



# #SummerBreak

written by Allegra  
July, 2019

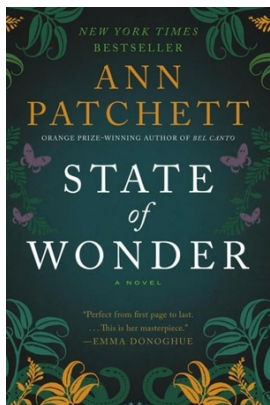


Allegra is going on holiday until mid-August. We'll gladly receive your suggestions and [submissions](#) from mid-August again (and we'll be cooking up a few changes to the site).

In the meantime, we wish you all a very mellow and restful summer break. While there are enough dark and serious things — political, social, academic, and environmental — to be worried about, we hope that you (and we) will be able to take a proper break and breathe, rather than trying to use our free time to finally finish *that* paper. So in the spirit of creative idleness and recharging our



batteries, a few reading recommendations from us — a nice selection of novels (in no particular order) for summer reading that we recently enjoyed and that, even though they do resonate in one way or the other with our professional worlds, will hopefully contribute to making this an enjoyable #SummerBreak.

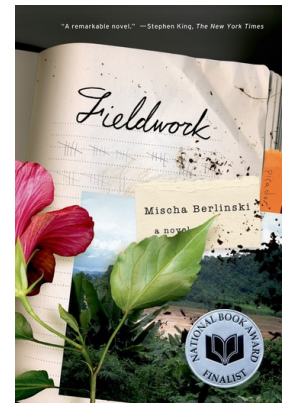


*State of Wonder* by Ann Patchett

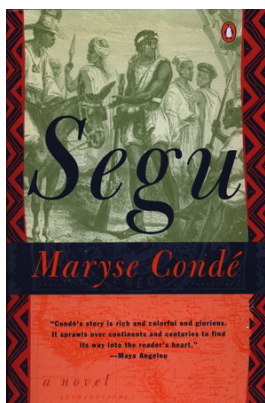
“Dr. Marina Singh, a research scientist with a pharmaceutical company, is sent to track down her former mentor, Dr. Annick Swenson, who seems to have all but disappeared in the Amazon while working on what is destined to be an extremely valuable new drug.” (via [Annpatchett.com](http://Annpatchett.com))



## *Fieldwork* by Mischa Berlin:



"When his girlfriend takes a job in Thailand, Mischa Berlinski goes along for the ride, planning to enjoy himself and work as little as possible. But one evening a fellow expatriate tips him off to a story: a charismatic American anthropologist, Martiya van der Leun, has been found dead—a suicide—in the Thai prison where she was serving a life sentence for murder. Curious at first, Mischa is soon immersed in the details of her story. This brilliant, haunting novel expands into a mystery set among the Thai hill tribes, whose way of life became a battleground for the missionaries and the scientists living among them." (via [Macmillan.com](https://www.macmillan.com))

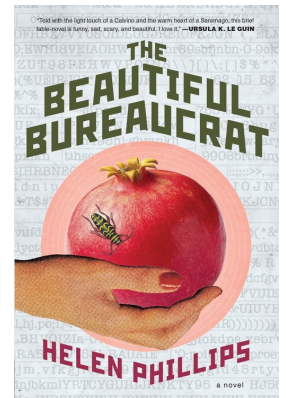


## *Segu* by Maryse Condé

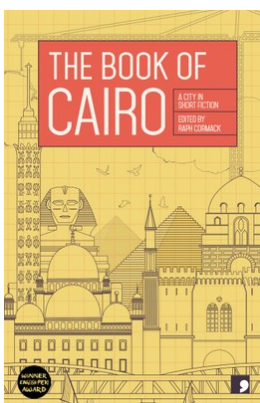
"The year is 1797, and the kingdom of Segu is flourishing, fed by the wealth of its noblemen and the power of its warriors. But even the soothsayers can only hint at the changes to come, for the battle of the soul of Africa has begun. From the east comes a new religion, Islam, and from the West, the slave trade." (via [Penguinrandomhousebooks.com](https://www.penguinrandomhousebooks.com))



## *The Beautiful Bureaucrat* by Helen Phillips



“In a windowless building in a remote part of town, Josephine inputs an endless string of numbers into something known only as The Database. As the days inch by and the files stack up, Josephine feels increasingly anxious in her surroundings.” (via [Helencphillips.com](http://Helencphillips.com))

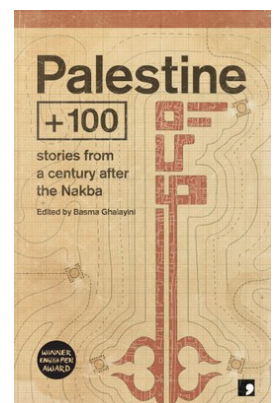


*The Book of Cairo*, ed. By Ralph Cormack, feat. Hassan Abdel Mawgoud, Eman Abdelrahim, Nael Eltoukhy, Areej Gamal, Hatem Hafez, Hend Ja'far, Nahla Karam, Mohamed Kheir, Ahmed Naji & Mohamed Salah al-Azab

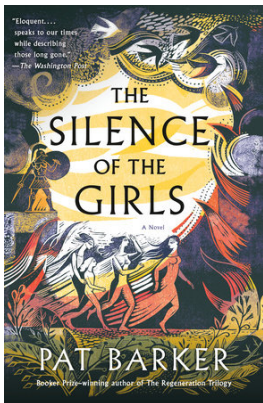


“Ten new voices offer tentative glimpses into Cairene life, at a time when writing directly about Egypt’s greatest challenges is often too dangerous. With intimate views of life, tinged with satire, surrealism, and humour, these stories guide us through the slums and suburbs, bars and backstreets of a city haunted by an unspoken past.” (via [Commapress.co.uk](http://Commapress.co.uk))

*Palestine +100*, ed. by Basma Ghalayini, feat. Talal Abu Shawish, Tasnim Abutabikh, Selma Dabbagh, Emad El-Din Aysha, Samir El-Youssef, Saleem Haddad, Anwar Hamed, Majd Kayyal, Mazen Maarouf, Abdalmuti Maqboul, Ahmed Masoud & Rawan Yaghi



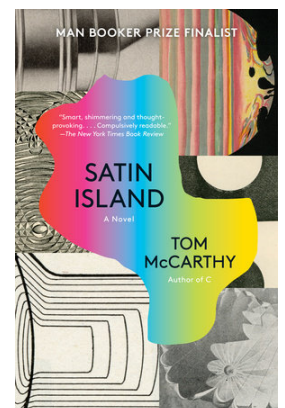
“Covering a range of approaches – from SF noir, to nightmarish dystopia, to high-tech farce – these stories use the blank canvas of the future to reimagine the Palestinian experience today. Along the way, we encounter drone swarms, digital uprisings, time-bending VR, peace treaties that span parallel universes, and even a Palestinian superhero, in probably the first anthology of science fiction from Palestine ever.” (via [Commapress.co.uk](http://Commapress.co.uk))



### *The Silence of the Girls* by Pat Barker

“Here is the story of the *Iliad* as we’ve never heard it before: in the words of Briseis, Trojan queen and captive of Achilles.” (via [Penguinrandomhousebooks.com](https://www.penguinrandomhousebooks.com))

### *Satin Island* by Tom McCarthy



“U., a “corporate anthropologist,” is tasked with preparing the Great Report, an all-encompassing ethnographic document that sums up our era. Yet at every turn, he feels himself overwhelmed by the ubiquity of data.” (via [Penguinrandomhousebooks.com](https://www.penguinrandomhousebooks.com))



*Featured Image by Allegra*