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Logical family, Armistead Maupin (book review)

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Coffin, and Emily Orr (Cooper Hewitt) delve into the surprising diversity of style in the era, which art deco dominates. Extensively illustrated by contemporary and period photographs, the wide-ranging text mostly covers American consumption of the pinnacles of design in the era, primarily luxury goods ranging from fine art to automobiles, designer clothing, and interior décor. VERDICT A specialized work that distills broad cultural influences and social context into representative objects of beauty and delight.—Megan Farrell, Central Michigan Univ. Libs., Mount Pleasant


Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry. Yale Univ. Apr. 2017. 320p. ed. by Adriaan Waiboer. illus. notes. bibliog. index. ISBN 9780300222937. $60. FINE ARTS Johannes Vermeer (1632–75) is the best known of the Dutch genre painters, whose most prolific period spanned the years 1650–75. His paintings depicting ordinary life are breathtaking in their almost photographic detail. Though Vermeer is frequently portrayed as an enigmatic loner, this title, compiled by Waiboer (head curator, National Gallery of Ireland), reveals through essays and visual comparisons the symbiotic relationship among several Dutch painters of the 17th century. In addition to Vermeer, Gerrit Dou, Gerard ter Borch, Jan Steen, Pieter de Hooch, Gabriel Metsu, and Frans van Mieris are all represented. Formulating a comparative study of these artists, with essays contributed by experts in the field to accompany the exhibition in Dublin, Paris, and Washington, DC, Waiboer illustrates how they frequently drew inspiration and borrowed from one another, copying and perfecting techniques with similar subject matter. The 180 gorgeous illustrations depict side by side the different artists’ interpretations of the same subjects. VERDICT A beautiful representation of Dutch genre painting and a true enlightenment of Vermeer and his contemporaries.—Sandra Knowles, South Carolina State Lib., Columbia
George, former *New York Times* sportswriter and current SBNation.com national columnist, ultimately concludes in this brief treatise that NFL teams gamble on rookie signal callers because a franchise quarterback is the most important slot to fill for a Super Bowl run. In what reads like a long newspaper article filled with commentary from current and recent coaches and quarterbacks, the author focuses primarily on the contemporary game, with nearly half the book covering 2016 draftees Carson Wentz, Jared Goff, and Dak Prescott. The rest centers on what a rookie quarterback needs to be successful beyond the physical tools: communication and leadership skills, an open relationship with the head coach, football intelligence, a strong work ethic, the ability to process information quickly, and the knowledgeable support of a veteran backup quarterback. *Verdict* While there are several interesting quotes from the coaches interviewed, overall the book lacks depth and historical perspective, resulting in a fast read without much lasting impact.


Myers, a longtime sportswriter who has written about the Tom Brady/Peyton Manning rivalry in *Brady vs. Manning* and Joe Montana’s first NFC championship game with the San Francisco 49ers in *The Catch*, revisits those three quarterbacks and talks with eight others to discuss a father’s ability to shape young signal callers. The tone is inspirational, and the content is similar in almost every story—a supportive father figure who attended all of their son’s games and often played the role of best friend. Myers sometimes varies his approach. For former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Montana, dad was the one who coached him in football and basketball; for current Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick, success always has been a bit out of reach. The strongest chapter depicts former New York Giants quarterback Phil Simms’s struggles with a nonsupportive father, contrasting that with his attentiveness to his less-successful quarterback sons, Chris and Matt. *Verdict* This book suffers from some repetitiveness and is more a tribute to fathers than the sport, making it a nice Father’s Day gift.


In this work, author Mavor (art history & visual culture, Univ. of Manchester, UK; *Blue Mythologies*) draws connections among the stories, themes, and imagery found in fairy tales, nursery rhymes, literature, art, film, and more. Chapters center on a theme or subject (e.g., innocence) often addressed or represented in story (e.g., Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre’s *Paul and Virginia*), analyzed and expanded to an in-depth, enriched examination of the topic. An impressive number of references span countries, cultures, and time, employing allegory, linguistics, visuals, history, etc., to support the author’s discourse. For example, in her discussion of glass and its association with transformation, vision, and epiphany, she references fairy tales (Cinderella’s glass slippers), art (Jonny Briggs’s glass Shoe), the natural world (the transformation of sand into glass), and more. *Verdict* Expansive and compelling yet accessible, Mavor’s work provides readers with a unique and thoughtful examination of her topic. Recommended for scholars, subject experts, and