**Amazing Taste**

The Oxford Companion to Sugar and Sweets, Darra Goldstein, MA ’76, PhD ’83, ed.; Oxford University Press, $65. From la mode to zappe inglese, this 920-page volume is encyclopedic in ambition—shedding light on the myriad aspects of our favorite carbohydrate and its impact around the globe since the beginning of time—and eclectic in execution. Entries by 265 contributors, chefs to culinary historians, are by turns pedagogical, whimsical and data-rich. Who knew of the 1919 Boston Molasses Disaster, when a leaking storage tank let loose a 20-foot-high, 160-foot-wide, 35 mph sticky flood that took 21 lives—or that a dentist invented cotton candy? Appendices list sugar-related movies and films and museums, and 32 pages of color inserts provide eye candy.

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**Shelf Life**

**Studio Portrait 1897**

She stands on a fraction of paperboard. Holds still without shifting. She is fifty years away from the worst famine in Europe, thirty years behind the new nation O regia, O stateless image making. Where is the source of her silence? Not history, our old villain, you say, but a muttering under black cloth: you say, Not history, our old villain, but a muttering under black cloth: you say, Not history, our old villain, but a muttering under black cloth: you say, Not history, our old villain, but a muttering under black cloth: Not history, our old villain. O stateless image making. Thirty years away from the worst famine in Europe. Fifty years away from the worst famine in Europe. She is on a fraction of paperboard. She stands without shifting. She is a daughter of hippie parents, antestablishment eccentrics who set up camp on a remote island off British Columbia in the early 1970s. Tales of her youthful fits and starts could spark nostalgia even in those who didn’t grow up romping around the woods with near-complete freedom.

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**Books Aren’t Dead**

Firstborn, TOR SEIDLER, ’72; Atheneum Books for Young Readers, $16.99. Chasing butterflies and falling for a coyote, Lamar, firstborn son of alpha wolf Blue Boy, isn’t living up to his father’s standards. Set in Yellowstone Park and narrated by Maggie, a clever mappie who becomes part of the wolf pack, the story centers on themes of friendship, integrity and the importance of being true to oneself.

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**Battle Lines**

The Upside of Down: A Memoir, SUSAN BIGGAR, MA ’90; Panish Lounge Publishing, $28. When Biggar’s first son was born with cystic fibrosis, doctors told her and her husband, Darrell, PhD ’92, that chances were slim he’d reach age 30. After a career move to Paris and the arrival of two more sons (the first of whom was born with CF), the parents learn to navigate unfamiliar health-care systems and their sons’ chronic disease with hilarity and a heap of grace.

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**Books and More**

Scattered among the Internet’s profusion of noise is plenty of great writing, says Morgan Entrekin, ’77, president of Grove Atlantic, an independent literary publisher. His latest project, Literary Hub (at lithium.com), pulled together a daily selection of online essays, excerpts and interviews on everything to do with books and literary culture. More than 100 publishers, booksellers and literary magazines have signed on as collaborators. “We hope that this can be a place that helps keep [literary] conversations alive, a place where people can follow that discourse and learn about books,” Entrekin says. “This isn’t about selling books; there’s not pressure to make certain numbers. I want it to be good.”