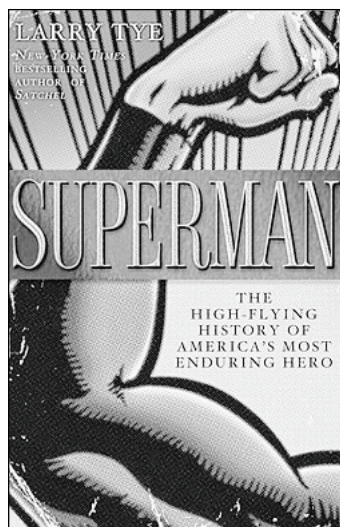


WHAT'S HOT



Superman: The High-Flying History of America's Most Enduring Hero by Larry Tye, Random House, 432 pp., \$27

A pop-culture cornucopia of the man from Krypton. Actually, the book is so much more than that: It celebrates the creators, writers, artists, and actors who have built and maintained the man of steel mythos over the last 75 years. Superman has become so ingrained in our zeitgeist that he has outstripped his very humble origins, becoming a cultural touchstone for every generation since the great Depression. A — pardon the pun — super read.

The Devil's Odds by Milton T. Burton, Minotaur Books, 272 pp., \$25.99

A twangy Texas noir, where the villains are bad and the heroes not always good, either. Texas Ranger Virgil Tucker travels the murderous milieu of 1940s East Texas, where the New Orleans Mafia is eager to take a piece of Galveston's gambling trade. There's murder, a magnetic femme fatale, more murder, and plenty of charisma to keep the pages turning, all satisfactorily resolved by the end. This is the third in a series, but the author passed away last November.

America, You Sexy Bitch: A Love Letter to Freedom by Michael Ian Black and Meghan McCain, Da Capo Press, 352 pp., \$26

The most entertaining road trip you'll take this year. Liberal Black and conservative McCain travel cross-country in a dirty RV, taking the political pulse of the people. What they learn about each other is almost as entertaining as what we learn about ourselves, with each author making hay for his or her side of the spectrum (McCain, it should be noted, is a young Republican: fiscally conservative but socially liberal, often at odds with the powers in control of her own party, if not the members themselves). Black and McCain make eloquent spokespeople, and they share uproarious and enlightening tales about who we are and what we want.

OUT THIS WEEK

- The Fallen Angel** by Daniel Silva
- Creole Belle** by James Lee Burke
- The Sandcastle Girls** by Chris Bohjalian
- Soundings** by Hali Felt

BEST-SELLERS

- FICTION**
1. **Gone Girl** by Gillian Flynn
 2. **Fifty Shades of Grey** by E.L. James
 3. **Fifty Shades Darker** by E.L. James
 4. **Fifty Shades Freed** by E.L. James
 5. **Catching Fire** by Suzanne Collins
- NONFICTION**
1. **The Cornbread Mafia** by James Higdon
 2. **In the Garden of Beasts** by Erik Larson
 3. **Wild** by Cheryl Strayed
 4. **Citizens of London** by Lynne Olson
 5. **Bernson's Corner** by Barry Bernson
- Based on sales at Louisville branches of Carmichael's Bookstore.

Books

Yankees book doesn't strike out

Despite uneven effort, gems found

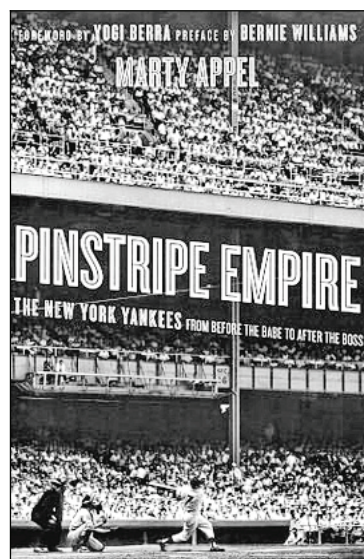
By Steve Kaufman
Special to The Courier-Journal

The New York Yankees are the best story in American sports history.

Resist the temptation to dismiss them as merely the product of an overwrought, self-centered Manhattan newspaper and publishing industry. Forty American League World Series appearances in 88 years (nearly one every other year since 1921) and 27 baseball championships verify the incredible dominance of this franchise.

Nor were the Yankees cold, faceless juggernauts: Books about the colorful lives of Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra and Mickey Mantle alone would fill many cities' public libraries, which is sort of the point. What more can "Pinstripe Empire" by Marty Appel bring to the literature?

Well, for one thing, there's Ap-



"Pinstripe Empire: The New York Yankees, from Before the Babe to After the Boss"

By Marty Appel, Bloomsbury, 574 pp./\$28

pel. If the team's former public relations director brings a fan's breathless enthusiasm, a school-boy's crush on the Mick and Joltin' Joe, he also has incredible access to the team's file of history. He served there, near the seats of power, from 1968-1977. He arrived as an errand boy, answering Man-

tle's fan mail. He stayed through the tumult of George Steinbrenner, Billy Martin and Reggie Jackson.

So maybe there are unexamined treasures here to be uncovered and savored.

It's an uneven effort. Covering 109 years of anything would be a protean adventure. And this is a story filled with so many historic moments — the trade for Ruth, the Babe's "called shot" home run, Gehrig's illness and "luckiest man on the face of the earth" speech, DiMaggio's hitting streak, Don Larsen's perfect game, Ruth's 60 and Roger Maris' 61* home runs, and on and on — that giving it all equal treatment would have taxed Edward Gibbon.

Some of it is great fun, just re-

living whichever decades were yours. But some of it feels rushed, as if Appel were up against a page count. It often has a "then the next season, they brought in Gossage" pace to it, jumping from year to year, lineup to lineup, statistic to statistic.

And some of the less-noble parts — Ruth's appetites, DiMaggio's arrogance, Mantle's bad boy behavior, Martin's self-destruction, Steinbrenner's cruelty — feel smoothed over, or ignored entirely, perhaps reflecting Appel's public relations instinct.

He covers it all, though, from the the original, rock-filled ball-field in Upper Manhattan to the opening of the third iteration of the Yankee Stadium palace in the Bronx, from Wee Willie Keeler to Derek Jeter.

If you're going to read about baseball's last 100 years, you pretty much have to start with the Yankees. And if you're going to do that, you could do worse than this "Empire."

Steve Kaufman is a writer and critic who lives in Louisville.

'Dead Celebrity' cooks up some tasty morsels

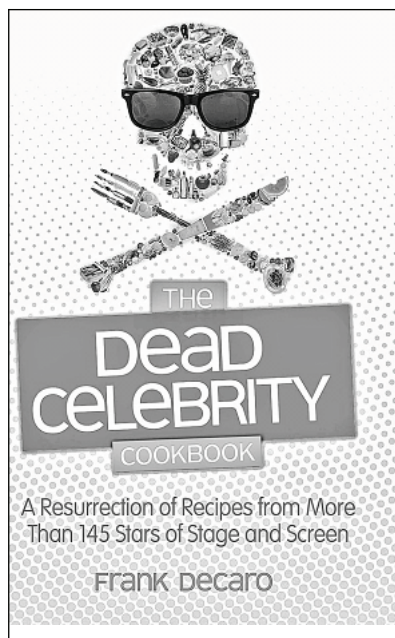
Reviewed by Scott Coffman
Courier-Journal Books Editor

What an astounding surprise! When I first heard the title, I confess I chalked it up as a one-joke wonder: Comedian and critic Frank DeCaro is known for his snarky commentary, and I expected the book would be lurid and tasteless variations on the same joke that appears on the back cover, which refers to the recipe for cannoli attributed to actor Rock Hudson.

Boy, was I wrong. In addition to providing enlightening biographical lessons about its deceased gourmands, "The Dead Celebrity Cookbook" actually features many recipes that you'll want to try. Full disclosure: A few of the celebrities' concoctions are so simple as to hardly qualify as recipes, but most seem like genuine items someone might prepare and enjoy; a couple of contributions sound unsuitable even for Fido.

One of my favorite tales recounted is the story of actor Roddy McDowall, to whose home folks clamored for invitations to his delightfully appointed soirees; folks in the know knew to eat beforehand, because though McDowall was a charming and impeccable host, he was allegedly a horrible cook.

This book is a winner, a charming indulgence for fans of the Golden Ages of Hollywood and television. All the famous folks featured in "The Dead Celebrity Cookbook" have indeed left this mortal coil; the



"The Dead Celebrity Cookbook"

by Frank DeCaro, HCI, 384 pp./\$19.95

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"This book is a winner, a charming indulgence for fans of the Golden Ages of Hollywood and television."

chapter with recipes from the Golden Girls stars, therefore, does not include Betty White.

DeCaro has similarly divided the other chapters, grouping stars together with some commonality.

Talk Chow, for example, features such chat show hosts as Mike Douglas, Dinah Shore and Merv Griffin. An All-Night Oscar Buffet offers many offed Oscar winners, like Claudette Colbert, Joan Crawford and Greer Garson. One exception to the rule is the chapter I Lunch Lucy, which is composed solely of recipes from the reposing redhead.

The author has been collecting celebrity cookbooks and recipes from an early age, and he reprints his selections faithfully here, often including small sidebars that mention more modern ingredients or additional techniques that would improve the originals. He also — quite candidly — admits when the recipe is, shall we say, less than successful. This honesty makes it all the more credible when he declares a recipe a winner.

Frankly, the biographical aspect of the book is even better than the recipes: The delightfully encapsulated histories of each and every mortified movie star and cadaverous celebrity in the book make for absorbing reading. Each of the more than 100 profiles is witty and wry, providing illuminative details that you may or may not have heard already. Despite my own celebrity worship, I still found enough new material to keep me reading well into the night.

Frank DeCaro has created a fun, frothy frolic which succeeds as a credible cookbook and as delectable biographies of perished personalities most readers will remember fondly.

EVENTS

Author **Nora Rose Moosnick** will be discussing her book "Arab and Jewish Women in Kentucky: Stories of Accommodation and Audacity" on Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Iroquois branch of the library.

New York Times reporter and author **Patricia Cohen** discusses "In Our Prime" at the Main Library on Wednesday at 7 p.m. Call 574-1644 or go online for free tickets.

ON TV THIS WEEKEND

They Eat Puppies, Don't They? by Christopher Buckley, 1:45 p.m. today on CSPAN2's BookTV

To Hell on a Fast Horse: Billy the Kid, Pat Garrett, and the Epic Chase to Justice in the Old West by Mark Lee Gardner, 6 p.m. Sunday on CSPAN2's BookTV

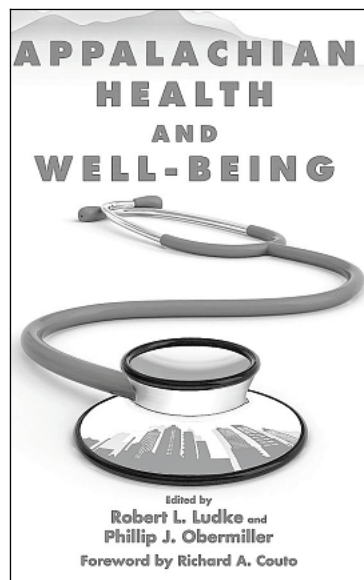
Healthy living challenge for Appalachia

By Kevin Kavanagh
Special to The Courier-Journal

Recently, the most critically acclaimed work that provides a mood of forbearing, misery and depression was the script for the film "Melancholia." However, the treatise "Appalachian Health and Well-Being" easily surpasses it. What makes its impact so profound is that it is a true documentative report, one that many Eastern Kentuckians are currently living.

The book is a compilation of reviews and studies of the entire Appalachian region, which spans 13 states and includes the metropolitan areas of Pittsburgh, Birmingham and, in Kentucky, Lexington. Each chapter is written by a different author and is designed to stand alone; thus the reader may pick and choose the topics.

From the outset, it is evident that great health care disparities exist in the Appalachian region. There are greater differences between the counties in the region than between Appalachia and the rest of the nation. The health care in Lexington certainly differs from McCreary County. In Kentucky, what we think of as Appalachia is actually Rural Central Appalachia, a subregion which is ex-



"Appalachian Health and Well-Being"

By Robert L. Ludke, Phillip J. Obermiller, The University Press of Kentucky, 400 pp./\$50

fatty foods. In rural southeast Kentucky, one only needs to visit the many buffet restaurants to realize that personal choices play a substantial role in this problem. The authors suggest policy changes for childhood obesity of healthy school lunches, elimination of junk food and drinks from school vending machines, and an increase in physical activity.

The book also dispels several Appalachian myths, such as the incidence of consanguinity, which has been reported to be problematic in some isolated rural communities, but this is no different from other rural regions in America. Similarly, the use of home remedies and faith-based healing is not different from the rest of the nation. Like other regions in the United States, faith and prayer are used to supplement mainstream medicine, not replace it.

The vast majority of the chapters are a well written, comprehensive discussion of the problems affecting Appalachia. An important concept is that unhealthy

lifestyles are not just the patient's fault but also a social problem; making substantial headway requires improvement in poverty, education, and employment.

A testament to the rapid deterioration of the health status in Rural Central Appalachia is the methamphetamine epidemic. The book's chapter on drug abuse notes that, in 2005, 377 meth labs were discovered in Eastern Kentucky. However, in 2011, according to the Kentucky State Police, there were almost 200 labs found in Laurel County alone. The authors' policy recommendations include providing more drug courts, treatment facilities and exploring the legalization of addictive drugs. However, this problem is so severe and rapidly progressive that the Kentucky General Assembly passed two bills this year aimed at curbing substance abuse.

For those who wish to understand the health and well-being in Eastern Kentucky, this is an insightful book which will give all an appreciation of the herculean task that has been placed upon the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

Kevin T. Kavanagh is a retired physician from Somerset, Ky.