Off the Shelf
Recent books with Harvard connections


Body Drama, by Nancy Amanda Redd ’03 (Gotham, $20, paper). The 2004 Miss America contestant, with an assist from the director of Mount Sinai’s Adolescent Health Center, writes a frank—and frankly illustrated, with photographs—tour of growing girls’ concerns from acne and breast development to weight, pregnancy, and genital warts.

What Is Emotion? History, Measures, and Meanings, by Jerome Kagan (Yale, $27.50). The Starch professor of psychology emeritus wades into the “empirically lean and theoretically contentious understanding of emotional phenomena” and finds himself “adopt[ing] a skeptical stance toward the existence of a small set of basic emotions.” Kagan writes, “Poets possess the license to use a predicate any way they wish,” but this is very much a scientist’s book.


Slate, Los Angeles Times, etc., and now Time) collects samples from the past dozen years. Reflecting on airport security lines in 2002 (“...the major war effort imposed on civilians...”), he finds a “need to think about it for a few more hours. And I think I know where I’ll find the time.”


While growing up in Houston, Denver, and Tulsa, Chang, like many girls, made cupcakes for friends. But her first career path was in management consulting; after concentrating in applied mathematics and economics at Harvard, she spent two years with Monitor Company in Cambridge, where she worked on the college recruiting program. “One icebreaker question we used was, ‘If you won the lottery tomorrow and money was no problem, what would you be doing?’” she recalls. “After asking hundreds of kids that question, I asked it of myself.”

The answer led Chang to enroll in a three-hour adult-education course on starting your own food business, taught by cookbook author Judy Rosenberg, founder of the Rosie’s Bakery shops in Boston. That inspired Chang to get a restaurant job; she started at the upscale Biba restaurant as a garde-manger cook, making the bar menu, including cold appetizers. But “I wasn’t that interested in the savory end of things,” Chang says. “I was always attracted to sweet flavors. They’re more interesting. And more enjoyable!”

She moved to Bentonwood Bakery in Newton, then became pastry chef at the Rialto restaurant in Cambridge. She worked in New York for renowned French pastry chef François Payard, formerly of Restaurant Daniel, then returned to Boston at Mistral. Still, “I didn’t want to work in restaurants long-term,” Chang explains. “A restaurant menu has a very limited scope for desserts. I wanted to do something that would reach more people, and I had always loved pastry shops.” In 2000 she opened her first Flour Bakery + Café, in the South End. “It was busy pretty much