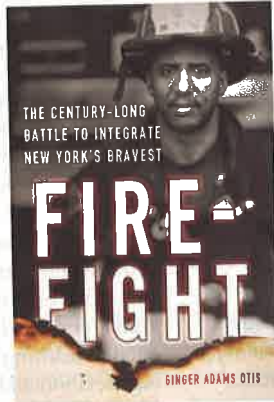


Integrating NYC

Browne, Arthur. **One Righteous Man: Samuel Battle and the Shattering of the Color Line in New York.** Beacon. Jun. 2015. 336p. photos. notes. index. ISBN 9780807012604. \$27.95; ebk. ISBN 9780807012611. HIST

In 1952, poet Langston Hughes finished a draft of a manuscript titled *Battle of Harlem*, which was a commissioned biography of Samuel Battle, the first African American officer in the New York Police Department. The manuscript failed to find a publisher, and Battle, a civil rights pioneer, died forgotten in 1966. Browne (*I, Koch*) retells Battle's fight for integration in New York City during the first half of the 20th century. The subject's time on the force brought him in contact with everyone from Booker T. Washington and Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt to writers from the Harlem Renaissance and athletes such as track-and-field star Jesse Owens and boxer Jack Johnson. The author provides a rich overview of the civil rights struggle in Gotham, and its place in the city's cultural and political history, but sometimes his attempts to include a wealth of material results in long digressions that detract from Battle's



personal and professional difficulties. **VERDICT** Of interest, and recommended for, readers of civil rights histories, but the fractured narration and detailed accounts of secondary characters may turn away those seeking a more straightforward story.—John Rodzvilla, Emerson Coll., Boston

★ Otis, Ginger Adams. **Firefight: The Century-Long Battle To Integrate New York's Bravest.** Palgrave Macmillan. May 2015. 272p. photos. notes. index. ISBN 9781137280015. \$28; ebk. ISBN 9781466879331. HIST

The complexities of firehouses in New York date back to the Tammany Hall era, when all-volunteer firehouses were used to increase votes for corrupt politicians. The present-day Fire Department, City of New York (FDNY) grew out

of the draft riots of 1863 and brought with it nepotism, favoritism, and discriminatory hiring practices. *New York Daily News* reporter Otis, who previously reported on the FDNY for *The Chief-Leader*, adeptly weaves the many threads of the department's troubled racial history in this engrossing book. Otis maintains the saga is ongoing. In 2012, African Americans comprised 26 percent of New York City's population yet the FDNY had a mere 300 black firefighters out of 11,000 (around 2.73 percent). Stories of those working to integrate the department are fascinating, while the continued resistance by city and FDNY officials to address discrimination is both frustrating and infuriating. After working to increase the diversity of the force (and battling the Bloomberg administration in court), the Vulcan Society (Fraternal Order of Black Firefighters) has started to make much-needed progress in changing the department's culture. **VERDICT** Vital and of interest to all Americans, particularly those concerned with firefighters, New York politics, American history, and civil rights. Essential for all collections.—Candice Kail, Columbia Univ. Libs., New York

and how the flexibility and ingenuity of the public allows for new business models to be developed. She explains the importance of combining the right set of skills within each business to be successful. It is the collaborative economy that will influence capitalism to reevaluate, if not reinvent. Chase also addresses the reluctant nature of big business to change owing to higher management being heavily vested in assets and discusses how to influence this group to shift their thinking. The entrepreneurial enthusiasm throughout

is contagious and inspiring with the emphasis being on collaboration and skill gathering. It isn't as important for one person to achieve a final product as it is to allow for specialization and growth. Technology, specifically the generation of the platform, remain a constant theme, as a structure and as a method of interaction. **VERDICT** Highly recommended for anyone studying business, economics, or user experience. An engaging and quick read on collaboration and the new capitalism.—Meghan Dowell, Beloit Coll., WI

Davenport-Hines, Richard. **Universal Man: The Lives of John Maynard Keynes.**

Basic. May 2015. 352p. illus. notes. index. ISBN 9780465060672. \$29.99. ECON

Davenport-Hines (*An English Affair*; *Proust at the Majestic*) presents John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) as a many-sided man besides being the most influential economist of the past 100 years. The author eschews technical discussion of economic theories in favor of rounding out Keynes as a whole in seven topical chapters: altruist, boy prodigy, official, public man, lover, connoisseur, envoy. He details Keynes's formative years at Eton College and Cambridge University; early government service; criticism of the Versailles peace treaty; seminal 1936 *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*; involvement in World War II; and his role in shaping the postwar world. The author shows how Keynes developed his persuasive powers through dinners and meetings and how he could pragmatically switch course in response to changing conditions. He fully explores Keynes's years of promiscuous homosexuality, his promotion of the arts, and his membership in the Cambridge Apostles and the Bloomsbury Group. **VERDICT** This book will suit a broad audience wanting to understand Keynes and the period in which he lived. Readers seeking an accessible introduction to Keynesian economics following the 2008 financial crisis should consider Robert Skidelsky's *Keynes: The Return of the Master*.—Lawrence Maxted, Gannon Univ. Lib., Erie, PA

Levitt, Steven D. & Stephen J. Dubner. **When To Rob a Bank...and 131 More Warped Suggestions and Well-Intended Rants.** Morrow. May 2015. 400p. notes. index. ISBN 9780062385321. \$25.99; ebk. ISBN 9780062218322. ECON

Levitt and Dubner, coauthors of *Freakonomics*, *Superfreakonomics*, and *Think Like a Freak*, return with more of their signature humor and economic perspective on everyday life, this time with excerpts from their blog (freakonomics.com). Each of the 132 short entries was written by one of the site's bloggers—mostly Levitt and Dubner, but they also highlight pieces by other contributors. Posts were composed by a single author, rather than by both as in their books. Chapters are organized thematically, and topics range from the price of oil and the time necessary to improve a golf swing to the customer service at KFC and the best day of the week to rob a bank. Since this compilation comes from actual blog posts, it frequently references events that are no longer current, but most topics are still relevant. **VERDICT** This book will be a hit with fans of *Freakonomics*, though those who aren't famil-