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Expert suggestions for summer reading

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For those who haven't picked up their summer reading yet, POLITICO asked experts and specialists for their picks on the best books in their field:

The Middle East

Expert: Moran Banai, U.S. editor of Middle East Bulletin, Center for American Progress

Recommendation: "In the Land of Israel," by Amos Oz

Why: "Written in 1982-83, it's a compilation of a series of interviews with people throughout Israel and the West Bank. It's a tapestry of what the situation was like at that time and what the culture and environment was, what people were thinking about, what their issues were — not only in terms of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict."

Expert: Danielle Pletka, vice president, foreign and defense policy studies, American Enterprise Institute

Recommendation: "A Peace to End All Peace," David Fromkin

Why: "One of my favorite books about the Middle East, about the fall of the Ottoman Empire — a real window into the forging of the modern Middle East and the Byzantine politics that continue to color the governance of the region today."

Expert: Karim Sadjapour, associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Recommendation: "The Increment," by David Ignatius

Why: "Ignatius's book is fiction, but he paints an incredibly vivid portrait of the life of a disillusioned Iranian official. ... Indeed, given the current tumult in Iran, Ignatius's art could one day soon imitate life. I finished it in two days."

Expert: Christopher Boucek, associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Recommendation: "A History of Iraq," by Charles Tripp

Why: "Extraordinarily thorough and richly sourced, Charles details the country's history from the British occupation through Saddam's rule. ... This book should be essential reading for anyone seeking to understand this very complicated nation."

Energy

Expert: Dan Weiss, director of climate strategy, Center for American Progress

Recommendation: " 'What the Heck Are You Up To, Mr. President?': Jimmy Carter, America's 'Malaise,' and the Speech That Should Have Changed the Country," by Kevin Mattson

Why: "I would urge government officials involved with clean energy and global warming policy to read this book as a cautionary tale. They can take heart that President Obama, Reps. Waxman and Markey, and Sens. Boxer and Reid are pursuing these goals in a very effective manner."

Expert: Kenneth P. Green, resident scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Recommendation: "Gusher of Lies: The Dangerous Delusions of Energy Independence," by Robert Bryce

Why: "It's exhortative instead of purely informative. It hammers apart the idea that we really

want to be independent of oil. Energy interdependence should be the actual goal for our energy system.”

Expert: Jerry Taylor, senior fellow, The Cato Institute

Recommendation: “Energy at the Crossroads,” by Vaclav Smil

Why: “It provides a cold dose of economic and physical reality to an energy policy debate largely disconnected from the same.”

Economic history

Expert: David Boaz, executive vice president, The Cato Institute

Recommendation: “The Forgotten Man,” by Amity Shlaes

Why: “Details the policy road map to avoid turning a financial crisis into a Great Depression.”

Expert: Gary Burtless, senior fellow, Brookings Institution

Recommendation: “Manias, Panics and Crashes: A History of Financial Crises,” by Charles Kindleberger

Why: “A classic economic history that is amusing, well written, understandable and very pertinent.”

Expert: Grover Norquist, president, Americans for Tax Reform

Recommendation: “Fight, Flight, Fraud — The Story of Taxation,” by Charles Adams

Why: “The history of revolutions, wars, empire and power is the history of taxation, good, bad and ugly.”

American political history

Expert: Boaz of The Cato Institute

Recommendation: “Dependent on D.C.: The Rise of Federal Control over the Lives of Ordinary Americans,” by Charlotte Twight

Why: “Shows how politicians have seduced Americans into dependences on the massive entitlement state that we’re now trying to figure out how to pay for.”

Expert: Stephen Hess, senior fellow emeritus, Brookings Institution

Recommendation: “Political Corruption in America: An Encyclopedia of Scandals, Power, and Greed,” by Mark Grossman

Why: “It’s an interesting book to dip into and it’s quite up-to-date. I don’t think there’s an entry for Sanford or Ensign just yet, but it’ll be revised.”

Expert: Matthew Spalding, director, B. Kenneth Simon Center for American Studies, The Heritage Foundation

Recommendation: “Lincoln: A Very Short Introduction,” by Allen Guelzo.

Why: “No student of American politics can do without an understanding of Abraham Lincoln, and, in his bicentennial year, a good place to start is this brief overview by one of our greatest Lincoln scholars.”

Expert: Jamie Fly, executive director, The Foreign Policy Initiative

Recommendation: “By His Own Rules: The Ambitions, Successes, and Ultimate Failures of Donald Rumsfeld,” by Bradley Graham

Why: “Donald Rumsfeld has been excoriated by both Democrats and Republicans for his handling of the Iraq war. This biography reveals a more nuanced picture than the conventional wisdom would suggest.”