

Good Reads 2020: the 24th Edition

The Bates College Non-Required Reading List
for Leisure Moments



Entries are in alphabetical order by submitter, and their name appears at the bottom of the last title submitted.

Thanks to Post & Print for supplying the coveted printed versions and to the College Store for distributing those versions and posting online. This is a labor of love that I fortunately had passed on to me by Sarah Potter, Bookstore Director Emerita. This year's issue is dedicated to the Class of 2020 everywhere.

Until next year,
Alison Keegan, Dean of the Faculty's office

"Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people, and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary" ~ Boris Pasternak

Meet Your Next Favorite Book

I would recommend *The Way of Kings* by **Brandon Sanderson**, for any fantasy-lovers out there! Also, *The Sparrow* by **Maria Doria Russell**. *My Name is Asher Lev* by **Chaim Potok** is an oldie, but goodie!

Andee Alford, Math and Statistics Workshop

In memory of **Herman Wouk**, who died in 2019: *This is My God*, a wonderful discussion of Judaism as the core of a modern man's life; *The Winds of War*, a Tolstoyan narrative of the years leading to Pearl Harbor.

A Dangerous Liaison by **Carole Seymour-Jones**. If you've been hungry for info about Simone DeBeavoir and Jean-Paul Sartre, this will fill your plate.

1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus by **Charles C. Mann**. Picked it up again after a looong interval. A great re-visit.

Main Currents of Marxism by **Leszek Kolakowski**. With socialism resurgent in some corners, a necessary resource.

The Power Broker by **Robert Caro**. Robert Moses and NYC in the 20th Century. Think the Cross-Bronx Expressway is a boring topic? You won't after this book.

Martin Andrucki, Department of Theater and Dance

Happiness by **Aminatta Forna**. Tells the story of an American divorcee in London who researches urban foxes, and how her life intersects in an interesting way with a prominent Ghanaian psychiatrist who is in the city for a conference. Leaves you hopeful.

Year of Yes by **Shonda Rimes**. A life-affirming read about taking chances and pushing past our own limitations.

The Night Watchman by **Louise Erdrich**. Based on her grandfather's journals, the book details his fight against Native dispossession, vividly detailing his life in North Dakota, and the challenges he and his tribe face in battling those in power in Washington, D.C.

***Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* by Caroline Criado Perez.** Armed with data and humor, Criado Perez discusses how our systematic lack of data on females skews policies in predictable ways.

***Education of an Idealist* by Samantha Power.** Power chronicles her drive to succeed, from being a reporter during the war in Bosnia, to becoming the US ambassador to the United Nations.

***Claremont* by Wiebke von Carolsfeld.** A book that starts with a traumatic event, but then focuses on a family healing from that trauma.

Áslaug Ásgeirsdóttir, Department of Politics and Dean of the Faculty's Office

I recommend the nonfiction book ***Erosion* by Terry Tempest Williams.** Everything she writes is wonderful and this, her latest book, is as rich, deep, and thought-provoking as all that have come before.

Cynthia Baker, Department of Religious Studies

***The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richardson.** A well-written story about eastern Kentucky in the 1930s when the WPA had a program for bringing books to rural people. Based on real history of the Book Women and the blue people that I knew nothing about.

***Tales of the Alhambra* by Washington Irving.** The author of Sleepy Hollow and Rip van Winkle fame also spent many years in Spain. This is part travelogue, part history and part retelling of legends he heard while living in the Alhambra in Granada in 1828. He is a great observer of humanity and a great storyteller.

***One Hundred Names* by Cecelia Ahern.** I liked this one because it is a sweet story of life in present day Ireland. Spoiler alert: It has a happy ending!

Pamela Baker, Professor Emerita, Department of Biology

The Mike Bowditch series, written by **Paul Doiron**, current Editor Emeritus of Down East, The Magazine of Maine, who takes us in the Maine's wilderness where natural predators aren't the only killers. The series follows Mike Bowditch who is a game warden in the wilds of Maine with a haunted past. <https://www.howtoread.me/mike-bowditch-books-in-order/>

I've read the series in order and just started the last one **Almost Midnight** and have enjoyed them all.

Just finishing this and it's well worth the read: **Agent Running in the Field** by **John le Carré**.

Jim Bauer, Information and Library Services

Some "easy to get caught up in authors" are **Lisa Scottoline**, **Elin Hildebrand**, and **Tess Gerritsen**. I'm finding books that require lots of concentration, are not keepers my attention these last few weeks. Right now I'm reading Hildebrand's *Summer of '69*...I can easily relate to that summer and Nantucket/Martha's Vineyard where it is set!

Jane McInnis Bedard, retired colleague

I would love to recommend *The Overstory* by **Richard Powers**. It was a selection from the Multifaith Chaplaincy's book club and is centered around people's experiences with trees. I keep thinking about this book now that so many people are seeking refuge in the outdoors as a means of escape and comfort.

I also would suggest *The Nightingale* by **Kristen Hannah**. It is such a magnificent story about resilience and helping others at times when it's needed most- also very timely!

Ashley Bigda, Office of Advancement

One of the best things I read this year was *We Were Liars* by **e. lockhart**. I think it's filed under YA, but who cares. It is just a beautifully written, deeply moving summer-set story that you'll devour in a matter of hours. Perfect for long hammock afternoons; best served with a tall glass of lemonade.

Jennifer Blanchard, Office of the President

If She Wakes – Author **Michael Koryta** splits his time between Bloomington, Indiana and Camden, Maine – two places near and dear to my heart. *If She Wakes* is the best mystery I read this past year. In addition to being a gripping story set in Maine, the novel really displays Koryta’s talents. Sometimes I would find myself thinking, “That’s a great sentence!” Those sentences usually weren’t even that important to the overall story. I loved that the writing became just as enjoyable as the big plot points.

She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story that Helped Ignite a Movement – *New York Times* reporters **Jodi Kantor** and **Megan Twohey** recount how they broke the Harvey Weinstein story, while also offering a close, critical look at the systemic norms and legal practices that enable(d) his (and other predators’) behavior. Truly eye-opening.

Just Mercy – Bates honorary degree recipient **Bryan Stevenson** recounts his fights for social justice, including his efforts to end the death penalty. *Just Mercy* has been a popular title on this list for many years, and many Batesies have attested to its virtues. It’s amazing.

With a 3-year-old at home, I’ve been reading a lot of children’s books. Maine author **Chris Van Dusen** is Emmett’s favorite. Van Dusen has written 10 books (and illustrated many more). All of them are wonderful, especially *The Circus Ship*, *If I Built a House*, and *Randy Riley’s Really Big Hit*. Van Dusen is a bit of a Maine legend. Every parent I know knows his work, and truth be told, the parents enjoy the books at least as much as the kids.

Jonathan Cavallero, Department of Rhetoric, Film, and Screen Studies

I have been listening to the book *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng, via Audible, on my Kindle.

Emily Colucci, Ladd Library

There were several moments made available to me this year during MLK Jr. Day at Bates, which prompted me to dive into several books. They aren't leisure, but they have had and are having a profound effect on me. There's definitely a theme. ***Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America*** by **Michael Eric Dyson** and ***Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race*** by **Debby Irving** have both deepened my understanding of the foundational ways that white people are socialized to not identify with their own race. This piece of the puzzle has been important to finding my role in white supremacy. Reading these books together has helped me see both sides of the coin at once, and that has been a gift.

Daphne Comeau, Office of Advancement

Michael Crummey, *Sweetland*. One of the most moving books I've read in years: a small island off the coast of Newfoundland, by the end of the book you feel as though you know the terrain – and the intertwined lives of the residents – as well as you know your backyard.

Drew Hayden Taylor (who read at Bates in late February), *Motorcycles and Sweetgrass*. Hilarious misadventures of the chief of a First Nations community in southern Ontario. A mysterious stranger rides in on a 1953 Indian Chief (the motorcycle of the title)...And the fun begins.

Jean Stafford, *The Mountain Lion*. Absorbing coming-of-age story about a brother and sister who find refuge with their uncle in the mountains of Colorado. For me the most absorbing part of the book is the girl's story - the breaking-out of a feisty and unconventional soul (who wants to be a writer) from the small-minded comforts of middle-class life in the 1920's.

Jane Costlow, Program in Environmental Studies

Leadership in Turbulent Times by **Doris Kearns Goodwin** is unexpectedly resonant right now.

Girl, Woman, Other by **Bernardine Evaristo** is beautiful and challenging fiction.

She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story that Helped Ignite a Movement by Jodi Kanto and Megan Twohey about the breaking of the Weinstein case is fascinating. Even though we know how it ends, getting a look at the process of investigative journalism is totally riveting, including a really important section on Christine Blasey Ford.

Shoshanna Currier, Bates Dance Festival

Into the Water by Paula Hawkins. With the same propulsive writing and acute understanding of human instincts that captivated millions of readers around the world in her explosive debut thriller, [The Girl on the Train](#), Paula Hawkins delivers an urgent, twisting, deeply satisfying read that hinges on the deceptiveness of emotion and memory, as well as the devastating ways that the past can reach a long arm into the present.

American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins. If it's only a better life you seek, seek it elsewhere...This path is only for people who have no choice, no other option, only violence and misery behind you. And your journey will grow even more treacherous from here. Everything is working against you.

After the Eclipse: A Mother's Murder, A Daughter's Search by Sarah Perry. After the Eclipse [has] an eerie, heartbreaking power that it shares with the very best of true crime."--Laura Miller, Slate "Perry weaves together her painful memories of that night with archival research and journalistic interviews to not only piece together the details of her mother's death, but illuminate the woman she was before it. With clear, powerful prose, Perry paints a portrait of unconventional motherhood while questioning society's handling of violence against women.

The Patron Saint of Liars by Ann Patchett. St. Elizabeth's, a home for unwed mothers in Habit, Kentucky, usually harbors its residents for only a little while. Not so Rose Clinton, a beautiful, mysterious woman who comes to the home pregnant but not unwed, and stays. She plans to give up her child, thinking she cannot be the mother it needs. But when Cecilia is born, Rose makes a place for herself and her daughter amid St. Elizabeth's extended family of nuns and an ever-changing collection of pregnant teenage girls. Rose's past won't be kept away, though, even by St. Elizabeth's; she cannot remain untouched by what she has left behind, even as she cannot change who she has become in the leaving.

***Lilac Girls* by Martha Hall Kelly** is a powerful book set in the second World War and based on a true story. It is well narrated by three different narrators, one for each POV. The story is told through the eyes of Caroline Ferraday,

New York Socialite; Kasia Kuzmerick , a young Polish woman; and Herta Oberheuser a young German Doctor, whose lives are set on a collision course.

Deborah Cutten, Academic Support Services

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek is a wonderful book by **Kim Michele Richardson** about the Pack Horse Librarians who in the 1930s, delivered library books in rural Kentucky to promote literacy.

She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story that Helped Ignite a Movement by Megan Cantor and Megan Twohey is about the breaking of the Harvey Weinstein sexual harassment story. It was a page-turner for me.

***Normal People* by Sally Rooney** is a love story about a complicated relationship between two young people in Ireland.

***The Summer Cottage* by Viola Shipman** is a light, easy read - which was just what I needed in the midst of COVID-19. It's about family tradition and small town community.

***In the Bleak Midwinter* by Julia Spencer Fleming** is another pretty easy read but a mystery - the main characters are a small town cop and a minister.

***The Memory of Us* by Camille Di Maio** is set in pre-war London and is about a young woman who lives the dream life of the rich but her world is shaken when she learns that her parents institutionalized a blind and deaf younger brother.

***The Overdue Life of Amy Byler* by Kelly Harms** was a lighthearted story about an overworked and underappreciated single mom who's ex-husband comes back to the family home to take care of the kids while she heads off to live the high life in NYC.

Karen Daigler, Center for Purposeful Work

Ducks, Newburyport by **Lucy Ellman**. A long, internal monologue. Perfect for days of quarantine.

David Das, Off-Campus Study Office

Here for It by **R. Eric Thomas** (He also narrates his own Audible.)

Carson Dockum, Student Affairs

Heavy by **Kiese Laymon**

Jessica Duff, Athletics

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes & Other Lessons from the Crematory by **Caitlyn Doughty**. Doughty has a nice approach for a book about death and the death industry -- just irreverent enough without being insensitive. I intend to read more of her books.

The next two recommendations go together:

The Phantom of Fifth Avenue: The Mysterious Life and Scandalous Death of Heiress Huguette Clark by **Meryl Gordon** AND ***Empty Mansions: The Mysterious Life of Huguette Clark and the Spending of a Great American Fortune*** by **Bill Dedman and Paul Clark Newell**. These books tell the fascinating story of Huguette Clark, daughter of a copper baron and disgraced US Senator who inherited a vast fortune but lived as a recluse, spent her final two decades (yes, decades) living in a NYC hospital, died at 104 with only the companionship of those whose salaries she paid, and left her massive estate in shambles to be fought over by employees, charitable organizations, and a large group of distant squabbling relatives. And I didn't even mention the real estate she owned, but didn't live in...

The Last Romantics by **Tara Conklin**. A lovely story about family, siblings especially, and all the ways they love each other, hurt each other, the choices we make and don't make -- a very relatable, undemanding book.

Fahrenheit 451 by **Ray Bradbury**. Somehow never read this in high school or college, but I'm glad I read it now -- it's timely and chilling.

Susan Dunning, Office of Advancement

***The World That We Knew* by Alice Hoffman.** Set during WW II in Europe, this is one of those books that makes the outside world disappear.

***The Huntress* by Kate Quinn.** A long, engrossing novel that starts in Siberia before WW II, and continues beyond it into Massachusetts.

***The Wonder* by Emma Donoghue.** This title was chosen by a friend's reading group. If she hadn't told me to read it, I might never have picked it up. The book, set in Ireland during the second half of the 1800s, explores faith, preconceptions, and responsibility. It starts slow, but is worth the wait. Superb character development and lots to think about.

***A Single Thread* by Tracy Chevalier.** Set in the 1930s; reminiscent of Barbara Pym, but tougher. A good read anyway, but particularly of interest if you have a passion for any form of needlework.

Caz Frear has written two mysteries, with the third due late this year. On the one hand, it's great to discover someone at the beginning of her career; on the other, you have to wait a long time for each subsequent book. She is one of the rare authors whose second book lives up to the promise of the first. Do read them in order: first is ***Sweet Little Lies***, and the second is ***Stone Cold Heart***.

***This Is How It Always Is* by Laurie Frankel.** Another book about identity and preconceptions, and also a good story.

***When You Reach Me* by Rebecca Stead.** Because I always have to throw in at least one YA title. Everything I want to say gives something away – just read it.

Elizabeth Durand, Class of 1976

***Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi**

***The Overstory* by Richard Powers**

***The Unwinding* by George Packer**

Francis Eanes, Program in Environmental Studies

***Skyward* by Mary Alice Munroe.** Harris Henderson handles injured birds with ease at his birds of prey rehab center, but he has no idea how to manage his diabetic five-year-old Marion. Enter Ella Majors, a pediatric nurse-turned-nanny. As Ella cares for the girl, she becomes an integral part of the Hendersons' lives and, before long, Harris begins to see her as more than a plain caretaker. Hauntingly beautiful relationships between birds and people add texture to the story. Most notable are the connections among an elderly black man named Lijah and his eagle, Santee, and a rooster that appears to guard both the center and Brady, a troubled teen working off a community service sentence.

***The Overstory* by Richard Powers.** The novel is about nine Americans whose unique life experiences with trees bring them together to address the destruction of forests. There is a world alongside ours—vast, slow, interconnected, resourceful, magnificently inventive, and almost invisible to us. This is the story of a handful of people who learn how to see that world and who are drawn up into its unfolding catastrophe.

***A Man Called Ove* by Fredrick Backman.** Behind the cranky exterior there is a story and a sadness. So when one November morning a chatty young couple with two chatty young daughters move in next door and accidentally flatten Ove's mailbox, it is the lead-in to a comical and heartwarming tale of unkempt cats, unexpected friendship, and the ancient art of backing up a U-Haul.

***The Alchemist* by Paulo Coeleho.** This story, dazzling in its powerful simplicity and soul-stirring wisdom, is about an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago who travels from his homeland in Spain to the Egyptian desert in search of a treasure buried near the Pyramids. Along the way he meets a Gypsy woman, a man who calls himself king, and an alchemist, all of whom point Santiago in the direction of his quest. No one knows what the treasure is, or if Santiago will be able to surmount the obstacles in his path. But what starts out as a journey to find worldly goods turns into a discovery of the treasure found within. Lush, evocative, and deeply humane, the story of Santiago is an eternal testament to the transforming power of our dreams and the importance of listening.

Melinda Emerson, Information and Library Services

***Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic* by David Quanmen.** May not be for everyone at this moment, but this 2013 account of previous pandemics and thoughtful consideration of "the next big one" is engaging without being sensationalistic. Here in the midst of that next big one, I found these journalistic narratives a comforting reminder that things could be much worse as well as a sobering warning that the worst could still come to pass.

***Winnie-the-Pooh* by A. A. Milne.** I'm frustrated I can't convince my kids to love these stories yet, but maybe they're not middle-aged enough. As I listened to the flawless estate-authorized Audible recording, I found myself laughing with real grown-up happiness, not just nostalgia.

***Olive, Again* by Elizabeth Strout.** If you've read *Olive Kitteridge*, you've probably already read this continuation of Olive's story. I was struck dead by the original story collection, in a good way. I lived through the sequel, but I wouldn't have missed this life for anything.

Nathan Faries, Program in Asian Studies

I promise I've read (or listened to) books of real substance this year, but right now, it seems more relevant to share my guilty pleasure with you: audio books by **Anthony Horowitz** (he wrote the whole Foyle's War TV series). You could start with *Magpie Murders* -- really fun and twisted. If you like it, try *The Word is Murder*, which has wickedly funny self-referential pseudo-non-fictional humor. There's a second one in that series entitled *The Sentence is Death* -- equally entertaining. Unrelated to those is *The House of Silk*, a novel that was actually sanctioned by the Arthur Conan Doyle estate, and is brilliantly read by **Derek Jacobi**. A real treat. That one also has a second, called **Moriarty**, but I DON'T recommend that one: the writing and the reader are both sub-par. Enjoy, and don't feel guilty!

Carol Farrell, Department of Theater and Dance

I really loved *Olive, Again* by Elizabeth Strout '77. I liked it even better than *Olive Kitteridge*! Also, *Educated: A Memoir* by Tara Westover.

Cary Gemmer Blake, Class of 2007, Office of Advancement

***Talking to Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell.** This book is about the problems that can occur when people try to understand and communicate with strangers. Using examples from history as well as current events, Gladwell explains why most people are not able to interpret the actions of those they don't know. I enjoyed learning about the psychology of communication and how it could be applied to real-life situations.

***Notes on a Nervous Planet* by Matt Haig.** In this book, Matt Haig talks about mental health in the Information Age. Drawing from his own experiences with mental illness, he gives advice in limiting the negative effects of modern life. Given the current situation, where many of us are interacting via the Internet more than ever, the book has only become more relevant.

***Stranger in the Woods* by Michael Finkel.** This non-fiction book tells the real story of Christopher Knight, the "North Pond Hermit" who hid himself away in the Maine wilderness for almost three decades. The book explains how he survived through the seasons and the effects of his burglaries on nearby homes. Christopher Knight's actions were destructive at times but the story of his seclusion is interesting and almost unbelievable.

***The Institute* by Stephen King.** In this science fiction novel, a boy named Luke is kidnapped and brought to a secret facility for children with special powers. Luke and the other children are forced to undergo experiments to heighten their abilities so they can be used as weapons by those who run the facility. Like most Stephen King novels, the Institute has memorable characters and a story that takes many exciting turns.

Dan Girling, Post & Print

***On Earth We are Briefly Gorgeous* and *Night Sky with Exit Wounds* by Ocean Vuong.** The two most beautiful books I read in 2019.

***My Time Among the Whites* and *Make Home Among Strangers* by Jennine Capó Crucet.** A window into the experiences of a first Gen Cuban America from Miami, navigating high ed, and what happens after.

Carolina González Valencia, Department of Art and Visual Culture

Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939 by **Adam Hochschild** is a moving story of the heroic members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade who engaged in a pivotal struggle for democracy in Spain.
Phyllis Graber Jensen, Communications Office

The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle
Meg Gresh, Dean of the Faculty's Office

I recommend ***The Monopolists: Obsession, Fury, and the Scandal Behind the World's Favorite Board Game*** by **Mary Pilon**. In our new world you may have been playing board games more than before. If you have a copy of Monopoly, you may find booklets or references to the history of Monopoly included in the box or the rules. You can read them but don't believe them as there is a lot more to the story that was intentionally left out. Reading ***The Monopolists*** will show how a game designed around 1900 by the progressive feminist Lizzie Magie shows problems caused by wealth inequality and demonstrates remedies and became the board game that Parker Brothers published as Monopoly in the 1930s. Some of my favorite books have been ones that took something I thought I knew something about and showed me an entirely different perspective. ***The Monopolists*** does that and you'll never look at Monopoly the same way.

Bruce Hall, Information and Library Services

Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782 by **Elizabeth A. Fenn**. I teach this book in my environmental history class, and it is a recurring favorite. This year all the more so. Fenn reveals the horrors of the disease, the ways that it revealed how North America was far more interconnected than you would imagine, and how every event--even one driven by a microbe--is inseparable from the social and political dynamics that define human fortunes. ***Pox Americana*** is a great read, but it is also a helpful reminder that people need to do more than "be in this together" if they are going to confront the inequities of any catastrophe.

Joe Hall, Department of History

Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Start Up by **John Carreyrou**. Non-Fiction that reads like Fiction.

Jay Hartshorn, Athletics

The Third Chapter: Passion, Risk, and Adventure in the 25 Years after 50
by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot
Leslie Hill, Department of Politics

Sometimes a series by a single author, if time allows. While volunteering in Saigon for 9 weeks, I found several thorough, fascinating biographies by

Walter Isaacson:

Leonardo DaVinci

Benjamin Franklin: An American Life

Einstein: His Life and Universe

Isaacson has written five other books, including biographies of Kissinger and Steve Jobs, and two "group biographies" of the "The Wise Men" (six advisors to Truman after WWII—if only Trump had a similar brain trust) and "The Innovators" (on the geeks, hackers and geniuses who invented the Internet). Sometimes reading books by a single author is a bit humbling, reminding us of our comparatively unproductive lives. Isaacson wrote these books while variously serving as the editor of Time, chairman/CEO of CNN, and president of the Aspen Institute.

And what turned out to be a fascinating book for our current Covid19 lockdown:

Richard Preston, *Crisis in the Red Zone: The Story of the Deadliest Ebola Outbreak in History, and of the Outbreaks to Come.*

If you love books, you might enjoy any of the ten volumes written by **Nicholas Basbanes '65**. Most are on the history of books and the unique world of bibliophiles, but his most recent is a biography: ***Cross of Snow, a Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.***

Bill Hiss, Class of 1966, retired colleague

***Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens.** For years, rumors of the “Marsh Girl” have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens.

I'm sure this will be a repeat selection - it's just that good. Everyone was talking about it and I was skeptical, but the hype was real. The writing is beautiful, the characters are compelling, and the story poetic and intriguing. Highly recommended.

***My Dark Vanessa* by Kate Elizabeth Russell.** (trigger warning: dark content) Exploring the psychological dynamics of the relationship between a precocious yet naïve teenage girl and her magnetic and manipulative teacher, a brilliant, all-consuming read that marks the explosive debut of an extraordinary new writer. This is not a light, easy selection - oriented around the Me Too movement and the psychological impact of sexual assault, it was challenging to read, heartbreaking, often agonizing, and raw. It won't be for everyone, but it is a powerful book if you're up for the very heavy content.

***The Broken Earth Trilogy* by N.K. Jemisin.** *The Broken Earth* trilogy is set on a massive continent called the Stillness, in a far-future Earth wracked with periodic disasters known as Seasons. These Seasons aren't just bad storms: they're massive, apocalyptic events that last for generations, reshaping the world and its inhabitants. There was a lot of hype behind this trilogy, and yet again I was not disappointed. I discovered that the author is a counseling psychologist, which I find really enhances the characters and elements of the story - every aspect of this series is multifaceted, especially around subjects of trauma/mental health/abuse, racism, climate change, etc. These books are really phenomenal.

***The Deeper the Water the Uglier the Fish* by Katya Apekina.** Moving through a selection of first-person accounts and written with a sinister sense of humor, *The Deeper the Water the Uglier the Fish* powerfully captures the quiet torment of two sisters craving the attention of a parent they can't, and shouldn't, have to themselves. In this captivating debut, Katya Apekina disquietingly crooks the lines between fact and fantasy, between escape and freedom, and between love and obsession. Another heavy novel (though not nearly as intense as **My Dark Vanessa**) this one really blew me away. It is both dark and gorgeous, electrically charged and thought provoking. The language in the book has a unique depth, the characters get under your skin, and the narrative structure is really compelling. By the end of the book I wanted to read it all over again.

Alexandra Hood, Olin Arts Center

***Roughhouse Friday* by Maine author, Jaed Coffin.** This book describes a year in the life of a young man who kayaked to Alaska on a whim after college and then became a boxing league champion while tutoring at-risk kids and struggling with ideas about masculinity and maturity. I loved every page.

***The Afterlife of Kenzaburo Tsuruda* by Elisabeth Wilkins Lombardo.** This novel is about an atheist Japanese scientist who, upon his death, emerges into an afterlife he never believed in. It reads somewhat unfinished because the author died before the book was published, but it's a gorgeous story that mixes history and Japanese spiritual tradition.

Shonna Humphrey, Office of External Grants

***Lady Sherlock* by Sherry Thomas.** A fun detective novel series in which Holmes is actually a girl! Good plotting and fun to read.

***The Deadly Series* by Kate Parker.** A feminist, genteel, poor, widow in Britain during the runup to WWII - good plotting and fun.

***Heavy* by Kiese Laymon.** I read this after hearing Laymon speak at Bates. This is a profoundly moving, important book. I've been giving it as a birthday gift to everyone in my family. Extraordinary prose telling a searing tale of coming of age as an African American man in the US.

***Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People* by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald.** This is an excellent book that explains the theoretical underpinnings of the implicit association test in a very accessible way.

***Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens.** As someone who yields to no one in her indifference to the beauty of nature, I find the lyricism of the prose in a novel that is very much about how our relationship to nature shapes our identity utterly compelling. Stunningly beautiful. Please read this book.

***The Pursuit of Power: Europe 1815 – 1914* by Richard Evans.** A very good and accessible survey of a period in history that I find quite challenging to understand.

***The Secrets We Kept* by Lara Prescott.** A fun to read, novel based on the CIA plot to get Doctor Zhivago published in the west.

***Old in Art School* by Nell Painter.** A wonderful memoir by an excellent American historian about her decision to pursue a career as an artist after she retired from Princeton. If you're retirement-curious, you should read this.

Margaret Imber, Program in Classical and Medieval Studies and Dean of the Faculty's Office

***Beautiful Ruins* by Jess Walters.** It's a social critique on Hollywood over time and place with engaging characters all trying to "write" their own stories. There's even an appearance of Richard Burton. As my book group concluded, a very good pandemic choice - a fun, generally uplifting romp.

***The Mirror and the Light* by Hilary Mantel.** Finally, the last volume in the trilogy of the rise and fall of the remarkable history of Thomas Cromwell.

Laura Juraska, retired colleague

Earlier this year, I found myself- just by coincidence rather than any plan-reading three novels in a row that all involved time travel. They have very different settings and themes, and very different ways in which time travel figures into the plots, but also some similarities in terms of history and social upheavals intertwining with individual lives. I recommend all three: **Richard Powers' *The Time of Our Singing*; Helen Dunmore's *The Greatcoat*; and Kiese Laymon's *Long Division*.**

Emily Kane, Department of Sociology

The Golden Hour; The Summer Wives; The Wicked City; and The Wicked Redhead all by **Beatriz Williams**. Williams has quickly become my new favorite author. She often intertwines characters from previous books, so it can be a challenge to pay attention and keep them all straight but she takes us on some historic fictional journeys that are unforgettable and truly compelling. Always with strong female characters, these books depict espionage, sacrifice, courage, love, and often times, set against challenging and threatening circumstances. The writing is beautiful and I'm thrilled when I discover a new Beatriz Williams book.

The Wives by **Tarryn Fisher**. Fast-paced and suspenseful, this is the type of breathless thriller that I love to not be able to put down. I always try to figure things out in books like this, but have learned to just sit back and wait for it to be revealed in all its twisty glory.

This Tender Land by **William Kent Krueger**. I started this book just as the pandemic hit in full force and I found myself unable to focus, constantly distracted, and not giving it the full attention it deserved. I snapped out of that funk and was soon enthralled by the gorgeous writing and truly epic journey Krueger took me on that spanned 1930's Minnesota. Much like *Where the Crawdads Sing*, the landscape of this book is just as much a main character as the people who inhabit it.

Alison Keegan, Dean of the Faculty's Office

Behind her Eyes by **Sarah Pinborough**. My notes say "wicked good -- wicked creepy" 4 1/2 stars.

Her Fearful Symmetry by **Audrey Niffenegger**. My notes say "good (not great) characters, well enough written, with an interesting premise" 4 stars.

Bastard Out of Carolina by **Dorothy Allison**. Disturbing and complicated story about abuse, poverty, and family. Character development was totally solid. Loved this. 5 stars.

Where the Crowdad Sings by **Delia Owens**. Loved this. Idealized but real. Awesome characters -- unlikely but loved it anyway. 4 1/2 stars.

Stephanie Kelley-Romano, Department of Rhetoric, Film, and Screen Studies

***The World That We Knew* by Alice Hoffman.** Set in WWII Europe, it's a story about a Jewish mother who calls to life a female golem to protect her daughter when she realizes she no longer can. It follows several intersecting characters and stories, each of them focused on connection and humanity in impossible times.

***Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo.** This book revolves around intersecting identities and how various characters who are attached to femininity in some way (either through gender, sexuality, or gender assigned at birth) navigate that particular identity as it criss-crosses with others like race, class, gender, relationships, and work.

***Hidden Valley Road: Inside the Mind of an American Family* by Robert Kolker.** Kolker tells us the true story of the Galvins and their twelve children, six of whom were diagnosed with schizophrenia. The book follows their story, their attempts at treatment, the tragedy of such a diagnosis, and the adult children's work with scientists to try to find a genetic "key" to the disease.

***Solitary* by Albert Woodfox.** Woodfox shares his story of his time in Angola prison in Louisiana, where he spent over 40 years in solitary confinement as one of the Angola Three — three Black prisoners kept in solitary confinement due to their political activism. He fought continuously for dignity and humanity (for himself and other prisoners), and he has an exacting radar in this book for how so many prison policies boil down to the removal of those things. He also writes about the Black Panther Party and how vital it was in helping him maintain his identity and his humanity while in prison. He was released in 2016.

***Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk.** A fantastic story fantastically translated. The further in you venture, the more uncertain you are of who's sane. The main character is an oddball old crank I kept rooting for.

Grace Kendall, Communications Office

***There, There* by Tommy Orange.** An extremely engaging story about 12 characters, centered on the Big Oakland Powwow. Better in print than audiobook, in order to keep track of the characters.

***Say Nothing* by Patrick Radden Keefe.** A history of The Troubles in Northern Ireland, told through the context of one woman's murder.

***Pride* by Ibi Zoboi.** A remarkably accurate and fun retelling of *Pride and Prejudice*, set in modern Brooklyn.

***A Constellation of Vital Phenomena* by Anthony Marra.** Historical fiction set in post-Soviet Chechnya, predominantly during the second Chechen war.

***The Orphan Master's Son* by Adam Johnson.** The story of a North Korean man's life, it sheds light on life in modern North Korea.

***The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.** The story of a young black slave who uses his power of teleportation to help free slaves on the Underground Railroad.

***Red at the Bone* by Jacqueline Woodson.** Full disclosure, I haven't finished this book, but I can't put it down. It begins with the sweet sixteen party of a woman whose parents were teenagers when she was born, and tells the stories of her parents and grandparents.

Jennifer Koviach-Côté, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Many are not that new but I enjoyed every one of these!

***Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee**

***Call The Midwife* by Jennifer Worth**

***Talking to Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell**

***Circe* by Madeline Miller**

***The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller**

***Olive, Again* by Elizabeth Strout**

***Furiously Happy* by Jenny Lawson**

***The Chronology of Water* by Lidia Yuknavitch**

Cheryl Lacey, Dining

City by Clifford D. Simak. I am stunned that this futuristic, visionary masterpiece did not come to my attention earlier in life. Very quick read. Stunningly apt for this moment in US, world history.

Peter Lasagna, Athletics

Little, Big by John Crowley. John Crowley's masterful *Little, Big* is the epic story of Smoky Barnable, an anonymous young man who travels by foot from the City to a place called Edgewood; not found on any map; to marry Daily Alice Drinkwater, as was prophesied. It is the story of four generations of a singular family, living in a house that is many houses on the magical border of an otherworld. It is a story of fantastic love and heartrending loss; of impossible things and unshakable destinies; and of the great Tale that envelops us all. It is a wonder.

Bill Low, Museum of Art

***The Mirror and the Light* by Hilary Mantel**

***Broken Earth Trilogy* by N.K. Jemisin**

***How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi**

***Why We Sleep* by Matthew Walker**

***Anil's Ghost* by Michael Ondaatje**

***The Dazzle of Day* and *Hearts of Horses* by Molly Gloss**

***Department of Speculation* by Jenny Offill**

***The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett**

***Olive, Again* by Elizabeth Strout**

Kathy Low, Department of Psychology

***Milkman* by Anna Burns**

***The Silent Patient* by Alex Michaelides**

***Becoming* by Michelle Obama**

***The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett**

***Talking to Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell**

***The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood**

Maggie Maurer-Fazio, Department of Economics

***Upstairs at the White House: My Life with the First Ladies* by J. B. West.** I found this book to be a very interesting read. Written by the Head Usher of the White House, it gives a personal view of what life was like with each of the First Ladies – Roosevelts through the Nixons – their personalities, family life and social responsibilities.

What if the Norse gods were still around and under-employed? ***American Gods* by Neil Gaiman**, offers an entertaining adventure into the possibility and their struggle with a lack of believers. If you're into exploring an irreverent look at conventional religious beliefs, ***Good Omens* by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett**, could provide a good read for summer or any time.

***Just One Damned Thing After Another: The Chronicles of St. Mary's* by Jodi Taylor** (the first in an 11-book series). The story of a "secret" society of Historians who travel in time to obtain first-hand proof of certain historical events in conjunction with a local university. Things don't always go smoothly and their sojourns into the past provide adventures that make for a fun read.

Monica McCusker, Accounting

***Educated* by Tara Westover.** After seemingly everyone suggested this one last year, I picked it up and it completely lived up to the billing. This memoir of a young woman growing up in an isolated, fundamentalist family in the Idaho mountains is an extraordinary coming-of-age story.

***Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup* by John Carreyrou.** I had seen and read news stories about the rise and fall of blood-testing company Theranos and its founder Elizabeth Holmes. Reading the whole story, it is shocking how such fraudulent behavior was enabled by powerful people. It was a truly riveting story.

***Catch and Kill: Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect Predators* by Ronan Farrow.** Like *Bad Blood*, *Catch and Kill* is an example of stellar investigative reporting into the power structures that shield people (in this case, Harvey Weinstein) from the consequences of their horrible actions.

***The Gone World* by Tom Sweterlitsch.** I am not big on science fiction, but this is one that has stuck with me since reading it. If a mystery featuring time travel, multiverses, and the impending end of the world is the type of thing that sounds appealing to you, I give it a strong recommendation.

Tom McGuinness, Office of Institutional Research, Analysis, and Planning

***The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness* by Sy Montgomery.** This has been an incredible read - fun, moving, fascinating - exploring the consciousness of the creatures around us, and how that awareness can impact us as humans. The author spends most of her time at the Boston Aquarium, and it's been so interesting to learn more about a place I've been so many times, and now can't wait to revisit once being in public places is a thing we do again!

Meghan Metzger, Office of Advancement

You will notice a theme for my reads as I am a researcher and story teller for the Maine Old Cemeteries Association. As this is Maine's Bicentennial year, what better way to include my past time with some great reads.

***Early Gravestones of Southern Maine: The Genius of Bartlett Adams* and *Portland's Historic Eastern Cemetery A Field of Ancient Graves* by Ron Romano**

***Laurel Hill Cemetery of Saco, Maine* by Leslie Rounds and Emory Rounds on behalf of the Dyer Library Association**

***The Irish of Portland Maine: A History of Forest City Hibernians* by Mathew Jude Barker**

Kevin Michaud, Dining

My pick is ***Educated* by Tara Westover.** It was profoundly moving. Also, ***If I Had Your Face* by Frances Cha.** It just came out during the pandemic!

Hoi Ning Ngai, Center for Purposeful Work

***Euphoria* by Lily King.** Anthropologists gone wild in this novel based very remotely on the life of Margaret Mead and her first and second husbands, though the author take things on a different trajectory. The book brings up fundamental dichotomies: the scholars and the subjects, the "primitive" and the "advanced," fame and knowledge, possession and freedom, women and men, truth and fiction. In the process, the book looks at a range of approaches to anthropological field work, what researchers owe subjects, and the motivations of scholars (spoiler: They're not all on the level!). It's incredible how much stuff early anthropologists brought with them to their field sites: sideboards, tons of books, china, typewriters, and lots of booze; one wonders what the indigenous ethnographers made of them.

***They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* by Stephanie Jones-Rogers,** is a scathing account of how white women inherited, owned, sold, and treated enslaved people; it busts open the myth that genteel white women never fully bought into the culture and economy of slavery. Au contraire, they were full players, and derived from slave ownership considerable social standing and economic power in a male-dominated world. White women's wealth was typically in slaves, not land; they navigated legal channels to protect their sole ownership of their enslaved property from financially inept husbands in a volatile economy. Most chilling was the day-to-day treatment of enslaved people by their female owners, the casual dissolution of enslaved families to make a quick buck, and the intimate intersection of white and black women around wet-nursing, through which the very life of mistress' babies depended on black bodies.

Kerry O'Brien, Dean of the Faculty's Office

***The Overstory* by Richard Powers**

***The Weight of Ink* by Rachel Kadish**

***The Library Book* by Susan Orlean**

***Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens**

Carole Parker, Ladd Library

***Sweetland* by Michael Crummey.** Fantastic portrayal of an isolated Newfoundland island and the remaining inhabitants who the government is paying to leave their homes. In particular, the book focuses on Sweetland, the same name as the island: his history, thinking, feelings, and relationships to the land, and to the human and non-human community. He is a character that stays with you well beyond the end of the book, as does the island.

***The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood.** The sequel to *A Handmaid's Tale* follows the stories of several women, each with different roles in Gilead and beyond. Initially, their lives appear to be separated by space and circumstance, but then "things happen" and it becomes clear how intertwined they are as Gilead faces a crisis. I found the book riveting, and not as bleak as the *A Handmaid's Tale*.

Camille Parrish, Program in Environmental Studies

***Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered* by Ruth Klüger** (I'm reading the original German: *Weiter leben: Eine Jugend*). Klüger is professor emerita of German Studies at the University of California, Irvine. Her memoir recounts her increasingly constrained childhood in Vienna after the German annexation and the traumatic years thereafter as she and her mother were transported first to Theresienstadt and then to Auschwitz. Klüger's poetic, fluid language is deeply moving as she wrestles with the profound ambiguities of her experiences and her memories of them.

***Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss* by Margaret Renkl.** I'm just starting on this collection of essays by the New York Times columnist Margaret Renkl. Beautiful, meandering and melancholy, Renkl's writing meditates on the inextricability of love and loss -- how they bind us to each other and to the natural world of which we are part.

Sonja Pieck, Program in Environmental Studies

***The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce.** Perhaps it was the English setting, the humble Harold, or the very bizarre nature of his journey that drew me in. Quirky, charming and very human.

***Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver.** While this was not my favorite Kingsolver novel, I enjoy her writing. And as I look back over what I have read this year, I remember the details of this story vividly—monarch butterflies, difficult Appalachian life, climate change—she weaves a good tale.

***The Language of Flowers* by Vanessa Diffenbaugh.** An immersion into the Victorian language of flowers (fascinating!), the challenges of an overwhelmed foster-care system, how one might love a child, and so much more.

And finally, my annual shout out to **Louise Penny** for this year's book ***The Better Man***. I read everything she writes! I am completely absorbed by her characters.

Sarah Potter, Class of 1977, Bookstore Director Emerita

Tara Westover, *Educated: A Memoir*. Remarkable story of growing up in somewhat rural area of Idaho; followed by making it to college despite no K to 12 schooling, and almost no home schooling. On her own she learns just enough to pass exams that get her into Brigham Young University. The role of mentors are crucial to help her get oriented and then to encouraged to go to graduate school. Not at all as smoothly as I've made it sound. This reminded me that in my first few years teaching at Bates (early '70s) that I didn't think about the fact students have very different backgrounds.

Hiram Bingham, *Lost City of the Incas: The story of Machu Picchu and its builders*. Bingham is rightly given credit for telling the world about Machu Picchu beginning in 1911. This city in the Peruvian Andes was essentially untouched for 400 years — not discovered by the Spaniards who brought down the Inca empire. Bingham made several trips from Yale and discovered other places in the Andes. Separately he encouraged universities to begin to develop curricula about South America. Maps and Bingham photographs are included. Note: the 2002 addition by Hugh Thomson provides a 20 page Introduction providing more context.

Jack Pribram, Professor Emeritus, Department of Physics and Astronomy

***Writers and Lovers* by Lily King.** King's prose is effortlessly beautiful. The characters and the writing are understated.

***Hurricane Season* by Fernanda Melchor** (The translation, by Sophie Hughes, has been highly acclaimed). It's bold and haunting.

Stephanie Pridgeon, Department of Spanish

***Empires of Light* by Jill Jonnes.** Traces the history of the human use of electricity from the Greeks to the late nineteenth century. Full of great stories of the amazing personalities involved in electrifying the planet including Edison, Tesla, and Westinghouse.

John Rasmussen, Facility Services

I find myself feeling more than a little guilty each year at this time, realizing that I haven't read nearly enough outside my job to be able to recommend a lot. Yes, I do spend much of my day job reading literature to earn my keep, but that's no excuse...

Here are some titles that are on my bedstand that I promise myself to finish around the edges of learning to become a much more effective on-line teacher this summer. I am sure that many have been recommended in years past. Let this be a reminder.

I am a third of the way through ***Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer** and it is truly transformative about the way I view the world and connections between what I now see as rather inadequate notions of natural and social sciences and humanities and how to be a better person on this planet. Subtitle: ***Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants.***

Reading and rereading. There's a theme. ***White Fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism* (Robin DiAngelo); *How to be an Antiracist* (Ibram Kendi); *Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code* (Ruha Benjamin).**

The French and Francophone Studies department is offering all its senior majors **Alain Mabanckou's *Le Monde est mon langage***. Short essays in dialogue with friends and mentors of this engaging author from around the francophone world.

James Baldwin. Anything. I just finished *Giovanni's Room* and keep dipping into my anthology for more. I wrote about *Another Country* for my college application, and have appreciated revisiting him now 43 years later.

King Leopold's Ghost* (Adam Hirsch).** Again, a rereading for an article I have been working on forever in response to **Hergé's *Tintin au Congo. This wildly racist and colonialist comic adventure is fondly embraced by readers in all corners of the world and I'm trying to figure that out...

For those looking to brush up on their French, the bookstore (if it opens or you could make an order) might have some copies left of several of **Brahim Metiba's** works, *Ma mère et moi* and *Je n'ai pas eu le temps de bavarder avec toi*. I may have recommended this in the past. They are lovely. A son in dialogue with his parents and the ways in which his gay Muslim identity strains their loving relationships. The bookstore would probably love to move them into your readership.

Finally, the library has been offering up books from the annex archives for faculty to add to their personal or department libraries. I offer here a list of titles culled from the most recent list. Books for the moment? More like a poem than a true recommendation (I did not write down the authors at the time...)

A Corona Inventory
by Kirk Read

Though Thousands Fall
Let us have faith
Lift Up Your Heart
The White House Mystique
No life of my own
We shall rebuild
Before the dawn
The howling of the coyotes
Shrinking dollars, vanishing jobs
The quality of bank loans
How to live with your teen-ager
A guide to survival
Yes you can
This damned campus
Kirk Read, Department of French and Francophone Studies

***The Shepherd's Life* by James Rebanks.** This is a well written story on traditional sheep farming life in rural England.

***The Game: Harvard, Yale and America in 1968* by George Howe Colt.** This is an amazing story of people from all backgrounds of life across the US involved in the traditional Harvard-Yale football game and how they fit into this tumultuous year and in the future in US history.

***The Russian Five*,** a story of espionage, defection, bribery and courage **by Keith Gave.** This is a story of the five Russian hockey players who defected to the US to play hockey for the Detroit Red Wings in the National Hockey League.

***Tip of the Iceberg* by Mark Adams.** This is a mix of modern travel with a historical account of exploration around coastal southwestern Alaska

Mike Retelle, Department of Geology

***The Three Body Problem* by Cixin Liu**
Bronwyn Sale, Department of Education

I have been reading the *Binti trilogy* by **Nnedi Okorafor** and I'm loving it! Also, **Francis Su's** *Mathematics for Human Flourishing* (which is a little bit about math but a lot more about humanity and what connects us all).

Adriana Salerno, Department of Mathematics

I would like to recommend *In the Dream House* by **Carmen Maria Machado** but with a content warning (domestic abuse). This is a heavy read, beautifully crafted. Machado's micro-essays comprise a memoir of same-sex partner abuse during Machado's time at the Iowa Writer's Workshop, where she earned her MFA. She illuminates the processes of the gaslighting and escalating physical and emotional abuse she experienced and only later has been able to process. There are at least two reasons why this is an important read. There is an extreme dearth of representations of and discussions about same sex partner abuse, and part of Machado's impetus for writing the memoir was to let others know they are not alone, to help normalize conversations about this topic so victims will be taken seriously when they reach out for help. Sitting side-by-side with the heaviness of the subject matter is the fact that this is an exploration of genre and trope in literature. Each section of 1-3 pages presents a portion of the story in a different tradition with titles like "Dream House as Folktale Taxonomy," "Dream House as Choose-Your-Own-Adventure," and "Dream House as Noir." The exploration of genre in itself is engaging while pushing the reader to question their relationship with stories we tell about partner abuse--what does or does not fit into the scripts our society has written about these urgent, pervasive issues.

Tiffany Salter, Department of English

Talking to My Daughter About the Economy: or, How Capitalism Works-and How It Fails by **Yanis Varoufakis**. How does our economy work? This book clearly and concisely explains the system we live in that influences every aspect of our lives.

I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grand View of Life by **Ed Yong**. Every chapter in this book is an eye-opener. If you don't mind having your assumptions turned inside out, this is a book for you.

Sharon Saunders, Ladd Library

I recommend the debut novel, *The Vanished Birds* by **Simon Jimenez**.

Paula Schlax, Department of Biochemistry and Chemistry

Fiction

***Anansi Boys* by Neil Gaiman**

***A Darker Shade of Magic* by V.E. Schwab**

***Dark Matter* by Blake Crouch**

***The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins**

***Leviathan Wakes* by James S.A. Corey**

***Misery* by Stephen King**

***The Powder Mage Trilogy* by Brian McClellan**

***Seraphina* by Rachel Hartman**

***The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood**

***World War Z* by Max Brooks**

Non-Fiction

***Heavy* by Kiese Laymon**

***White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo**

Carl Steidel, Office of Student Support and Community Standards

Last year's review of **Mark Forsyth's *Etymologicon*** ended with a note that two of his other books - *Horologicon* and *Eloquence* awaited reading. I have now read them, and both are highly recommended. I hope by next year to have read Forsyth's *The Unknown Unknown*.

I also recommend two books on America's history and political culture: ***These Truths* by Jill Lepore**, and ***The Soul of America* by Jon Meacham**.

Whether you are a Native Mainer or from away, I guarantee you will enjoy **John Cole's *In Maine: Essays on Life's Seasons***.

For an analysis of the ways literature, properly taught and properly understood, can be the major source of intellectual development for students, I recommend **Mark Edmundson's *Why Read?***

Finally, my current read is **Alberto Manguel's *The Library at Night***.

This is a rich, intellectual, cultural, and political history of libraries and their contribution to the civilizations in which they rest.

Sawyer Sylvester, Professor Emeritus, Department of Sociology

***The Overstory* by Richard Powers**

***Make It Scream, Make It Burn* by Leslie Jamison**

***Rising* by Elizabeth Rush**

***Range* by David Epstein**

William Wallace, Department of Education

The mystery trilogy of ***Claire DeWitt and the City of the Dead, Claire DeWitt and the Bohemian Highway, and The Infinite Blacktop***, by Sara Gran.

Claire DeWitt is the self-diagnosed "world's greatest detective." And like most similarly self-regarding detectives who've come before her, she has a host of personal issues she is wading through while taking on cases and, often, just trying to survive. The trilogy consists of three separate mysteries, but with several connective through lines: you should definitely read them in order for maximum effect, but you can take each one on its own. Gran imbues the three with a touch of the occult as well, although that lessens with each book. The third book resolves some, but not all, of the running narratives from the entire series, and that incompleteness is the only thing that mars the proceedings. (Well, that, and the fact that DeWitt makes some very poor personal decisions that are often hard to take.) Definitely worth the read, and if you're like me you'll wish there was a fourth book already, if only for a better sense of completion. The most recent was published in 2018.

The Templars: The Rise and Spectacular Fall of God's Holy Warriors, by Dan Jones. A flowing and easy-to-read one-volume history of the (in)famous crusading religious military order. Just don't expect to find anything about Freemasons, the Holy Grail, or any Dan Brown nonsense. (Jones briefly covers some of the subsequent literary and pseudohistorical writings on the Templars in an appendix.) Jones has also written on the Crusades and the Plantagenets of England, which I'll probably delve into at some point given how much I enjoyed reading this book.

***The NHL: 100 Years of On-Ice Action and Boardroom Battles*, by D'Arcy Jenish.** Are you missing sports in your life right now? Well if you love hockey, give this one a try. Using previously little-known archival sources (yes!), Jenish presents an entertaining tale of the public and private doings of the National Hockey League since its founding in 1917. He also explores the predecessors to the NHL, as well as other leagues that have come and gone in the last century. Not only a solid hockey book, but a great advertisement for the necessity of preserving documents. What else did you expect?

Pat Webber, Muskie Archives

“The whole culture is telling you to hurry, while the art tells you to take your time. Always listen to the art.” ~ Junot Díaz

Titles with two or more recommendations:

The Testaments by Margaret Atwood

Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup by John Carreyrou

Sweetland by Michael Crummey

Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo

Talking to Strangers by Malcolm Gladwell

The World That We Knew by Alice Hoffman

The Broken Earth Trilogy by N.K. Jemisin

She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story that Helped Ignite a Movement by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey

Heavy by Kiese Laymon

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

The Dutch House by Ann Patchett

The Overstory by Richard Powers

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michele Richardson

Olive, Again by Elizabeth Strout

Educated by Tara Westover