

PRINT EDITION **Sunday Source**

Tipsheet

HIP AND HANDY? READS YOU NEED

Got the itch to stitch but not really into the draped afghan look? You're in luck: The popularity of such crafty trends as knitting, embroidery and quilting means that plenty of books are flush with projects you'll actually want to wear. "You want to make things that are for you," says Marie Connolly, owner of the Stitch DC stores in Capitol Hill and Georgetown. "Go into a store like Anthropologie — everything is knitted or crocheted. If you're a knitter, you look at it and say, 'I can do this.'" For those who have the need to needle, here are four of the latest not-your-grandma's craft books:

— **Carolyn Juris**



Cozy Crochet Kit: Simple Instructions and Tools for 25 Terrific Crochet Projects by Melissa Leapman (Chronicle, \$23)

THE DEAL: This tidy boxed set has an illustrated instruction book and colorful pattern cards, plus a yarn needle, crochet hooks and enough yarn to get your first project started.

COOL CRAFTS: Sweet applique flowers that put Carrie Bradshaw's oversized atrocities to shame; a retro-inspired, circle-handle purse.

DESIGN DUDS: The unflattering "flirty skirt" seems destined for the Salvation Army donation box.

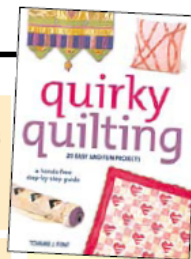


Hip to Stitch: 20 Contemporary Projects Embellished with Thread by Melinda A. Barta (Interweave, \$20)

THE DEAL: A straightforward, info-packed paperback on needlework that takes you from 12 basic stitches through bookbinding, bead embroidery and beyond.

COOL CRAFTS: A baby bib subversively crawling with ants, a ladybug and a grasshopper; a guitar-pick case adorned with polka dots and musical notes.

DESIGN DUDS: The most ordinary item — an enhanced corduroy jacket — somehow made it onto the cover, belying the more inspired projects inside.

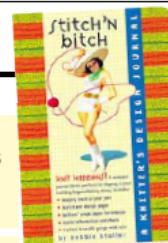


Quirky Quilting: 20 Easy and Fun Projects by Tomme J. Fent (HarperResource, \$20)

THE DEAL: A cleverly designed flipbook that props up like a tripod, leaving your hands free to operate the sewing machine you'll need for these patterns.

COOL CRAFTS: Zippered, plastic-lined makeup bags in rainbow colors; a drawstring tote for your yoga mat that is designed with a stylized lotus-blossom pattern.

DESIGN DUDS: A halter top made from old ties screams '70s summer camp — not in a good way.



Stitch 'N Bitch: A Knitter's Design Journal by Debbie Stoller (Workman, \$12, releasing this month)

THE DEAL: A 5-by-7-inch scrapbook with knitting essentials like graph paper, a needle gauge and ruler, plus design pages that are peopled by sketches of cute undie-wearing models. No complete patterns here; rather, it's all about organization: The journal space lets you track finished projects and make future plans.

COOL CRAFTS: Tips on collar styles, sweater edging and sleeve shapes let you improvise details in your own patterns.

DESIGN DUDS: None. Stoller literally wrote the book on hipster how-tos with her first two "Stitch 'N Bitch" efforts. Her third offering is just as strong.