

of the veldt, the brawling Sabi, the pitiless burning sun, the night wind in the msasa, and the charm of water caressing their bare bodies. . . . In Mimina's eyes the same camp fires reflected in twin points as they sat close together listening to the endless tales of Chief Tambara. He knew her years had flowed swiftly like some passionate veldt song. . . . Today . . . but he must not think of the present, of now. The water would be cold, not like that in their own pool. . . . Slowly he edged nearer the falls and felt spray cover her body. Mimina strained against him as the water foamed at his feet, beckoning and inevitable. Nada felt Mimina's body slipping swiftly into the current; and then he felt the water swirl around him and throw his body with mighty force against Mimina's. . . . Overhead, blueness had returned to the sky; and the Sabi, secretive and omnipotent, home of the water spirits and his own *mudzimu*, wandered back and forth across the arid land, guarding forever its own secrets.



Books and Cokes---1941

(These are brief condensations of the ten books that students reviewed on the Sketch-sponsored Books and Cokes program this fall. Teachers were barred from the meetings—it was entirely student-organized. The reviews are in chronological order, written by the reviewer. The last two books, *Now in November* and *While Rome Burns*, will be given in December on Thursdays. Don't miss them.)

Read **OF HUMAN BONDAGE** by W. Somerset Maugham. It's a story of Philip Carey, a shy, club-footed Englishman, his life and loves. As he grows up, he tries his hand at various professions, that of an artist, an accountant, and finally a doctor. He has a long, disgusting love affair with a slut named Mildred, she of the pale-green complexion. He starves, lusts, learns, lives.

Strangely enough, the book is mostly true. Philip Carey is Somerset Maugham. The characters are well done because they are drawn from real life. It is an outstanding example of "autobiographical fiction."

Read the book first of all to relax. Read it secondly to learn to live your own life, by knowing about another's.—*Robert E. Lee*

Read **LOOK HOMEWARD ANGEL** by Thomas Wolfe because in this book Wolfe comes close to being what he had it in him to be—the greatest novelist America has ever produced.

A portrait of a lower middle class family in a commonplace southern town, *Look Homeward Angel* is the first autobiographic novel of a man whose greatest virtue is at once his greatest vice—a torrential flow of ideas and words.

It is the story of Oliver Gant, strong, lecherous, wildly drunken, and his wife Eliza, superstitious, stingy, a shrewd real estate investor. These two are pictured as parents who thwart and stifle the lives of their children. Eugene (Tom Wolfe) is enough of an individual to attempt escape from the family corruption.

This is largely a tale of his *failure* to free himself completely from a feeling of loneliness, futility, and waste.—*Jean Ross*

Read ENOUGH ROPE by Dorothy Parker because she is “not only clever herself, but makes you feel clever as you read her.”

All the poems are short and sparkling with humor, whether or not they have a surprise ending—as most of them do. Sometimes they're almost serious for—say, eight lines, but they never stay that way to the end. Some of them are little gems of only four lines or six, and they've got more “punch” than all the longer ones put together.

What are the poems about? Men. Yes, men. All kinds of poems on all kinds of men.

“Some men break your heart in two,
Some men fawn and flatter,
Some men never look at you;
And that cleans up the matter.”

Parker obviously has a knack for saying what you think in the way you wish you'd said it.—*Muriel Park*

Read ULYSSES by James Joyce. It records the thoughts and actions of the people of Dublin on June 16, 1904, and the search of Stephen Dedalus for a spiritual father. Stephen, embittered, rootless, disowned by his consubstantial father, is the Telemachus of the story. Leopold Bloom, a Jew who is both sensual and intelligent, is the spiritual father for whom Stephen is searching. He is the Ulysses of the story. The reader is permitted to know Bloom better than he can know any other character of literature.

In *Ulysses*, Joyce creates a new form of stream of consciousness writing which many writers have since attempted to imitate with

little success. As Mr. DeVoto remarked at *Books and Cokes*, such attempts are senseless. The job has been done once and for all. More than that, to write such a book one must be, as Joyce indubitably was, a genius.—*Helen Pundt*

Read MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA by Eugene O'Neill . . . A tragic melodrama of the lives of the Mannon family of New England. O'Neill departs from his traditional setting of the sea, modelling this play on the ancient Greek trilogy of the House of Atreus, "Electra."

"Sheer melodrama," said critic-author Bernard DeVoto. "O'Neill has falsified life." In this play he has certainly exaggerated it. He brings into use Freudian concepts to portray home-life and family relationships of the Mannons. They are a morbid family, self-centered, ingrown, self-creating and self-worshipping. The reader will find that they go about hating and murdering one another in a most abnormal way!

"*Mourning Becomes Electra*," never a box-office hit because of its length, is one of O'Neill's later plays, certainly not his most popular, but well worth reading as significant of a style trend at one period.

From the first curtain the audience senses eerie shadows of the supernatural; as each character appears the tangled skeins of old tragedies in the lives of the Mannon ancestors weave tighter. As the play unfolds, tension mounts until the final curtain when the last Mannon is left alone to die.—*Dorothea Dunagan*

Read ANNA KARENINA by Leo Tolstoi because Anna is so delightfully human. Tolstoi presents his gay heroine by a rapid succession of candid camera shots which make Anna's whims and weaknesses caricatures of our own.

She's as avid for a purple passion as any co-ed, as chic and sophisticate as a Vogue's model, and as charmingly receptive as an Esquire's lady.

The brilliant scion of a life-sucking and decadent Russian society, Anna etches a brief and daring existence against the background of her times. Tolstoi uses Anna like a fine-edged instrument to fight the stagnation and corruption of Russia in the nineteenth century.

Amusingly, cynically, morbidly, even exquisitely the charac-

ters in "*Anna Karenina*" dance to the tune of Tolstoi's piping, pausing only to mock at and gossip with each other as they wander across the stage of Tolstoi's own mind; just as Tolstoi sang the song of his times in irony and despair, so he prophesied and wrote for the consciousness of our century, and his characters shake attenuated hands with us in the long-drawn gap of a hundred years.—*Mary Elma Roberts*

Read **THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE** by Stephen Crane because it presents an accurate and realistic picture of the effect of war on the individual men fighting it, the effect in which we of this generation are most interested. It is a story of the Civil War, written not to the glory of some of its generals, nor as an historical document describing the struggles of a young nation, not as a background for romance, but rather as the story of one typical, raw recruit, who, knowing nothing of the conduct or technique of war, finds himself suddenly confronted by it almost without realizing it. At first he is haunted by the fear that he will prove to be a coward when he is actually called upon to fight. The story tells how he does turn coward in his first battle, but eventually finds himself. The "Red Badge" was written about fifty years ago. However, like all great literature, it is universal, and is as pertinent today as it was when it was written.

—*Shepherd Greene*

Read **POINT COUNTER POINT** by Aldous Huxley.

After reading the final page, the college student will have been exposed to a variety of subjects ranging from a mathematical proof of the existence of God to a lengthy discussion of the relative merits of sex. A bull-sessioner's paradise, the book touches on almost all of the philosophical problems discussed by student intellectuals while hovering over Union cokes, ignoring chemistry books, or while sitting on the steps of Old Main observing the flow of pulchritudinous co-eds hurrying to one o'clocks against a dishonorable north wind.

The book has no definite plot; its value lies in the excellent development of characters who are used only as tools for expressing the ideas and behavior of intellectual and social London of the post-war period. Five or six types of intellectual beings are analyzed; almost all are shown to be escaping boredom and

futility by the easy route of sexual adventure. The book is full of heels and bums; nobody in the series of conflicts set up is both agreeable and successful—most are neither one. However, the reader is convinced that the author is being honest with this world, that he is not weighting the dice, and that his own standards are right. Conflicting ideas of the characters are developed into philosophy—both good and bad—which is extraordinarily understandable, entertaining, and enlightening.—*Donald Cressy*

Read **WHILE ROME BURNS** by Alexander Woollcott for entertainment.

Just as Nero had his fiddle, here is a collection of stories to entertain you, told by that raconteur par excellence, Alexander Woollcott, the Town Crier. Mr. Woollcott will not bore you by these tales of the peculiarities and witticisms of his friends, for, as an excellent reporter, he always knows what to say and how to say it, proceeding to do so in a very flowing, delicate style. This style, lacking the hard, short, one-two punch of many modern writers, tends toward the more natural and pastel cadence of polite conversation. However, Mr. Woollcott *can* tell stories, and will never let you bog down while reading his book. The entertaining quality of his writing lies more in his wit rather than his humor, and the careful reader can readily detect the subtle difference between the two, being nevertheless, highly amused “while Rome burns.”—*Doris Plagge*

Read **NOW IN NOVEMBER** by Josephine Johnson. It is both a first novel and a Pulitzer Prize Winner. It is a story for those who love the earth and particularly for those who have lived with the earth and wrestled with it. It is also a story for the young who must forever build a world of their own with the pieces of their childhood world when that has fallen apart.

The descriptive passages have delicacy and acrid beauty. The imagery is vivid and fresh. For example, “*The poplar catkins opened down from the top branches first, and looked like red squirrel-tails swinging. The top sheaths fell while the lower branches were still in bud, and their wax-yellow beaks lay on the grass.*” The narrative moves along with a lilt that balances in part the brittleness and cruelty of its action.—*Helen Pundt*