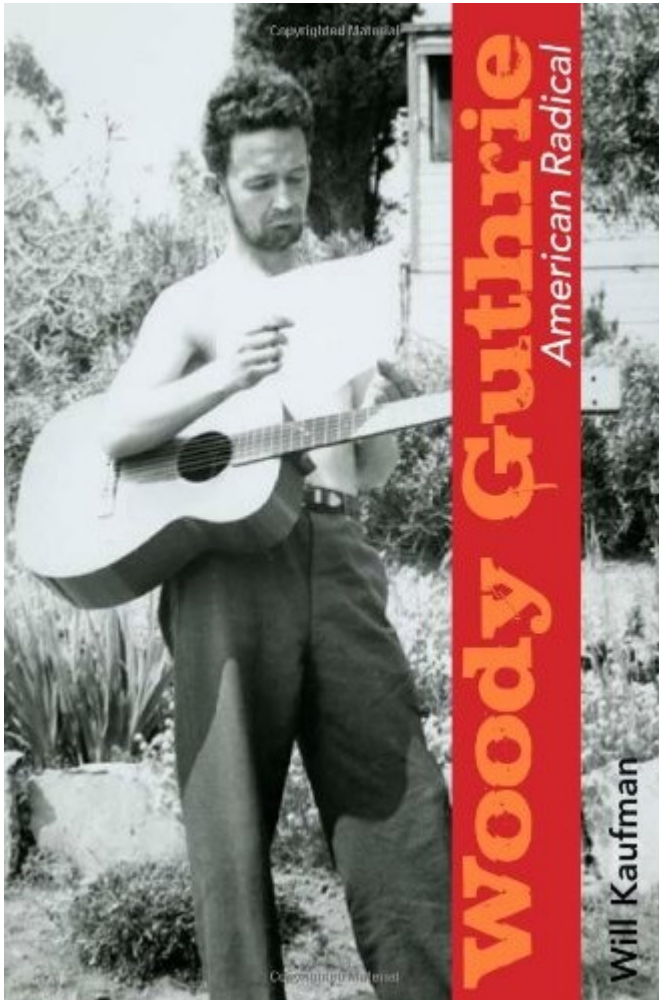


# Summer reading list

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

July 1, 2011

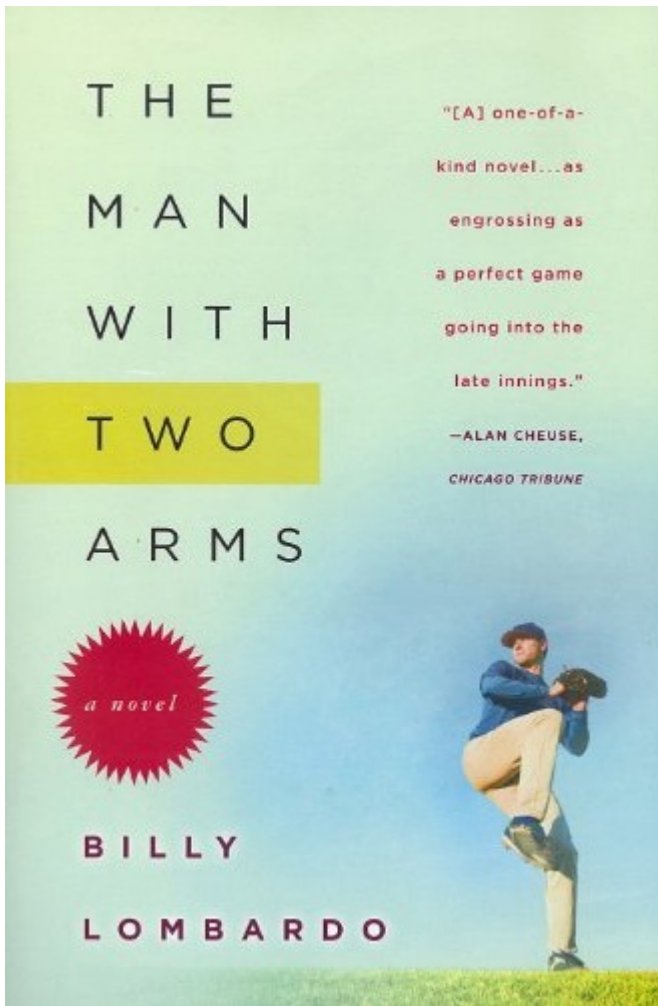
## In Review



## Woody Guthrie

by Will Kaufman

University of Illinois Press



## **The Man With Two Arms**

by Billy Lombardo  
Overlook TP

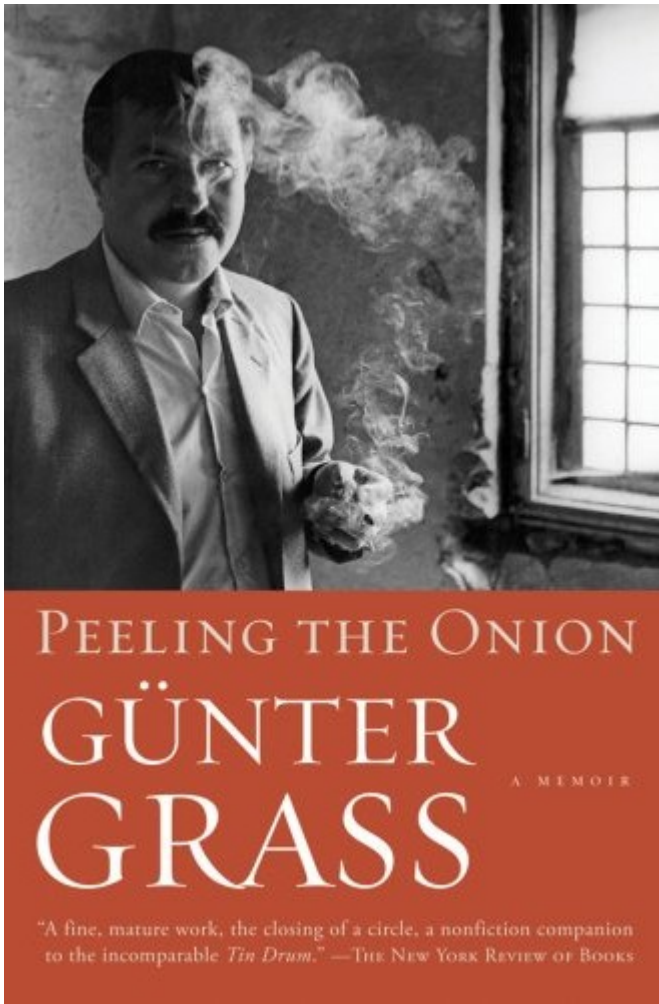
THE BALLOONISTS BY EULA BISS



## **The Balloonists**

by Eula Biss

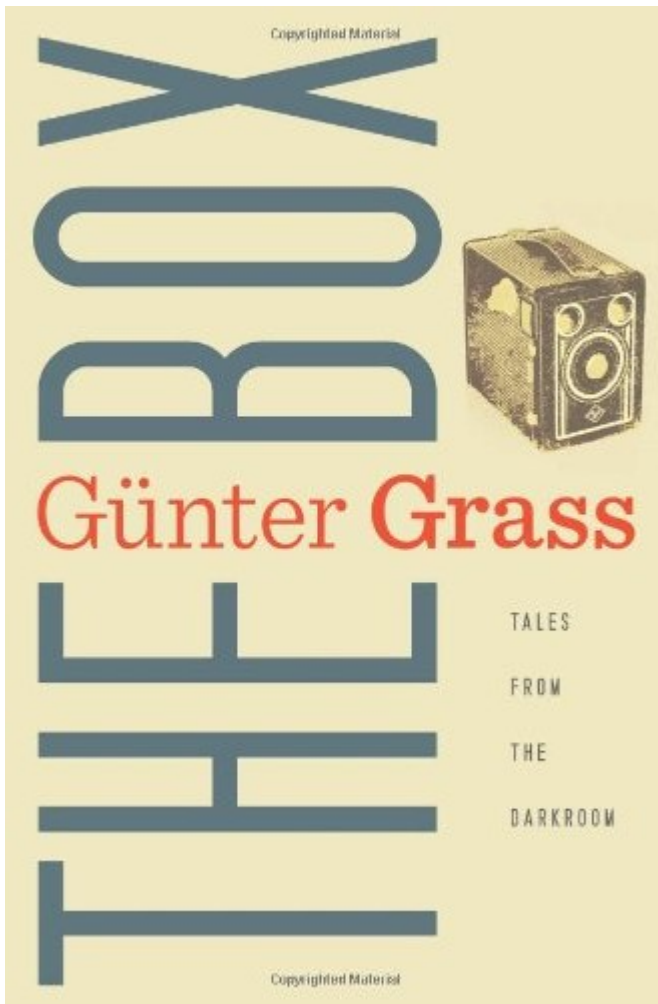
Hanging Loose Press



## **Peeling the Onion**

by Günter Grass

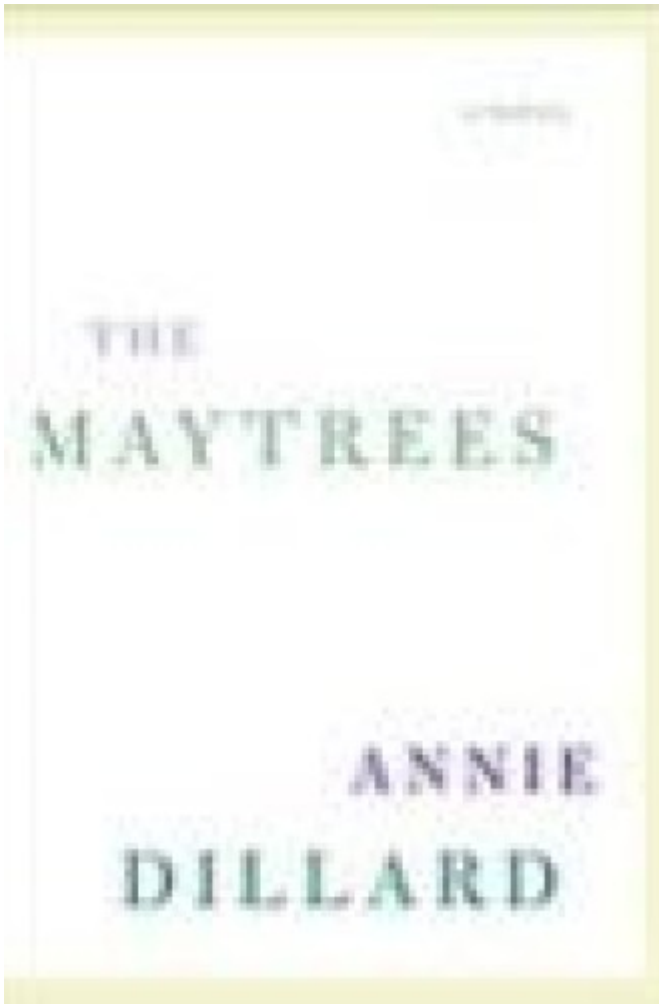
Mariner



## **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.