More Gems from the Spring Lists
by Albert R. Vogeler

The literary friend who provided me with titles from the Spring book lists in 2008 has found some new ones, also from obscure publishers. Many offer refreshing new perspectives in scholarship, or daring departures from dogma, and some poignantly encapsulate the human drama. After each title I append a brief excerpt from the advertising blurb, or a reviewer’s comments, or my own.

*Moby Duck*, by Cal M. Ishmael. Pequod Press, 2013. This parody of an over-praised classic purports to tell the tale of a huge malevolent white duck, and how the legendary creature was pursued to the ends of the earth by a crazed hunter named Rehab. Crude though it is, it avoids the pompous mystifications and tedious digressions of the original story.

*Adventures in the Wild*, by Ben Thayer and Don Zatt. Munchhausen Books, 2013. Purposely denying themselves all civilized amenities like deodorant, cufflinks, the *New Yorker*, and dry martinis, the two survivalists parachuted into the Amazon rain forest in 1990 and have not yet emerged. They left this gripping pre-written account of their exploits.

*My Life Sentence*, by I. Shelby Freed. Bighouse Imprints, 2013. Sentenced to life imprisonment without parole, Mr. Freed was dismayed by the intolerable irony of his name. Unable to change his sentence, he decided to change his last name—to Stang. Now, no longer living a contradiction, he enjoys his freedom from the anxieties of the job market.

*The Story of Our Flag*, by Rhett Weidenbluh. Vol. I. Banner Books, 2012. Our flag dates back to turbulent revolutionary times when, according to Weidenbluh, it was not clear whether there were actually eleven or fifteen states. Thirteen seemed a good compromise estimate for the stripes. Vol. II will explain the stars, and we may be in for another surprise.

*Global Warming and Polar Melting*, by Rush Inuit. Hoddar & Hoddar Publishers, 2013. The Director of Emergency Response, Office of Eskimo Affairs, knows whereof he speaks. He describes his ingenious efforts to keep his igloo frozen by installing solar-powered deep freeze units, and he recommends this solution to everyone with the same problem.

*Appeals to a Higher Power*, by Evan Elpuss. Aspiration Associates, 2013. This is the absorbing account of one man’s lonely lifelong struggle to get on the good side of the Powers
That Be, to find a way through life’s thickets, and to transcend the surly bonds of mortality. The jury is still out, but he is optimistic that things are going his way.

*A History of Corporal Punishment*, by O. Howard Hertz. Inflictus Imprints, 2013. The author is painfully aware that his subject is not everyone’s cup of tea. In accordance with the publisher’s conditions, several chapters describing involuntary anatomical interventions have been omitted from the book, but are available on his website with a secret password.

*Books You Can’t Put Down*, by A. Page Turner. Handbook Press, 2013. The author has patented a harmless vegetable adhesive which, lightly applied to the covers of a book, keeps it firmly in your hands when you might be tempted to put it down before finishing it. Students with short attention spans report that it helps them complete their reading assignments.

*Lore of the Pirate Age*, by Joaquin de Planque. Bookaneer Books, 2013. The author explores the pirate legends of the Caribbean, showing that buried treasure hoards, skull-and-crossbones pennants, battered tricorn hats, broadswords, peglegs, eyepatches, rum, ribaldry, and jollity, were in fact the daily realities of this colorful, fast-fading way of life.

*UFOs*, by D. E. Bunker. Roswell Enterprises, 2013. Everyone has an opinion about UFOs, but secrecy seems to be part of the equation. The government can resolve the issue once and for all by openly admitting that for years it has been conducting undercover surveillance missions using an elite corps of Unofficial Freelance Operatives.

*The S.S.*, by S. Esse. Essential Editions, 2013. The deeply sinister associations of the letters “S.S.” are fully justified, according to this important new study, which reveals the reprehensible record of criminal conspiracy, brutal belligerence, ruthless repression, and pathological persecution by the society for Simplified Spelling.

*Legal Norms and Career Success*, by Laura Biden. Harmony House Press, 2013. The Vice President’s niece says she owes her success to never having been arrested or convicted of anything whatsoever. She makes a strong case for keeping out of trouble and helping others to do the same. “The blameless life is the safest life,” she pronounces, and who will dispute her?

*Dyslexia in Modern Music*, by Roland Rock. Cacophone Imprints, 2013. Ironically a victim of the condition he describes, Rock surveys Western music from the Raboque to the Seltaeb and finds that medoly and harnomy have been in decline, while the atanos, the phonysymph, and the arepo may vanish completely, drowned out by knuf, par, and pohpiah.

*The Public Policy Review Institute*, by Paula C. Wonk. Public Policy Review Institute Press, 2013. Dr. Wonk has made her urgent priority the task of jazzing up the title of her organization, a government think tank. She has boldly proposed a committee to study the matter. It will ultimately vote on tentative recommendations for an official Nomenclature Modification Announcement.

*Being and Non-Being*, Vol. I, by Wanda Y. Datso. Urdank Imprints, 2013. Professor Datso, of Tokyo University, boldly asks the fundamental ontological questions: Why do we exist? How can non-being exist? Are being and non-being in equilibrium? Volume II, she promises, will provide all the answers, as well as explaining how she makes a living doing this sort of thing.

*The Mythology of Inebriation*, by Philip deGlasse and Anne Gover. High Time Books, 2013. The authors, respectively a wine-taster and a barista, conclude from years of research that alcohol is not the culprit. Instead, an elusive substance “X” is to blame, and the team is diligently tasting for it daily. Their next book is optimistically titled “Drink Your Way to Sobriety.”

*California Conurbations*, ed. by Kelly Fournier. Golden-Tate Publishers, 2013. The editor of this eccentric volume, featuring chapters by the women writers Frances Coe, Sandy Yeager, and Lois Angell, never explains why she studiously ignores all but three California cities, whose names are curious echoes of her contributors.