

# Bookshelf: Winter Reads

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## The Science of Kissing

By *Sheril Kirshenbaum*

Do we scavenge for lips that resemble red fruit or are we sniffing out compatibility? Kirshenbaum arouses both the senses and the mind by exploring myriad theories of why and how we smooch. A playful yet comprehensive look at recent research, the book covers everything from evolution and [attachment](#) theory to [gender](#) and cultural preferences in necking. —*Michele Lent Hirsch*

## The Emotional Calendar

By *John R. Sharp, M.D.*

Seasons, holidays, and even wind patterns can have profound effects on our mood. With explanations for sexual friskiness in summer and [depression](#) at the end of football season, Sharp hands us the tools to be more self-aware and adaptive when our [environment](#) changes—and to keep annual mood dips in check. —*Sajel K. Shah*

## Alone Together

By *Sherry Turkle*

Forget the digital Eden we were once creating. The technologies we've invented are now diminishing us—robbing us of attention, privacy, and intimacy. Turkle claims it's not the technology that's disappointing, but ourselves—we keep expecting it to solve our problems. But that rings a bit false; after all, we don't have to keep building the technology that caters to our vulnerabilities. —*Hara Estroff Marano*

## The Price of Everything

By *Eduardo Porter*

From the sacrifices we make to be social to the restrictions we embrace for [religion](#), all our actions carry hidden costs. Porter's highly read-able crash course in economic theory shows how literal and metaphorical price tags provide rationales for what we think we want. Whether your goal is to make better choices or to finally wrap your head around the current economic crisis, Porter's analysis is a valuable resource.—*Katherine Schreiber*

## Universal Lightbulbs

*How pivotal moments inspire everyone*

For *Epiphany! True Stories of Sudden Insight*, author Elise Ballard compiled life-changing moments from both celebrities and ordinary people. Here, she shares three tales that speak to her personally.

- **Forgive freely**

After activist Linda Biehl lost her daughter, Amy, during a political uprising in South Africa, she established a foundation aimed at reconciliation. She even built a relationship with the men responsible for Amy's death.

"At one point, I was shocked by a serious betrayal by someone very close to me, and I wasn't sure I'd ever be able to fully let go," Ballard says. "Linda's story made me realize true [forgiveness](#) is possible."

- **Step up**

When actor G.W. Bailey visited a ski outing for kids with cancer, he was struck by the children's [laughter](#) and high spirits. He immediately began volunteering with the nonprofit behind the event, and eventually became its executive director.

"This is a common theme in the book," Ballard says. "G.W.'s so successful and busy, and he thinks he's just going to take a quick detour and then go back to his normal life. Then one moment changes everything."

- **Believe it**

During a voice lesson in her early 20s, Maya Angelou's teacher asked her to read aloud from a book. She came across the line "God loves me," and repeated it until it rang true—and she realized that even she, a young black woman, could do great things.

"Dr. Angelou's voice—this gorgeous mix of power, grace, passion, and humility—impacted me for life," Ballard says. "I saw how self-acceptance fueled all her wonderful accomplishments."—*Vanessa Pinto*

