



# Death by Suburb

[How to keep the suburbs from killing your soul]

## Favorite Writers

### Books I've Recently Read

*Exclusion & Embrace* by Miroslav Volf

*Simplicity: The Freedom of Letting Go* by Richard Rohr

*Descartes' Error* by Antonio Damasio

*Deep Survival: Who Lives, Who Dies, and Why* by Laurence Gonzales

## Writers

### Annie Dillard

Ms. Dillard has written quite a few books, one of which won the Pulitzer Prize (*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*). I always feel depressed after reading a new book from her, because I know it will be at least five more years before she publishes another:

*Tickets for a Prayer Wheel*

*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974) (nonfiction narrative)

*Holy the Firm* (1977) (nonfiction narrative)

*Living by Fiction* (1982) (non-fiction narrative)

*Teaching a Stone to Talk* (1982) (narrative essays)

*Encounters with Chinese Writers* (1984) (nonfiction narrative)

*An American Childhood* (1987) (memoir)

*The Writing Life* (1989) (non-fiction narrative)

*The Living* (1992) (novel)

*Mornings Like This* (1995) (poems)

*For the Time Being* (1999) (non-fiction narrative)

### Francois Fenelon

A sixteenth-century, French Catholic priest who eventually was imprisoned for his beliefs, Fenelon is not for the faint of heart. His thoughts on the role of suffering (the "cross") point the way to live more authentically and openly before God. Here are several books that have compiled his letters or writings:

*The Seeking Heart*

*The Royal Way of the Cross*

*Let Go*

*Spiritual Letters of Fenelon*



### **William Kittredge**

This is another literary writer who is no friend of faith, but he writes a great story, and his memoir moved me.

*Hole in the Sky*

*The Best Short Stories of William Kittredge*

### **Cormac McCarthy**

Mr. McCarthy's works are dark, but I've learned a ton about cadence and imagery by reading his stuff. My favorite is *The Blood Meridian*, but the easiest to read is *All the Pretty Horses*, for which he won the National Book Award. Here are some of McCarthy's works:

*No Country for Old Men*

*Cities on the Plain*

*The Crossing*

*All the Pretty Horses*

*The Blood Meridian*

### **Eugene Peterson**

Some of Eugene's earlier writings, which addressed pastors, are powerful in their defining of the pastoral role. Here are just a few from Eugene:

*Working the Angles: the Shape of Pastoral Integrity*

*The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*

*Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work*

*Like Dew Your Youth: Growing Up with Your Teenager*

*Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology*

*Eat This Book: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology*

*A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*

### **Richard Rohr, OFM**

I love Rohr's thinking on the differences between the first half of life and the second — and the differences in spiritual transformation for men and women. Rohr is engaging in his live talks, so I strongly recommend his tapes/CDs more than I do his books.

*Men and Women: The Journey of Spiritual Transformation* (St. Anthony Messenger Press).

(Audio)

*Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer* (book)

*From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality* (book)

*Letting Go: A Spirituality of Subtraction* (audio)



### **Wallace Stegner**

An atheist, Stegner wrote some of the most moving novels of the twentieth century. His beautiful prose only goes to show the existence of God and the image of God in Stegner's work. Here are only a few:

*Crossing to Safety*

*Angle of Repose*

*Remembering Laughter*

*The Big Rock Candy Mountain*

*A Shooting Star*

### **Evelyn Underhill**

Ms. Underhill underwent quite a few changes in her thinking during her writing career, but her classic, *Mysticism*, still dominates the landscape.

*Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness*

*The Spiritual Life*

*Practical Mysticism: A Little Book for Normal People and Abba: Meditations Based on the Lord's Prayer* (Vintage Spiritual Classic Orig)