**January 26th—Final Countdown: NASA and the End of the Space Shuttle Program by Pat Duggins (264 pp).**

The Space Shuttle was once the cornerstone of the U.S. space program. However, each new flight brought us one step closer to the retirement of the shuttle in 2010. Final Countdown is the riveting history of NASA's Space Shuttle program, its missions, and its demise.

**February 23rd—Five Days: The Fiery Reckoning of an American City by Wes Moore (273 pp).**

When Freddie Gray was arrested for possessing an “illegal knife” in April 2015, he was, by eyewitness accounts that video evidence later confirmed, treated “roughly” as police loaded him into a vehicle. By the end of his trip in the police van, Gray was in a coma from which he would never recover. In the wake of a long history of police abuse in Baltimore, this killing felt like the final straw—it led to a week of protests, then five days described alternately as a riot or an uprising that set the entire city on edge and caught the nation's attention.

**March 23rd--The Moundbuilders: Ancient Peoples of Eastern North America by George R. Milner (224 pp).**

Nineteenth-century explorers of the American continent were amazed to find great monuments built of earth in the Eastern Woodlands. Thousands of these mounds were discovered in the plains and forests, some up to a hundred feet high, some overgrown hillocks, some conical, others flat-topped. Speculation was rife as to the identity of the Moundbuilders. As George Milner shows, research over the past century demonstrates conclusively that Native Americans built these mounds.

**April 27th—A Land So Strange: The Epic Journey of Cabeza de Vaca by Andrés Reséndez (336 pp).**

In 1528, a mission set out from Spain to colonize Florida. But the expedition went horribly wrong: Delayed by a hurricane, knocked off course by a colossal error of navigation, and ultimately doomed by a disastrous decision to separate the men from their ships, the mission quickly became a desperate journey of survival.

**May 25th—A Kingdom Strange: The Brief and Tragic History of the Lost Colony of Roanoke by James Horn (304 pp).**

In 1587, John White and 117 men, women, and children landed off the coast of North Carolina on Roanoke Island, hoping to carve a colony from fearsome wilderness. A mere month later, facing quickly diminishing supplies and a fierce native population, White sailed back to England in desperation. He persuaded the wealthy Sir Walter Raleigh, the expedition's sponsor, to rescue the imperiled colonists, but by the time White returned with aid the colonists of Roanoke were nowhere to be found.

**June 22nd--Love and Hate in Jamestown: John Smith, Pocahontas, and the Start of a New Nation by David A. Price (304 pp).**

In 1606, approximately 105 British colonists sailed to America, seeking gold and a trade route to the Pacific. Instead, they found disease, hunger, and hostile natives. Ill prepared for such hardship, the men responded with incompetence and infighting; only the leadership of Captain John Smith averted doom for the first permanent English settlement in the New World. The Jamestown colony is one of the great survival stories of American history, and this book brings it fully to life for the first time.

**July 27th—A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American Experience by Emerson W. Baker (416 pp).**

Beginning in January 1692, Salem Village in colonial Massachusetts witnessed the largest and most lethal outbreak of witchcraft in early America. Villagers--mainly young women--suffered from unseen torments that caused them to writhe, shriek, and contort their bodies, complaining of pins stuck into their flesh and of being haunted by specters. Believing that they suffered from assaults by an invisible spirit, the community began a hunt to track down those responsible for the demonic work. The resulting Salem Witch Trials, culminating in the execution of 19 villagers, persists as one of the most mysterious and fascinating events in American history.

**August 24th--Into the American Woods: Negotiations on the Pennsylvania Frontier by James H. Merrell (464 pp).**

James Merrell's brilliant book is an account of the "go-betweens," the Europeans and Indians who moved between cultures on the Pennsylvania frontier in efforts to maintain the peace. It is also a reflection on the meanings of wilderness to the colonists and natives of the New World.

**September 28th—A Few Acres of Snow: The Saga of the French and Indian Wars by Robert Leckie (388 pp).**

With his celebrated sense of drama and eye for colorful detail, acclaimed military historian Robert Leckie charts the long, savage conflict between England and France in their quest for supremacy in pre-Revolutionary America Leckie not only provides perspective on exactly how the New World came to be such a fiercely contested prize in Western Civilization, but also shows us exactly why we speak English today instead of French-and reminds us how easily things might have gone the other way.

**October 26th— The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America by Colin G. Calloway (240 pp).**

In this superb volume in Oxford's acclaimed Pivotal Moments series, Colin Calloway reveals how the Treaty of Paris of 1763 had a profound effect on American history, setting in motion a cascade of unexpected consequences, as Indians and Europeans, settlers and frontiersmen, all struggled to adapt to new boundaries, new alignments, and new relationships. Britain now possessed a vast American empire stretching from Canada to the Florida Keys, yet the crushing costs of maintaining it would push its colonies toward rebellion.

**November 23rd-- Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates: The Forgotten War That Changed America History by Brian Kilmeade (304 pp).**

When Thomas Jefferson became president in 1801, America was deeply in debt and needed its economy to grow quickly, but its merchant ships were under attack. Pirates from North Africa routinely captured American sailors and held them as slaves, demanding ransom and tribute far beyond what the new country could afford. These rogue states would show no mercy, so President Jefferson decided to move beyond diplomacy. He sent the U.S. Navy's new warships and a detachment of Marines to blockade Tripoli--launching the Barbary Wars and beginning America's journey toward future superpower status.

**December 28th-- The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the Election of 1828**

**by Lynn Hudson Parsons (277 pp).**

The 1828 presidential election, which pitted Major General Andrew Jackson against incumbent John Quincy Adams, has long been hailed as a watershed moment in American political history. It was the contest in which an unlettered, hot-tempered southwestern frontiersman, trumpeted by his supporters as a genuine man of the people, soundly defeated a New England "aristocrat" whose education and political résumé were as impressive as any ever seen in American public life. It was, many historians have argued, the country's first truly democratic presidential election.