

More gift book suggestions

If you haven't yet finished that holiday shopping, take heart. It may be just what you're looking for:

• Jane Smiley's "Ordinary Love" & Good Will" (Knopf, \$16.95). This is not a novel, but two memoirs novellas by the author of the critically acclaimed "Age of Grapes."

• "Our Love," a story of a child, divorced mother, tells her grown children of the "ancient agonies" of her divorce from their father and, as a result, learns something about their abiding pain.

• "Good Will," a young farmer and wood-worker happily isolates himself and his family on a small, self-sufficient farm in Pennsylvania, only to recognize the futility of imposing one's dreams on others. If you're looking for a strong and moving story of contemporary familial relationships, look no further.

• "African Rainbow: Across Africa by Boat" (William Morrow, \$10) by Lorenz and Mirella Ricciardelli. From Tanzania, across the Dark Continent, to the Atlantic Ocean, the Ricciardelli traveled 3,000 miles, making the first known crossing of Africa via waterways between the Indian and Atlantic oceans. Lucky for all of us armchair travelers, they recorded their amazing adventure through fine writing — and photography that is absolutely first-rate.

• "Heartlands: An American Odyssey" (Simon & Schuster, \$29.95) by Jane Sobel and Arthur Klonsky will delight the heart of anyone who grew up in a small town (plus all of those who wish they had). Sobel and Klonsky traveled 57,000 miles across the back roads of this country to capture the spirit of small-town America. Here, via interviews with people in places like Panacea, Fla.; Granbury, Tex.; and Mackinaw City, Mich., is where they found. Splendid photography complements the author's narrative.

• "Hollyhocks and Radishes" (Pickle Point Publishing, \$19.95), compiled by Bonnie Stewart Miskulin. This utterly charming, unpretentious little cookbook is comprised of plenty of recipes, plus letters to Michelson from "Grandma" Judy Chard, who runs a fruit and vegetable stand in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. In addition to recipes for such dishes as rhubarb bundt cake, fried green tomatoes with cheese, and corn apple hotcakes, "Hollyhocks and Radishes" contains observations from "Grandma" on a melange of Midwestern foods.

• John Updike's "Just Looking: Essays on Art" (Knopf, \$35). In 23 richly-illustrated essays, this prize-winning author (and brilliant artist) discusses his favorite artists, artistry and diverse works as John Singer Sargent's portraits, Modigliani's "Reclining Nude," and Johannes Vermeer's "View of Delft." Candid and engaging, Updike's observations are consistently accessible in non-artsists.

• Roddy McDowell's 10-by-14-inch volume, "Double Exposure, Take Two," (William Morrow, \$30). This is a collection of 125 black-and-white and 19 color portraits of famous entertainers, taken by McDowell. Among those captured on film by the actor-photographer are a



book break

Victoria Diaz

youthful Elizabeth Taylor, a melancholy Vivien Leigh, and a quintessentially-British Alec Guinness.

Accompanying each photo is a commentary written by a celebrity friend of those pictured. Isaac Stern writes of Agnes DeMille, Dirk Bogarde of Ava Gardner ("Her presence is a reminder that beauty still walks the land"), Walter Matthau of Charlie Chaplin, James Stewart of Marlene Dietrich. The big, beautiful book can be great fun for anyone who has ever gone to the movies. If he ever runs out of roles to play, McDowell (who published a first photo collection, "Double Exposure," in 1986), definitely has something to fall back on.

• "Crazy English" (Pocket Books, \$16.95) by Richard Lederer. On these pages, readers can peruse such chapters as "A Hymn to Heteronyms," "Tease Times with Verbs," and "The Strange Case of the English Language." Lederer also deals with tantalizing questions why we drive on parkways and why we park on driveways.

• Tracy Kidder's "Among Schoolchildren" (Houghton Mifflin, \$19.95). Named one of the most notable books of 1989 by the New York Times Book Review, this is an exciting, thought-provoking account of a year the author spent "among schoolchildren" in a fifth-grade Massachusetts classroom. Kidder, who previously wrote "House" and "The Soul of a New Machine," possesses an astonishing gift for conveying the inherent drama of everyday occurrences.

If you're looking for something a little different:

• "Born to be Bad" (Pantheon, \$8.95), a rare collection of bound postcards, depicting advertising posters from some of the most "notorious" B-movies of the '40s and '50s. Selected by Michael Barson, the tear-out cards will bring memories of such old favorites as "High School Hellcats," "Larceny" and "Cry Baby Killer" for long-time movie buffs.

• A new book collection, "Rip It Up" (\$8.95) also published by Pantheon and compiled by Barson, contains 31 postcards picturing memorabilia (concert programs, movie posters, record jackets) from the early days of Rock and Roll.

• "Happy Origami" (Kodansha International, \$17.95) by Toshie Takahama includes a lively introduction to the art of origami, plus paper and instructions on how to create flowers, stars, and other projects for holiday celebrations.

• "United States Power Squadrons' Boating Court for Power and Sail" (William Morrow, \$39.95) is a combination book-and-video set designed as an introductory course for beginners.

Try gold and white Christmas

Q. Ever since we decorated our living and dining rooms in coral red and hunter green, it has become apparent to our family that traditional red and gold Christmas decorations will blend in too much. What suggestions do you have in an alternate color scheme that maintains a traditional feel?

A. Build all of your Christmas decorations around a white tree, using gold as the only major color statement. Reserve red for the smallest of accents to help coordinate with your coral red and hunter green harmony. A white tree will look less artificial if it ties in with other decorations throughout the house, such as white polka-dots set into brass pots.

White lends itself to certain subtleties often lost on a natural green tree. For example: instead of heavy metallic swags, use garlands of small gold ornaments and intertwine them with tiny yellow lights. Vary the lustre and size of the tree ornaments by combining the bright, shiny gold with others in matte or dull finish. Also consider using the traditional natural berries and fruits decorated in both gold and silver. Soften the overall effect with angel and Santa faces set into the branches.

If you're looking for gold and white's symbolic meaning is very appropriate for the holiday season, and as much part of it as red and green. These are the colors of glory and transcendent power; they exude affirmation, joy, and splendor. Your home will be all the more attractive for gold and silver.

Q. I'm recently widowed and about to move from a home my



all about color

Helen Diane Vincent

husband and I shared for many years to a smaller condominium. For reasons of sentiment and practicality, I want to bring with me as many furnishings from the old house as possible. Could you give me some helpful hints on how this would approach this situation without losing my new place's character?

A. You must accommodate some of your furnishings as long as you pay attention to underlying conditions that influence placement. These have been confirmed by researchers and are cited by some of the best interior designers.

Because of their high reflectancy, whites and pale colors do increase a sense of openness. However, it is important to recognize that a well-worked out color harmony, using easy transitions from light to dark, from color to color is equally important. This means you can use a very wide range of favorite colors as long as they are carefully coordinated and allow your eye to scan without too many abrupt adjustments.

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