

Goodnow Library March Madness Book Summaries

Adult Non-Fiction

You are the universe : discovering your cosmic self and why it matters / Deepak Chopra, M.D., and Menas C. Kafatos, Ph.D..

Part One The Ultimate Mysteries -- What Came Before the Big Bang? -- Why Does the Universe Fit Together So Perfectly? -- Where Did Time Come From? -- What Is the Universe Made Of? -- Is There Design in the Universe? -- Is the Quantum World Linked to Everyday Life? -- Do We Live in a Conscious Universe? -- How Did Life First Begin? -- Does the Brain Create the Mind? -- Part Two Embracing Your Cosmic Self -- The Power of Personal Reality -- Where You Really Came From -- Home Free.

Between the world and me / Ta-Nehisi Coates

"For Ta-Nehisi Coates, history has always been personal. At every stage of his life, he's sought in his explorations of history answers to the mysteries that surrounded him--most urgently, why he, and other black people he knew, seemed to live in fear ... In [this book], Coates takes readers along on his journey through America's history of race and its contemporary resonances through a series of awakenings--moments when he discovered some new truth about our long, tangled history of race, whether through his myth-busting professors at Howard University, a trip to a Civil War battlefield with a rogue historian, a journey to Chicago's South Side to visit aging survivors of 20th century America's 'long war on black people,' or a visit with the mother of a beloved friend who was shot down by the police"-- Provided by publisher.

Three days in January : Dwight Eisenhower's final mission / Bret Baier ; with Catherine Whitney.

January 1961: President Eisenhower has three days to secure the nation's future before his young successor, John F. Kennedy, takes power--a final mission by the legendary leader who planned D-Day and guided America through the darkening Cold War. Bret Baier, the Chief Political Anchor for Fox News Channel, illuminates the underappreciated presidency of Dwight Eisenhower by taking readers into Ike's last days in power. Baier casts the period between Eisenhower's now-prophetic farewell address of January 17, 1961, and Kennedy's inauguration on the afternoon of January 20 as the closing act of one of modern America's greatest leaders--during which Eisenhower urgently sought to prepare both the country and the next president for the challenges ahead.

The book of joy : lasting happiness in a changing world / His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, with Douglas Abrams. / His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, with Douglas Abrams

Two leading spiritual masters share their wisdom about living with joy even in the face of adversity, sharing personal stories and teachings about the science of profound happiness and the daily practices that anchor their emotional and spiritual lives.

A long way home : a memoir / Saroo Brierley ; with Larry Buttrose.

"The miraculous and triumphant story of a young man who rediscovers not only his childhood life and home...but an identity long-since left behind"-- Provided by publisher.

The hidden life of trees : what they feel, how they communicate : discoveries from a secret world / Peter Wohlleben ; foreword by Tim Flannery.

"A forester's fascinating stories, supported by the latest scientific research, reveal the extraordinary world of forests and illustrate how trees communicate and care for each other"-- Provided by publisher.

Hidden figures : the American dream and the untold story of the Black women mathematicians who helped win the space race / Margot Lee Shetterly.

Before John Glenn orbited the earth or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. Among these problem-solvers were a group of exceptionally talented African American women, some of the brightest minds of their generation. Originally relegated to teaching math in the South's segregated public schools, they were called into service during the labor shortages of World War II, when America's aeronautics industry was in dire need of anyone who had the right stuff. Suddenly, these overlooked math whizzes had a shot at jobs worthy of their skills, and they answered Uncle Sam's call, moving to Hampton, Virginia, and the fascinating, high-energy world of the Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory. Even as Virginia's Jim Crow laws required them to be segregated from their white counterparts, the women of Langley's all-black "West Computing" group helped America achieve one of the things it desired most: a decisive victory over the Soviet Union in the Cold War, and complete domination of the heavens.

Alexander Hamilton / Ron Chernow

The inspiration for the hit Broadway musical Hamilton! In the first full-length biography of Alexander Hamilton in decades, National Book Award winner Ron Chernow tells the riveting story of a man who overcame all odds to shape, inspire, and scandalize the newborn America. According to historian Joseph Ellis, Alexander Hamilton is "a robust full-length portrait, in my view the best ever written, of the most brilliant, charismatic and dangerous founder of them all."

Born a crime : stories from a South African childhood / Trevor Noah

Noah's path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of The Daily Show began with a criminal act: his birth. Born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother, at the time such a union was punishable by five years in prison. As he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist, his mother is determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life. With an incisive wit and unflinching honesty, Noah weaves together a moving yet searingly funny portrait of a boy making his way through a damaged world in a dangerous time.

Hillbilly elegy : a memoir of a family and culture in crisis / J.D. Vance.

Vance, a former marine and Yale Law School graduate, provides an account of growing up in a poor Rust Belt town that offers a broader, probing look at the struggles of America's white working class. The Vance family story begins hopefully in postwar America. J. D.'s grandparents were "dirt poor and in love," and moved north from Kentucky's Appalachia region to Ohio in the hopes of escaping the dreadful poverty around them. They raised a middle-class family, and eventually their grandchild (the author) would graduate from Yale Law School. But as the family saga of *Hillbilly Elegy* plays out, we learn that this is only the short, superficial version. Vance's grandparents, aunt, uncle, sister, and, most of all, his mother, struggled profoundly with the demands of their new middle-class life, and were never able to fully escape the legacy of abuse, alcoholism, poverty, and trauma so characteristic of their part of America.

Thank you for being late : an optimist's guide to thriving in the age of accelerations / Thomas L. Friedman. / Thomas L. Friedman

Friedman discusses how the key to understanding the 21st century is understanding that the planet's three largest forces -- Moore's law (technology), the market (globalization) and Mother Nature (climate change and biodiversity loss) -- are accelerating all at once. And these accelerations are transforming the five key realms: the workplace, politics, geopolitics, ethics, and community. Friedman posits that we should purposely "be late" -- we should pause to appreciate the amazing historical epoch we're passing through and to reflect on its possibilities and dangers.-- adapted from book jacket.

The zookeeper's wife / Diane Ackerman

The true story of how the keepers of the Warsaw Zoo saved hundreds of people from Nazi hands. When Germany invaded Poland, Stuka bombers devastated Warsaw--and the city's zoo along with it. With most of their animals dead, zookeepers Jan and Antonina Żabiński began smuggling Jews into empty cages. Another dozen "guests" hid inside the Żabińskis' villa, emerging after dark for dinner, socializing, and, during rare moments of calm, piano concerts. Jan, active in the Polish resistance, kept ammunition buried in the elephant enclosure and stashed explosives in the animal hospital. Meanwhile, Antonina kept her unusual household afloat, caring for both its human and its animal inhabitants--otters, a badger, hyena pups, lynxes--and keeping alive an atmosphere of play and innocence even as Europe crumbled around her.--From publisher description.

Thinking, fast and slow / Daniel Kahneman

In this work the author, a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for his seminal work in psychology that challenged the rational model of judgment and decision making, has brought together his many years of research and thinking in one book. He explains the two systems that drive the way we think. System 1 is fast, intuitive, and emotional; System 2 is slower, more deliberative, and more logical.

When breath becomes air / Paul Kalanithi ; foreword by Abraham Verghese.

"For readers of Atul Gawande, Andrew Solomon, and Anne Lamott, a profoundly moving, exquisitely observed memoir by a young neurosurgeon faced with a terminal cancer diagnosis who attempts to answer the question What makes a life worth living? At the age of thirty-six, on the verge of completing a decade's worth of training as a neurosurgeon, Paul Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. One day he was a doctor treating the dying, and the next he was a patient struggling to live. And just like that, the future he and his wife had imagined evaporated. When *Breath Becomes Air* chronicles Kalanithi's transformation from a naive medical student "possessed," as he wrote, "by the question of what, given that all organisms die, makes a virtuous and meaningful life" into a neurosurgeon at Stanford working in the brain, the most critical place for human identity, and finally into a patient and new father confronting his own mortality.

Tools of titans : the tactics, routines, and habits of billionaires, icons, and world-class performers / Tim Ferriss ; foreword by Arnold Schwarzenegger ; illustrations by Remie Geoffroi.

Fitness, money, and wisdom -- here are the tools. Over the last two years, Tim Ferriss has collected the routines and tools of world-class performers around the globe while interviewing them for his self-titled podcast. Now the distilled notebook of tips and tricks that helped him double his income, flexibility, happiness, and more is available as *Tools of Titans*.

The undoing project : a friendship that changed our minds / Michael Lewis.

Examines the history of behavioral economics, discussing the theory of Israeli psychologists who wrote the original studies undoing assumptions about the decision-making process and the influence it has had on evidence-based regulation.