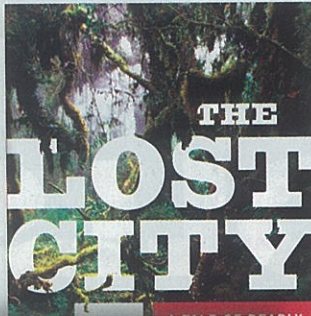
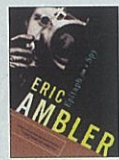


Stellar summer reads



The Lost City of Z by David Grann (Doubleday, \$32)

Colonel Percy Fawcett may not have been an actual colonel, but he was the last of the gentleman explorers – a professional amateur in a pith helmet who could walk into the Amazon with nothing more than a rough map and a machete and walk out again having charted the Bolivian-Brazilian border. Until, of course, he didn't: In 1925, while searching for the ruins of a South American city that had long consumed his imagination, Fawcett's expedition vanished. This is a swashbuckling biography and a white-knuckle detective story, a heart-of-darkness travelogue and poison-arrow-sharp adventure. Grann pulls it all off effortlessly.



GRANN'S PICK: Epitaph for a Spy by Eric Ambler (Vintage, \$17)

Forget Ludlum or le Carré – perhaps the best suspense novel remains the one that invented the genre. First published in 1938, *Epitaph for a Spy* has everything you want in a summer thriller: a spy ring, a Hitchcockian twist and a setting in the south of France. Plus, Ambler writes with panache.



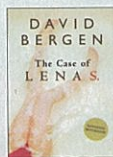
where we have to go

A Novel

LAUREN KIRSHNER

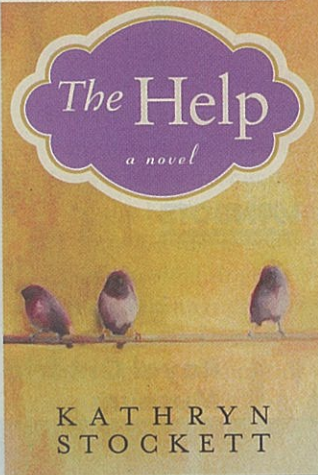
Where We Have to Go by Lauren Kirshner (Emblem, \$23)

When we first meet birthday girl Lucy Bloom, the 11-year-old longs only for a store-bought cake with icing and a royal-blue bike with streamers. She's disappointed. It gets to be a pattern. As Lucy moves through adolescence, what she wants most – the nuclear family, the model-thin figure, a boy's attention and an able-bodied cat – proves beyond her grasp, but she's so completely winning that her trials never become tiresome. Canadian authors excel at the precocious female protagonist, and Kirshner's engaging character is a worthy addition to the bunch.



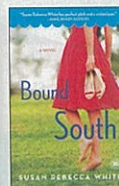
KIRSHNER'S PICK: The Case of Lena S. by David Bergen (Emblem, \$21)

This is a beautiful novel about teenagers who are in love, in that blind-to-the-world, violent and yearning way that tends to leave us when we turn 21. Told mostly from the perspective of a 16-year-old boy, Bergen's novel is restrained and heartbreaking and has remained unforgettable to me.



The Help by Kathryn Stockett (Putnam, \$28)

Set in steamy Jackson, Mississippi, this is one of those compulsive, unplug-the-phone-and-lock-the-kids-outside kind of reads that more than merits such spotty parenting. The author, a white Southerner, has taken on a risky project: to capture the voices and struggles of 1960s black domestic servants without resorting to cheap ventriloquism. What results is a collection of characters so richly imagined that they'll rattle around your head long after you've put the book away and let the kids back into the house.



STOCKETT'S PICK: Bound South by Susan Rebecca White

(Touchstone, \$20) This novel explores the relationship between contemporary Southern mothers and daughters and, yes, the relationship between rich ladies and their "help." Read this captivating book to see what has changed in the South over the past 40 years and what has remained stubbornly the same.

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