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## Summer Reading Recommendations from President Doti

Chapman University Media Relations

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## Summer Reading Recommendations from President Doti

Dear Student:

As this academic year draws to a close, I'm sure the one memory that will stand out in our minds is all the construction activity that brought dust, dirt, noise and the loss of the walkways and malls on our beautiful campus. But construction also brings excitement. The Leatherby Libraries, Oliphant Hall, Wallace All Faiths Chapel and Residence House will transform our campus and enhance the intellectual, spiritual and social life of our university.

We plan for the new buildings and facilities to be completed this summer. And while the landscaping will not be done in August, we plan for the walkways and other hardscape to be completed by then, thereby allowing access to all the long-awaited buildings.

I wish to express gratitude for your patience this past year. While it's been fun watching the new buildings rise before our eyes and the wonderful panels painted on the construction barriers by our various student teams certainly added color, I also know of the inconvenience and disruption. So many thanks.

Now the construction activity will change scenes, moving from the central campus to the future site of the new home for the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts: Marion Knott Studios. Groundbreaking for the Knott Studios, to be located at the corner of Palm and Cypress streets, will occur this summer, with completion scheduled for early 2006.

Even more important than the opening of all our new buildings and facilities will be the arrival of 34 new faculty to our community. These teacher-scholars, of course, will have a significant and very positive impact on academic life at Chapman.

During the summer, I hope you will have an opportunity to read not for exams, grades or writing papers just for the fun of it. Here are a few recommendations of books I've recently read and are my personal favorites.

I love the works of Indian writers. My recent favorite is *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry. Although this book is perhaps the saddest book I've ever read, it also, at times, is one of the funniest. It's difficult to explain this paradox, so you'll just have to read it to see what I mean. The best book on business and entrepreneurship that I've read in a long time is *Richard Bransons Losing my Virginity: How I've Survived, Had Fun, and Made a Fortune Doing Business My Way*. That title pretty much says it all.

A wonderful little book is Peter Robinson's *How Ronald Reagan Changed My Life*. This book crosses political boundaries to examine what I believe is an often overlooked attribute of leadership, namely, the emotional underpinnings of a leader.

English Passengers by Matthew Kneale is an amusing novel based loosely on an actual historical incident. It received the Whitebread Book Award and was a finalist for the Booker Prize. What I really loved about this novel is its narrative form, where each of the major characters narrations move the plot along.

A book that will help give better historical perspective to terrorism and current problems in Iraq and the Middle East is Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East by Michael Oren. This is an incredibly well-researched work that is, to use the well-worn cliché, difficult to put down.

I highly recommend Hollywood Animal by the controversial motion picture screenwriter, Joe Eszterhas. While it's a must read for film and television students, I believe anyone will enjoy this book. It's very well written, especially the part that touches on the moving and startling impact of the Holocaust on his life and the lives of his parents.

Finally, another book that includes the Holocaust as a backdrop is Stephanie Zweigs recently translated Nowhere in Africa. The movie version, with the same title, won the 2002 Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. It is, without doubt, the best movie I saw last year.

These books will be available for sale at the campus bookstore. Many of them are also available on tape and CD. If you read any or all of these books, I look forward to your reviews and hope you'll e-mail them to me at [doti@chapman.edu](mailto:doti@chapman.edu).

Good luck on your finals. We'll keep the Rinker Library and computer labs open for extended hours through exam week. I hope you have a great summer. Congratulations to our graduates. As for the rest of you, I look forward to sharing another exciting academic year in the life of our university.

Sincerely,

James L. Doti