Off the Shelf
Recent books with Harvard connections

Up on the Roof: New York's Hidden Skyline Spaces, by Alex MacLean '69, M.Arch. '73 (Princeton Architectural Press, $50). The aerial photographer documents how the (literally) upper class lives, on green terraces, around pools, or simply through the equipment that keeps them cool and hydrated.

The Founders and Finance, by Thomas K. McCraw, Straus professor of business history emeritus (Harvard, $35). During an election debate about America’s economy, a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian revisits first principles, examining the Revolutionary War-era financial crises and the solutions crafted by Alexander Hamilton, Albert Gallatin, and others (immigrants all), in time to enable the Louisiana Purchase and to pay the costs of the War of 1812.

Open Access, by Peter Suber (MIT, $12.95 paper). A succinct guide to digital dissemination of work free of charge and of copyright or licensing restrictions (more appealing for scholars publishing in journals than, say, for authors or filmmakers who earn a living through their creative work). By the director of the Harvard Open Access Project.


From Slave Ship to Harvard, by James H. Johnston (Fordham University Press, $29.95). A history of an African-American family, from Yarrow Mamout’s enslaved arrival in North America in 1752, proceeding through Robert Turner Ford’s debut at (residentially segregated) Harvard College in 1923, and beyond. The family was remarkable from the outset: Mamout, freed, was painted by Charles Willson Peale.

Good Counsel: Meeting the Legal Needs of Nonprofits, by Lesley Rosenthal '86, J.D. '89 (Wiley, $80). How big was the legal staff of the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts when the author (now vice president and general counsel) joined it? “Oh, around five-foot-five,” she says. Joking aside, this is a useful guide for nonprofits’ leaders, board members, volunteers, and lawyers.


Loaded Words, by Marjorie Garber, Kenan professor of English and of visual and environmental studies (Fordham University Press, $26 paper). Essays on language—rich in surprises because they are not necessarily about the words you expect. As the author notes in the introduction, “Would you like to take a walk?” means different things if addressed to “(a) your dog, (b) a hothead in a bar, or (c) the person to whom you are about to propose marriage.”

Triumphs of Experience, by George E. Vaillant, professor of psychiatry (Harvard, $27.95). A seventy-fifth-year harvesting of the Harvard Grant Study, the longitudinal examination of a cohort of 268 college men. Growth, it happily turns out, is not arrested with age.

Building a Magnetic Culture, by Kevin A. Sheridan, M.B.A. ’88 (McGraw-Hill, $28). A human-resources consultant (and mountain climber) offers lessons on attracting the right people and engaging them in your organization: how Google, for instance, goes about making sure it gets “Googley” employees.

The Guardian Poplar, by Chase N. Peterson '52, M.D. '56 (University of Utah Press, $39.95). The past University of Utah president’s memoir recalls his own journey from that state to Harvard, back home, and then again to Cambridge as director of undergraduate admissions and then vice president for alumni affairs and development in the late 1960s and early 1970s—an era of tumult, change, and reaching out to new constituencies.

Howard’s Gift: Uncommon Wisdom to Inspire Your Life’s Work, by Eric C. Sinoway, M.P.A. ’05 (St. Martin’s, $24.99). The author puts into print lessons about planning and taking charge of your life from his cherished mentor, Sarofim-Rock professor of business administration emeritus Howard H. Stevenson, the guiding light of entrepreneurship studies at the Business School.

My Husband and My Wives: A Gay Man’s Odyssey, by Charles Rowan Beye, Ph.D. ’60 (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $26). A retired classics professor (Stanford, Boston University, City University of New York) recounts an erotic and emotional life that includes homosexual experiences as a youth, marriage to two women (producing four children), and a subsequent, late-life, same-sex marriage.


On high: The Alden, 225 Central Park West, in Manhattan, from Up on the Roof