



Susan Anspach and Jack Nicholson in *Five Easy Pieces* (1970), from Jack Nicholson: *Anatomy of an Actor* (Phaidon/Cahiers du Cinéma), by Beverly Walker.

Novels about war-ravaged Africa have long been the province chiefly of male writers. Now **Susan Minot** brings us *Thirty Girls* (Knopf), a haunting portrayal of two women: Esther, an abducted teen turned child soldier, and Jane, the privileged white American journalist on a mission to capture the voices of these children. Bobbed, liquored up, and looking for danger, *Flappers* (Sarah Crichton) were both glamorized and demonized by 1920s society.

Judith Mackrell toasts six of the era's most extraordinary rebel girls. Here's a touchy subject: Why are some cultural groups in America—such as the Mormons, Cubans, Indians, and Chinese—succeeding and amassing wealth while others (we know who we are) are not? **Amy Chua** and **Jed Rubinfeld** argue that certain traits—a sense of superiority, inferiority, and impulse control—make up *The Triple Package* (Penguin Press) dictating whether a group rises or falls. **Annie Jacobsen** cracks *Operation Paperclip* (Little, Brown), the covert post-WW. II program of bringing former Nazis, the Reich's greatest scientific minds, to America. *V.F.* contributing

editor **Howard Blum's** *Dark Invasion* (Harper) throws light on the war of espionage and terror Germany waged against the U.S. in 1915. **Dasa Drndic** honors the lives of Italian Jews imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp in *Trieste* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). The last of **W. G. Sebald's** major works to be translated into English, *A Place in the Country* (Random House), pays tribute to six artists who shaped his vision, and is a memoir of the great author's emigration and artistic maturation. Photographer **Builder Levy's** *Appalachia USA* (David R. Godine) does for today's coal miners what Walker Evans did for sharecroppers and tenant farmers in the

Dust Bowl. William Burroughs, one of the most provocative, influential, and innovative writers of our age, would have hit 100 this month. To celebrate, score **Barry Miles's** *Call Me Burroughs* (Twelve). Love: no subject is more mystifying. *Love Illuminated* (Morrow), by **Daniel Jones**, editor of *The New York Times's* "Modern Love" column, is a valentine to those who simply can't get enough of other people's love lives. Meaning pretty much everyone. —ELISSA SCHAPPELL

Hot Type



Bottoms Up!

Why does a man drink?" Tennessee Williams once asked. "1. He's scared shitless of something. 2. He can't face the truth about something." In the case of each of the famously inebriated authors Olivia Laing writes about in her new book, *The Trip to Echo Spring* (Picador)—Williams, and his compatriots John Cheever, Raymond Carver, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and John Berryman—truer words were never spoken. Laing leads us on an extraordinary journey to all the places that figured prominently in the writers' lives, while attempting to reckon with her own family's history with alcoholism. Unlike other bios that treat these authors' drinking as a gossipy anecdote, there is nothing glamorous here. Instead, Laing shows how booze kept the demons of self-doubt off their heels, fired their creativity, but couldn't drown the ghosts of their pasts. Laing's blend of reportage, analysis, and self-discovery is to be savored. —ELISSA SCHAPPELL



Ernest Hemingway, pouring a shot of gin, at his home in Cuba.

IN SHORT

The stories in **Yu Hua's** *Boy in the Twilight* (Pantheon) mine the lives of ordinary folks in small-town China. The ghosts of family and place occupy **Diane Johnson's** *Flyover Lives* (Viking). **Richard Powers's** novel *Orfeo* (Norton) rose out of the myth of Orpheus. With *One More Thing* (Knopf), funnyman **B. J. Novak** adds hilarious essayist to his long list of credits. Subway historian **Doug Most** clocks *The Race Underground* (St. Martin's). **Lucie Whitehouse's** *Before We Met* (Bloomsbury) is full of lies. **Dorothy Gallagher** salutes the myth, the legend, *Lillian Hellman* (Yale). Novelist **Penelope Lively** shares her passions for archaeology, reading, and writing in *Dancing Fish and Ammonites* (Viking). The hero of **Okey Ndibe's** *Foreign Gods, Inc.* (Soho) is a New York City cabbie. **Gabriel Sherman** calls out the bullies at Fox "News" for being *The Loudest Voice in the Room* (Random House). **Robert Harris's** new thriller is *An Officer and a Spy* (Knopf). **Deborah McKinlay** delights with *That Part Was True* (Grand Central). Unexpected love is at the heart of **Anna Quindlen's** *Still Life with Bread Crumbs* (Random House). **Bill Eppridge's** *The Beatles: Six Days That Changed the World* (Rizzoli) is fab. **Eric Helms**, *Pied Piper of The Juice Generation* (Touchstone), shares his juiciest recipes.