across Arctic ice fields. Weather was harsh, erratic, and frigid with food and shelter scarce; many succumbed to frostbite and madness. Flawed theories of Siberian geography and settlements caused further setbacks. (Disastrously, De Long had already discovered that prevailing theories about warm currents under Polar icecaps were incorrect.) Impeccable writing, a vivid re-creation of the expedition and the Victorian era, and a taut conclusion make this an exciting gem. *Agent: Sloan Harris, ICM. (Aug.)*

Striking Gridiron: A Town's Pride During a Team's Shot at Glory During the Biggest Strike in American History

Greg Nichols. St. Martin's/ Dunne, $25.99 (288p) ISBN 978-1-250-03985-9

The Braddock Tigers, a high school football team based in a Western Pennsylvania steel town, garnered national attention in 1959 as it enjoyed unprecedented undefeated streak. Head coach Chuck Klausing was a stern but benevolent father figure to his players, most of whom faced a life short on amenities and long on hardships, such as abusive fathers and hunger. When Braddock's steel workers participated in the United Steelworkers' lengthy labor union strike, the team became the lone ray of hope in the sleepy, depressed town. Veteran journalist Nichols errs critically in failing to intertwine the team's season with the strike's progression, which prohibits readers from seeing how one historic event affected the other—and eliminates any dramatic sweep. What remains is a feel-good sports story punctuated by bland labor updates. *(Sept.)*

The Youngs: The Brothers Who Built AC/DC

Jesse Fink. St. Martin's, $25.99 (320) ISBN 978-1-250-05383-1

Above all, journalist Fink's look at the band addresses the question that he believes most mainstream rock critics have never been able to answer about AC/DC: "Why have they endured and resonated endured and resonated with hundreds of millions of people and inculcated such fierce loyalty and outright fanaticism?" The answer is that the unrelenting tenacity of the Young brothers: rhythm guitarist Malcolm, the group's quiet leader; manic lead guitarist Angus; and producer George, the architect of their early sound. By tracing the lives of 11 songs from the band's 40-plus-year career, Fink charts the history of the band's success and examines the recording process behind each song. "It's a Long Way to the Top," from 1975 is the vehicle for a discussion of the effort Atlantic Records expended breaking the group in America, while "Back in Black" is a fascinating look at the band's tempestuous relationship with producer Mutt Lange, who crafted their best work but ultimately alienated them with his tendency "to strive for technical perfection at the expense of feel." *(Aug.)*

The Opium War: Drugs, Dreams, and the Making of Modern China

Julia Lovell. Overlook, $35 (480p) ISBN 978-1-4683-0895-2

Lovell (*The Great Wall*), lecturer in modern Chinese history and literature at the University of London, expounds in great detail upon the myriad causes and results of the 19th-century Opium Wars. The book is primarily a blow-by-blow account of the war's "chaotically interesting" events, supplemented by close studies of the important personalities involved. Toward the end of the 18th century, the British Empire was running up a serious trade deficit in the Orient. The "perfect solution" to their situation, they came to believe, was to import more Indian opium into China. By the 1830s, however, Qing government administrators began to grow anxious over booming opium consumption and forced the lucrative trade into the black market, cutting British profits, which helped fund the Royal Navy. Conflict escalated as Britain repeatedly attempted to reinstate the opium trade's legality, but opium had become a convenient scapegoat for the Qing rulers. Lovell painstakingly follows the intricate webs of trades, treaties, accusations, and recriminations between the two empires that has culminated in a the contemporary state of affairs in which Chinese citizens simultaneously lambaste the West while competing for visas and study-abroad opportunities. Lovell masterfully condenses into one volume a dense, difficult conflict, the results of which are still can still be felt 170 years later. Maps. *(Aug.)*

The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload

Daniel J. Levitin. Dutton, $27.95 (512p) ISBN 978-0-525-95418-7

Levitin (*This Is Your Brain on Music*), professor of psychology and behavioral neuroscience at McGill University, examines the way our brains have evolved (and not) to meet the challenges of the Information Age. While our brains evolved to take on the daunting challenges of life in the Stone Age, they now have many redundant, maladaptive, and not quite finished features that clash with the huge demands placed on our attention by the modern world. Levitin reviews the way our thinking is distorted by these distractions, beginning with a tour through the neurology of attention; the origin of these distractions, from written language to the smartphone; and the powers of the wandering mind, the state in which humans think the most creatively. He offers advice on how to reorganize attention and make better decisions. Each chapter also takes practical detours through information theory, probability, and other human strategies for coping with contemporary problems. Levitin's fascinating tour of the mind helps us better understand the ways we process and structure our experiences. *Agent: The Wylie Agency. (Aug.)*

The Real Cost of Fracking: How America's Shale Gas Boom Is Threatening Our Families, Pets, and Food

Michelle Bamberger and Robert Oswald. Beacon, $26.95 (256p) ISBN 978-0-8070-8493-9

Veterinarian Bamberger (*Help! The Quick Guide to First Aid for Your Dog*) and pharmacologist Oswald present case studies from Pennsylvania to support their assertion that processes involved in hydraulic fracturing have health consequences oil companies or regulatory agencies refuse to acknowledge. In case after case, the authors describe adults, children, pets, and livestock suffering symptoms of "shale gas syndrome," which they link to contaminated water sources and poisoned air. As it stands, companies are neither required to test before drilling operations nor do they have to disclose the chemicals used in their operations. Physicians and residents who have accepted settlements