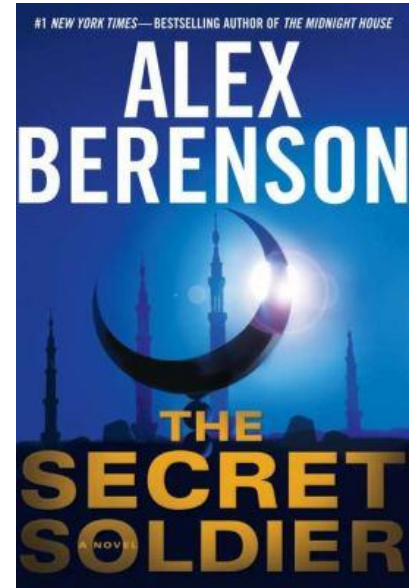
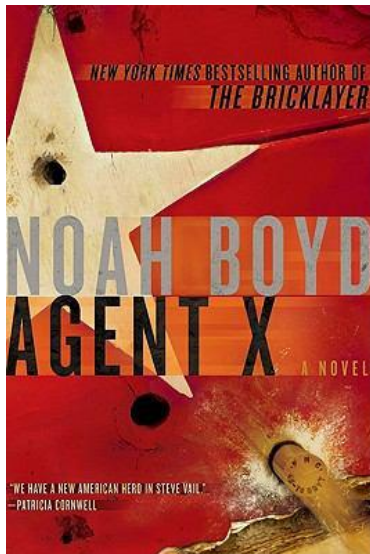


“Secret Soldier” by Alex Berenson. G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2011 \$25.95, 401 pages.

Although Berenson’s new novel is a work of fiction, he extensively draws on historical facts of the rise of the House of Saud and its relationship to Wahhabi Islam. Berenson states his fictional characters are interwoven with real political figures in the story. In this book, Berenson has brought back main character John Wells, a former CIA agent, who is still deeply involved in espionage. He is currently working on the capture of a double agent spy, Keith Edward Robinson, who is sending his wife postcards scrawled with a phone number from warm sunny locations. He is convinced to take on another assignment working undercover in Saudi Arabia. Factions are attempting a power takeover from King Abdullah causing the King to not trust his own secret police. King Abdullah calls on Wells to uncover the conspiracy. What is the real goal of the conspirators? Wells must discover what the endgame is and stop it before America is drawn into another world conflict. Berenson has mastered the art of suspense writing with well developed plots and his characters are colorful and likeable. The author lives in New York and previously worked as a reporter for The New York Times. His other novels include “The Faithful Spy,” “The Ghost War,” “The Silent Man,” and “The Midnight House.”



“Agent X” by Noah Boyd. HarperCollins, 2011. \$24.99, 391 pages.



This is the second installment for Boyd featuring former FBI agent Steve Vail and like the first, this action thriller has nonstop action. Boyd has mastered the art of suspense writing and twisting plots to keep you on the edge from the first page to the last. The authenticity of Boyd’s real life experience with the FBI gleans off of every page in this novel. Main character Vail is in DC to date Kate Bannon, the Assistant Director of the FBI but romance is out the window as Vail is enlisted to help investigate information from an officer of the Russian embassy that Americans are selling information to the SVR. The informant is recalled to Russia and Vail must hastily secure the informants before they are executed. This novel has twists and turns sure to delight the most discriminating thriller fan. Boyd, a retired FBI agent, lives in New England writing novels and investigates cold cases in his spare time.

Susan Benning is the Head Librarian at May Memorial Library. Visit us on the web at www.alamancelibraries.org. Call us for information on upcoming programs at 336-229-3588.