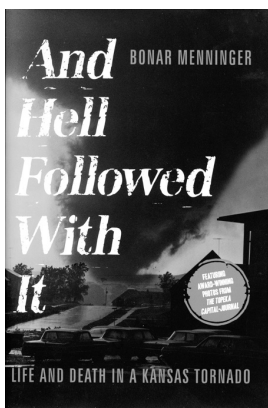


**And Hell Followed with It: Life and Death in a Kansas Tornado**, by Bonar Menninger

(327 pages, October 2010), reexamines the



storm that swept through downtown Topeka, Kansas, on June 8, 1966, the most destructive F5 tornado in U.S. history up to that time. Residents had long thought that a high hill on the southwest side of the city would deflect

any tornado, but this time the twister came right over Burnett's Mound and destroyed 800 homes, killing 16 and injuring some 500 people. It ripped through Washburn University, destroying many old stone buildings and causing damage that some compared to Berlin after World War II. Menninger tells the stories of the storm's survivors vividly and engagingly, accompanied by stunning photos by *Topeka Capital-Journal* photographer Perry Riddle. He also briefly examines the science of tornados and the history of weather forecasting. \$24.95. Emerald Book Company. 978-1-9345722-49-8.

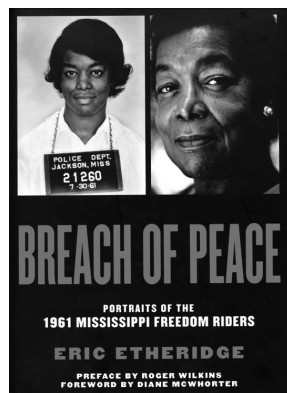
**Better Than Great: A Plenitudinous Compendium of Wallopingly Fresh Superlatives**, by former *American Libraries* editor

Arthur Plotnik (244 pages, June 2011), offers an energetic escape from the literary languor that enwrathes writers and speakers addicted to stale adjectives that attempt to define the exceptional—notably *great*, *awesome*, *fantastic*, and *amazing*. In the great, er, laudable lexicographic style of word collector Paul Dickson (*Words*, 1982, and

*Names*, 1986), Plotnik serves up a platter of alternative word choices for superlatives in 15 different categories (such as Great, Beautiful, Intense, Trendy, Delicious, and Cool) with a side dish of advice on how to create your own and a lagniappe of literary samples from John Milton to T. C. Boyle. Together with two of his earlier works on writing style—*Spunk & Bite* (2007) and *The Elements of Expression* (2006)—*Better Than Great* completes an unmatched triplicity of linguistic perfection. \$15.95. Viva Editions. 978-1-57344-660-0.

**Breach of Peace: Portraits of the 1961 Mississippi Freedom Riders**, by Eric Etheridge

(240 pages, May 2008), assembles the names, personal details, and the original arrest mug shots of 310 Freedom Riders who made their way by bus or other means to Jackson, Mississippi, in May–September 1961 to challenge state segregation laws in the South. Etheridge located some 80 of the



Riders and provides a contemporary photo for each with a short synopsis of what they have been doing since (including John Lewis, who has been a U.S. Representative from Georgia since 1987). The then-and-now comparison of photos, the narratives of what happened to them at the time of their arrests and in the state prison at Parchman, and the background information on the protest arranged by the Congress of Racial Equality make this a moving and inspirational historical record. \$30.00. Atlas & Co.; distributed by W. W. Norton. 978-0-9777433-9-1.

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**Convicting the Innocent: Where Criminal Prosecutions Go Wrong**, by Brandon L. Garrett (367 pages, April 2011), conducts a thorough analysis of the trial transcripts and police reports in the case records of the first 250 people exonerated by postconviction DNA evidence to uncover specific flaws in the criminal justice system that can lead to wrongful imprisonment or capital punishment. Apparently many things can go wrong, including false confessions obtained by suggestion or coercion, unreliable eyewitness identifications, invalid or exaggerated testimony by forensics experts, untrustworthy claims by jailhouse informants, inadequate defense representation at trial, incomplete access to evidence, lack of attention to flawed evidence by appeals courts, and roadblocks put in front of prisoners who seek DNA tests to prove their innocence. Garrett shows that these failures are systemic and not isolated, and he outlines a number of criminal procedure reforms that could reduce wrongful convictions. \$39.95. Harvard University. 978-0-674-05870-5.

**Fifty Plants That Changed the Course of History, by Bill Laws** (223 pages, February 2011), offers capsule summaries of the culinary, medicinal, commercial, or practical significance of 50 familiar plants. Some will be obvious (wheat, wine grapes), but Laws manages to throw in some interesting and little-known history about each. For example, the 17th-century French Benedictine monk Dom Pérignon, who helped develop still wines in the region of Champagne, is sometimes credited with first sealing a wine bottle with a stopper made from cork oak; and pharmacist Wilbur Scoville devised a test for rating the heat of a chili pepper in 1912. \$29.95. Firefly. 978-1-55407-798-4.

**The Founders of American Cuisine**, by Harry Haff (286 pages, February 2011), looks at seven Americans who wrote influential cookbooks that nurtured and developed food preparation in the United States. Haff offers a biography of each in Part One and

reprints recipes from their books in Part Two (accompanied by a modern rendering and professional cooking tips). Among the cookbooks sampled are Mary Randolph's *The Virginia Housewife* (1824), the first regional cookbook; Eliza Leslie's *Directions for Cookery* (1837), which made the journey west with many homesteaders; Lafcadio Hearn's *La Cuisine Creole* (1885), the first book on New Orleans cooking; Chef Charles Ranhofer's *The Epicurean* (1894), which revealed the food preparation secrets of New York's famed Delmonico's restaurant; and Victor Hertzler's *The Hotel St. Francis Cook Book* (1919), which established California cuisine and specifically credited food products originating in the United States (California oysters, Saratoga chips, Potage Honolulu). \$38.00. McFarland. 978-0-7864-5869-1.

**New Atlantis: Musicians Battle for the Survival of New Orleans**, by John Swenson (284 pages, June 2011), pays tribute to the extraordinary efforts of New Orleans musicians to rebuild and repopulate the city after Hurricane Katrina. Music writer Swenson knows many of them, and he incorporates interviews and conversations with Dr. John, Trombone Shorty, Bo Diddley, Cyril Neville, Michael White, Paul Sanchez, and others. A perfect companion to the HBO *Treme* series, which parallels the same events. \$27.95. Oxford University. 978-0-19-975452-6.

**Symbols of Power in Art**, by Paola Rapelli (381 pages, April 2011), analyzes the symbols used in western art to represent power and authority (crown, scepter, throne, ermine, lion, sword) and the artistic techniques and imagery used to depict the majesty of various rulers from the Middle Ages to Napoleon. The latest in Getty's "Guide to Imagery" series, this compact volume presents concise information on each of its topics, accentuated with notes that point out details in the paintings, sculptures, tapestries, and coins shown. \$24.95. Getty Publications. 978-1-60606-066-7. 