

climactic upheavals. Beginning with the 12th-century rise of the Plantagenets in England and ending with the 1453 Ottoman overthrow of the Byzantine Empire, Bauer ranges far and wide, touching on everything from the gruesome murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury; the ascendancy of the first king of the Incan Empire; the terrorization of the Asian Steppe by Mongol hordes; the relocation of the papacy from Rome to Avignon; the birth of the Inquisition in Toulouse, France; the beginnings of the African slave trade; and the bubonic plague's decimating sweep across Europe. In five sections (Renaissances; Invasions, Heresies, and Uprisings; Catastrophes; Regroupings; and Endings), Bauer covers a bewildering amount of territory in her attempt to offer a tantalizing global perspective of a tumultuous epoch. Unfortunately, she too often sacrifices depth for breadth. 22 illus. & 96 maps. *Agent: Richard Henshaw, Richard Henshaw Group.* (Aug.)

Evil Season

Michael Benson. Pinnacle, \$7.99 mass market (400p) ISBN 978-0-7860-2761-3

The downsides of dramatizing a true crime narrative become abundantly clear in this dull reconstruction of a horrific 2004 murder in Sarasota, Fla. An overwhelming stench leads to the discovery of the butchered corpse of art gallery owner Joyce Wishart; she had been stabbed numerous times, nearly beheaded, and her killer had removed her vagina and lower abdomen. Six months after the crime, detectives get a DNA hit identifying Elton Brutus Murphy's blood at the scene. Much of the book deals with the butcher's vivid descent into madness and violence, culminating with his murder of Wishart. The dramatic prologue provides Murphy's inner thoughts as he supposedly posed the corpse after the killing (to create his own "masterwork") and prepared to make "the stew." Yet later in the book, the author apparently quotes from his interviews with Murphy to note that the murderer laughed at the theory that his victim was posed in a particular way, and makes clear that there is no evidence of any kind that he cooked any part of her, not even in his confession. These conflicts ultimately undermine Benson's (*Betrayal in Blood*) cred-

ibility, a fatal flaw in any work of nonfiction. *Agent: Jake Elwell, Harold Ober Associates.* (Aug.)

Assassination and Commemoration: JFK, Dallas, and the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza

Stephen Fagin. Univ. of Oklahoma, \$29.95 (256p) ISBN 978-0-8061-4358-3

Half a century after J.F.K. was assassinated in Dealey Plaza, the city of Dallas still struggles with being branded as having some responsibility. The evolution of the city's responses to this sentiment is well-documented in this interesting, if somewhat dry, account of the path from the fatal shots to the creation of a museum on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, which Lee Harvey Oswald ostensibly used as his sniper's nest. Fagin begins by describing the poisonous atmosphere in the right-wing-leaning city even before the fatal day, before detailing radically different plans for the building. Many wanted it torn down, while others thought that it would make the perfect location for a living memorial that honored the president's life, while focusing on his murder—a view that eventually prevailed. Fagin makes the case that the museum's value only increases as more and more of those who remember where they were when they heard the sad news pass away every year. While some of the author's observations are a bit overblown, this stands as a useful study of a city's response to trauma. 16 b&w and 35 color illus. (July)

Build Your Dreams: How to Make a Living Doing What You Love

Alexis Irvin and Chip Hiden. Running Press, \$17 trade paper (208p) ISBN 978-0-7624-5038-1

Designed as a companion piece to Irvin and Hiden's inspirational documentary film, *The Dream Share Project*, this refreshingly brief, exercise-focused guide is geared toward helping dreamers turn their creative aptitudes and fantasies into meaningful, sustainable work. The book is divided into chapters outlining how to identify core values, how to pursue them, and financial and practical concerns along the way. The visualization strategies, idea maps, and meditation exercises will be familiar to frequent readers of creativity-fo-

cused self-help titles, and some of the case studies are merely shopworn business book retreats. However, the book's unflinching practicality is a rarity in the genre: the duo readily and duly acknowledge the necessity of powering through the less-exciting, early stages of achieving one's goals, and they provide quite a bit of advice on how to deal with poor employment prospects, seemingly endless internships, and repeat rejection. The book is decidedly millennial in its outlook on the working world—every moment of giddy optimism is matched by a reminder of the inevitability of stumbling blocks and failure. But for dreamers hoping to keep their heads in the clouds and their feet on the ground, this is a great starting point. *Agent: Steve Harris and Michele Martin, CSG Literary Partners.* (July)

Coming Clean: A Memoir

Kimberly Rae Miller. New Harvest/HMH, \$25 (272p) ISBN 978-0-544-02583-7

An only child to loving parents who were such chronic hoarders that they had to flee their over-stuffed Long Island house rather than face cleaning it, actress and journalist Miller delineates her harrowing childhood and secretive home life. Miller's bus driver father, a brilliant, however emotionally remote man, collected papers and broken electronics, while Miller's government-employed mother was a twin whose untreated childhood scoliosis left her shrunken and with a low sense of self-worth, although fiercely devoted to her daughter. Home life spelled a weird combination of obsession and inertia—collected stuff and unused purchases were piled so high that little room was left for the family even to eat or sleep or use the bathrooms; and filth and mold invited rodents. As a child Miller realized her family wasn't like other people's families with tidy, presentable homes; far from it. A fire destroyed one home when she was in second grade, while the large house they moved into was soon rendered similarly uninhabitable, so that Miller never invited anyone home and had to adopt a "decoy" house to be dropped off at by friends. Eventually she went to college at Emerson in Boston where she kept a clean living space, as she did when she later moved to L.A. and New York City. The reader senses in this horrific story that