

troubled femme fatale Zan—spend nearly half the book steaming up the metaphorical windows with their improvised couplings. And though *Clearcut* sounds like a drugstore bodice-ripper in premise, Shengold easily elevates it with her devotion to the souls—and not just the commingling body parts—of her characters, as well as her pungent language (a freshly cut log kicks up “a backwash of warm cedar sawdust, as fragrant as cinnamon”). **B+** —*Leah Greenblatt*

## CHARLEMAGNE'S TABLECLOTH

Nichola Fletcher  
Nonfiction (St. Martin's, \$24.95)

## A REVOLUTION IN EATING

James E. McWilliams  
Nonfiction (Columbia Univ., \$29.95)



Fletcher's book unfolds like a richly threaded, jewel-encrusted tapestry, so fabulous is her research on different kinds of feasts throughout history. She describes one held in September

1465 for the Archbishop of York with a menu of 41,833 items of meat, including 4,000 rabbits, 1,000 egrets, and 400 peacocks; King Midas' funeral feast in his tomb in 700 B.C., which was almost perfectly preserved from the desert heat; and a 15th-century wedding in Italy in which “the entire table service was made out of sugar: plates, cutlery, and even wineglasses.” McWilliams' subject, while less glamorous, is still fascinating: an examination of what colonial Americans ate, whether they

were natives, slaves, or immigrants, and how those cooking traditions have evolved ever since. He examines the ever-changing recipe for the rice-and-beans dish “hoppin' John” and the influence of scrapple, the Pennsylvania Dutch dish of cornmeal and pigs' innards, writing engagingly, though with an occasional dollop of academic dryness. Still, anyone curious about the cultural history of that meatloaf on the dinner plate will gobble it up. *Tablecloth*: **A-** *Revolution*: **B+** —*Tina Jordan*

## THIRTY-THREE TEETH

Colin Cotterill  
Mystery (Soho, \$24)



Dr. Siri Paiboun is your average 70-something Laotian coroner who sees and talks to spirits,

thinks he's the reincarnation of a 1,050-year-old Hmong shaman, and spends much of his time flouting the whims of his country's wacky Communist government. But Cotterill overcomes the potential pitfalls in his rather unpredictable mystery by triumphantly braving the tightrope between quirky humor (“Diarrhea, in its most vindictive state, can erase even thoughts of terror”) and the surreal macabre (“He stood there over me, wrenched at his head with both hands, and snapped his own neck. He almost pulled it clean off”). Oddly, moments of would-be silliness—when Siri tells his disgruntled and dying ex-neighbor, “You have to beg forgiveness from the spirit of the dog for what you did”—emerge instead as tragically funny and magically sublime. **B+** —*Channing Joseph*

## Best-Sellers



**'EVERYTHING' IS ALL RIGHT**  
*Waiting to Exhale* author Terry McMillan's sixth novel, *The Interruption of Everything*, cuts in at No. 4 this week (475,000 copies are in print). Two spots down, Sophie Kinsella's *The Undomestic Goddess*, a stand-alone title outside her *Shopaholic* series, debuts at No. 6.

## FICTION

		WEEKS ON LIST
1	<b>HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE</b> J.K. Rowling, Scholastic, \$29.99	2
2	<b>LIFEGUARD</b> James Patterson and Andrew Gross Little, Brown, \$26.95	2
3	<b>THE HISTORIAN</b> Elizabeth Kostova, Little, Brown, \$25.95	6
4	<b>THE INTERRUPTION OF EVERYTHING</b> Terry McMillan, Viking, \$25.95	1
5	<b>UNTIL I FIND YOU</b> John Irving, Random House, \$27.95	2
6	<b>THE UNDOMESTIC GODDESS</b> Sophie Kinsella, Dial, \$23	1
7	<b>THE DA VINCI CODE</b> Dan Brown, Doubleday, \$24.95	121
8	<b>ELEVEN ON TOP</b> Janet Evanovich, St. Martin's, \$26.95	5
9	<b>THE MERMAID CHAIR</b> Sue Monk Kidd, Viking, \$24.95	16
10	<b>NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN</b> Cormac McCarthy, Knopf, \$24.95	1

## NONFICTION

		WEEKS ON LIST
1	<b>NATURAL CURES "THEY" DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT</b> Kevin Trudeau, Alliance Publishing, \$29.95	6
2	<b>1776</b> David McCullough, Simon & Schuster, \$32	9
3	<b>100 PEOPLE WHO ARE SCREWING UP AMERICA</b> Bernard Goldberg, HarperCollins, \$25.95	3
4	<b>THE WORLD IS FLAT</b> Thomas L. Friedman, FSG, \$27.50	16
5	<b>FREAKONOMICS</b> Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, Morrow, \$25.95	15
6	<b>CONFESSIONS OF A VIDEO VIXEN</b> Karrine Steffans with Karen Hunter, Amistad, \$24.95	3
7	<b>YOUR BEST LIFE NOW</b> Joel Osteen, Warner Faith, \$19.99	40
8	<b>THE 3-HOUR DIET</b> Jorge Cruise, HarperResource, \$24.95	5
9	<b>THE SECRET MAN</b> Bob Woodward, Simon & Schuster, \$23	3
10	<b>BLINK</b> Malcolm Gladwell, Little, Brown, \$25.95	28

SOURCE: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, WEEK OF JULY 18-24, 2005

## OPENING ACTS

“Although Chung Ling Soo, the ‘Marvelous Chinese Conjurer,’ had never uttered a word from the stage during his long career, a moment after the rifles sounded, he cried out...in perfect English, ‘Oh my God. Something’s happened.’” —From the first chapter of *Jim Steinmeyer's THE GLORIOUS DECEPTION: THE DOUBLE LIFE OF WILLIAM ROBINSON, AKA CHUNG LING SOO, THE "MARVELOUS CHINESE CONJURER"* (Carroll & Graf, \$27)

“‘Jess?’ Her mother’s voice sounded through the hallway, mixing with the mustiness around her so well that the sound almost had a smell. To Jess, sitting in the cupboard, the sound of her name was strange, wobbly....” —Opening of *Helen Oyeyemi's debut novel, THE ICARUS GIRL* (Nan A. Talese, \$23.95)