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Published: February 27, 2009

**[FOOL’S PARADISE: Players, Poseurs, and the Culture of Excess in South Beach](#)**, by *Steven Gaines*. (Crown, \$25.95.) A lively chronicle of sleaze and vapidty, from the era of Capone to Sinatra and Madonna.

**[THE DAY WALL STREET EXPLODED: A Story of America in Its First Age of Terror](#)**, by *Beverly Gage*. (Oxford University, \$27.95.) With the cruel bombing of Sept. 16, 1920, as her centerpiece, Gage provides a wider survey of industrial warfare in the United States.

**[BEYOND THE REVOLUTION: A History of American Thought From Paine to Pragmatism](#)**, by *William H. Goetzmann*. (Basic, \$35.) This valuable book promotes a cosmopolitan vision of openness and equality.

**[THE GOOD PARENTS](#)**, by *Joan London*. (Black Cat/Grove/Atlantic, paper, \$14.95.) When an Australian woman in thrall to her boss disappears, her parents are left to meditate on their own youthful indiscretions.

**[A HIDDEN LIFE: A Memoir of August 1969](#)**, by *Johanna Reiss*. (Melville House, \$24.95.) Reiss, who recounted her ordeal hiding from the Nazis in the 1972 book “The Upstairs Room,” here attempts to decode the wrenching mystery of her husband’s suicide.

**[THE BLOODY WHITE BARON: The Extraordinary Story of the Russian Nobleman Who Became the Last Khan of Mongolia](#)**, by *James Palmer*. (Basic, \$26.95.) A brilliant study of a sadistic commander in a nasty war.

**[NINE LIVES: Death and Life in New Orleans](#)**, by *Dan Baum*. (Spiegel & Grau, \$26.) Baum’s profiles make up a vivid portrait of the city in all its generosity and folly.

**[MAGIC BUS: On the Hippie Trail From Istanbul to India](#)**, by *Rory MacLean*. (Ig, paper, \$14.95.) A journalist revisits the 1960s Asian road to enlightenment.

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**The New York Times** **HEALTH**  
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**AMERICA ANONYMOUS: Eight Addicts in Search of a Life**, by Benoit Denizet-Lewis. (Simon & Schuster, \$26.) A contributing writer for The Times Magazine ranges over a variety of demons and obsessions.

A version of this article appeared in print on March 1, 2009, on page BR18 of the New York edition.

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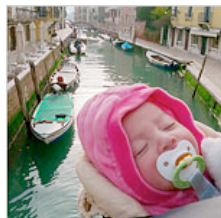
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