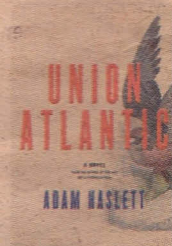
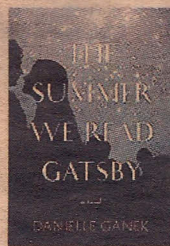
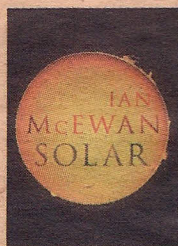


NOVELS GET NEWSY

The past is sooo ... 20th century. This year, an unusual number of big-name novelists are plumbing recent headlines instead. Herein, a cocktail-party cheat sheet to the hottest topical fiction of 2010. — *Michael H. Miller*



BOOK					
					
	SOLAR by Ian McEwan Nan A. Talese, March	THE SUMMER WE READ GATSBY by Danielle Ganek Viking, May	MUCH FOR THAT by Lionel Shriver HarperCollins, March	THE PREGNANT WIDOW by Martin Amis Knopf, May	UNION ATLANTIC by Adam Haslett Nan A. Talese, February
TOPIC	Climate change	Foreclosure	Health-care crisis	Conservative family values	Financial meltdown
PLOT	Nobel Prize-winning physicist Michael Beard tries to fix the environment and save his marriage in one go.	Set in the "end of an era summer of 2008," two sisters inherit their aunt's run-down cottage and can't afford the upkeep.	A couple is "protected" by the "health insurance company from hell."	The sexual revolution of 1970 gives way to a contemporary polemic on the dangers of promiscuity.	Doug Fanning goes from foot soldier to the top of the financial world (and then down again).
CRITICAL BUZZ	<i>Publisher's Weekly</i> calls Beard a "fascinatingly repulsive protagonist."	Not much yet, but Ganek's first novel was a smash and this one has current events on its side.	<i>Kirkus Reviews</i> says, "A powerful study of both marriage and medical care."	"Alongside the breasts, there are flashes of Amis's old gift for new phrases," says <i>The Telegraph</i> .	<i>Esquire</i> calls the book "The first great novel of the new century."