

"Reading is a means of thinking with another person's mind; it forces you to stretch your own."
- Charles Scribner, Jr.

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∞ Thomas Bihl, Latin
No Man Knows My History: the Life of Joseph Smith ~ Fawn M. Brodie

Buried treasure, magic rocks, polygamy and murder: Fawn Brodie's biography of Mormon prophet Joseph Smith has it all. First published in 1945, her book remains the definitive scholarly version of the life of the founder of America's fastest growing religion. Born a simple farm boy in rural Vermont, Smith went from being a ne'er-do-well treasure hunter to commanding thousands of devout converts, leading them from sleepy upstate New York to found a city that rivaled Chicago in population and size. Smith's visions revealed a strange and compelling chapter of Christ's ministry, one in which He visited the New World to bring news of His coming to the lost tribes of Israel, better known to most as Native Americans. Though Brodie was excommunicated from the Mormon church as a consequence of this biography, her depiction of the church's founder remains sympathetic, emphasizing his creativity, charm and magnetic personality.

∞ Mark Blake, Special Needs
Sword Song ~ Bernard Cornwell

Sword Song is the fourth in a series about King Alfred and the Vikings. The saga is centered around Ured, a Saxon warrior raised by Danes, who is a begrudging ally to Alfred the Great. He is caught between those who raised him and an oath he has made. The saga

continues as Lord Ured leads his forces with Wasp Sting by his side, beginning his most difficult battle for what will become known as England. This moving journey is sure to captivate those who enjoy Viking tales and lore.

∞ Gretchen Buntschuh, Grants and IB
Extended Essay Consultant
Pictures at an Exhibition ~ Sara Houghtelling

In Sara Houghtelling's first novel, we experience the world of France in the 1930's and 1940's as seen through the eyes of Max Berenzon, the son of an extremely successful art dealer and collector. Max, a bit of an innocent, wants to emulate his father by becoming his successor. As the darkness of World War II covers France, Jewish families such as Max's begin disappearing either through arrest or by going into hiding. The glorious art is confiscated by the Germans who plan through the railway system to deliver the art to Nazi leaders for their personal collections. This powerful novel tells the tale of Max during the war and afterwards as he tries to locate his father's missing art. Woven into the tale is the story, based upon a real citizen of France, who managed through amazing, steady effort to keep much of the magnificent art of Paris and the Louvre from disappearing into the Nazi enclaves. Sara Houghtelling has done careful research before beginning the story. The book is a wonderfully compelling read.

∞ Gretchen Buntschuh, *continued*
A Proper Education for Girls: A Novel ~
 Elaine diRollo

If you are a Dickens enthusiast, you are in for a treat. This is a delicious tale of two sisters living in an extremely cloistered Victorian world guarded by their father who collects inventions and by the evil Dr. Cattermole who is fond of surgery even if he has not attempted the procedure before. Lillian and Alice Talbot, through a series of grand adventures both in England and India, turn the rigid era on its head. Both are bright, clever women who refuse to be boxed and shown like one of their father's collected inventions. With a bevy of characters fit for a Dickens novel, one laughs, worries and applauds, but rather than the typical ending with all the loose ends tied in a neat bundle, this ending is refreshingly modern.

∞ Randy Carspecken, Math
Three Cups of Tea ~
 Greg Mortenson

The hardest mountain in the world to climb is arguably K2 (the 2nd Karakoram peak in Pakistan) which is the 2nd highest behind Everest. Starting in the early 1990s, after the author failed to reach the summit, he succeeded in building village schools in remote regions of this mountainous country: a feat nobody would have imagined possible. The reader is chilled in following the author's often dangerous path over barriers of language, religion, tradition and corruption. Before creating the schools, he painfully builds respect and support and eventually many deep friendships with Pakistanis who helped him promote the education of girls as well as boys. By the time the "Village in New York" is attacked by terrorists (9/11), the Pakistanis and the author understand more than ever how education is the key to world equality and therefore, peace, the same realization Sir Edmund Hillary had in the 1950s that inspired him to help build schools in Nepal. This book is an inspiration that is well worth your time.



∞ Dawn Cope, Art
How the Brain Learns ~ David A. Sousa

One of the books I read this summer is *How the Brain Learns* by Sousa. It's an up-to-date book on this subject and well written. The studies are especially supportive of the effects of the arts and humor in positively enhancing learning. I'm willing to lend my copy if you'd like to borrow it.

∞ Kyra Dauwalder, Sophomore
The Mortal Instruments ~ Cassandra Clare

The Mortal Instrument series takes you on an extraordinary adventure. If you love *Twilight*, I guarantee you would love this series. It is a fantasy series with drama, comedy, and adventure mixed in. A young girl named Clary is an average girl living in New York until one day she encounters the Shadow Hunter, Jace, killing a demon.

Clary soon learns she's not really an ordinary girl and has The Sight to see into the world of Shadow Hunters, demons, werewolves, vampires, faeries, and more. She becomes involved in a war between demons and Shadow Hunters. Why does she have The Sight? What will happen to Clary and Jace? Read the first book, *City of Bones* to learn more.

∞ Aaron Dunigan AtLee, Math
The Man Who Loved Only Numbers: The Story of Paul Erdos and the Search for Mathematical Truth ~ Paul Hoffman

Paul Erdos (1913-1996) was a mathematician who eschewed physical comforts for a life devoted completely to mathematics. He never had a home, and all his belongings fit into two suitcases. He spent his life traveling the world to collaborate with other mathematicians on interesting problems and conjectures. He would often show up at a university or even another mathematician's house and declare, "My brain is open!" meaning he was ready to work on mathematics. His goal in life was to discover as many mathematical truths as he could, and he considered mathematics to be the pursuit of the purest form of truth.



In this biography of Erdos, Paul Hoffman describes the man's life and how he impacted several generations of mathematicians with his ability to pose interesting problems, inspire mathematical research, and bring together great minds. He also describes the mathematician's generous spirit and wry humor, and opens a window into what mathematicians do and how they view their work. There is no technical mathematics in this book, so it is accessible to anyone. If you like reading about eccentric geniuses, you will enjoy this biography.

∞ Alicia Fenney, English
Emotional Intelligence ~ Daniel Goleman

Be a risk-taker: challenge your perception of intelligence. Combining personal expertise and extensive research, Goleman describes the importance of empathy and impulse control in an increasingly dangerous social world. Goleman finds that individuals who practice empathy and impulse control (yes, these are traits one can learn) lead happier, more productive emotional and social adult lives. A fascinating read for students and for our most influential members of society, teachers. *Emotional Intelligence* suggests that "intelligence" is much more than what standardized tests tell us. Indeed, those who are intelligent about their and others' emotions ("EQ") outperform those whose intelligence lies solely in the academic realm.

∞ Alicia Fenney, continued
Atonement ~ Ian McEwan

Briony Tallis is thirteen when her accidental voyeurism of her sister's affair with gardener Robbie Turner becomes an impetus for the overactive imagination that destroys three lives, including her own. A story of passion, perspective, truth and consequences, *Atonement* is beautifully narrated from the point-of-view of each main character and, like witnesses of a crime scene, each perspective reveals its relative truth. Artistic visionaries will enjoy the narrative craft of Part One, while history aficionados will devour the

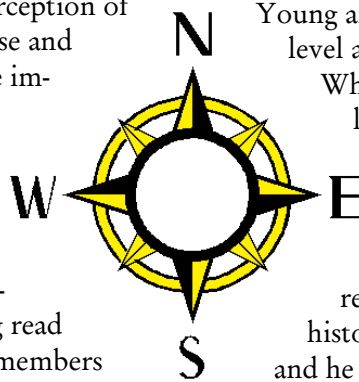
historical fiction of part two as Briony, Cecelia and Robbie separate and struggle through the height of England's involvement in World War II, at home and in a foreign land.

∞ Matt Fetzer, History
War and Peace ~ Leo Tolstoy

The epic of life is the essence of *War and Peace*. Life's value is truly understood in the face of death. It is a book that requires patience. The first 600 pages are context to the main event, Napoleon's invasion of Russia. This novel is many things. It is a story of five Russian families; the infinite hopes and fears of the human race are told through them.

Young and old live their lives at the most personal level as history prepares to intrude upon them. When it arrives, it does so at a very private level, and they are unaware that they have become part of it. When they flee Smolensk and Moscow, they are simply trying to survive, unaware that they are actors on a grand stage. This reveals another aspect of Tolstoy as the historian. In his view, "History" is complex and he views attempts to impose structure on its chaos as artificial. Events happen for infinite reasons and to pinpoint one as decisive is absurd. Russia was not invaded simply because Napoleon wanted it. He did not reach Moscow at will. This required the cooperation of millions. Events of chance all had to break Napoleon's way. Sometimes things just happen, yet historians insist on finding "the cause" as if it must be the will of someone.

The 18th and 19th centuries were a time for the historians and their godsof history – George Washington, Catherine the Great, Napoleon, Andrew Jackson, Abe Lincoln, Otto von Bismarck – and the 20th century would see more – Hitler, Stalin, Churchill, FDR, and Mao. We commonly accept that these were the pivotal figures of history; Tolstoy has given us pause. History is driven by the great *mass* of humanity. It should be written and understood with a human touch.





Talk Retro for Father's Day. In it, Ralph Keyes traces the origins of phrases, words and expressions that exist in our discourse but whose once specific references may have been lost in the misty past. "Deadline," for example was a word first appropriated by journalists to indicate the time when articles were due, but it originally came from prison lingo to indicate the line around the compound that if crossed by a prisoner would be the point at which he would be shot. Luckily, even our 'dead-lines' aren't quite so literal. If you have an interest in how social and popular culture has influenced our language, I would recommend this book.

∞ Julia Messersmith, Latin
The Road ~ Cormac McCarthy

When reading for pleasure, I tend to gravitate towards biographies and works of nonfiction. Having finished *The Road*, however, I have set out to read Cormac McCarthy's entire catalogue. Set in a desolate, ash-covered, post-apocalyptic wasteland, a father and his young son battle for survival against the elements and the odds. With death lurking incessantly, they know nothing except to follow their instincts and the gray road facing them. *The Road* is raw, intensely emotional and Romantically grotesque. Yet what is truly remarkable about McCarthy is that his writing carries the story more so than the actual events. His style is succinct and fluid, and he even neglects the use of proper punctuation, so as not to slow down the reader from discovering the kismet of the wayfaring pair

∞ Patrick O'Kane, Spanish
La sombra del viento (*The Shadow of the Wind*)
~ Carlos Ruiz Zafón

Set in mid-1900 Barcelona, this mystery thriller tells the story of a young man's (Daniel Sempere) quest to discover the history of Julian Carax, a relatively unknown author whose books have all but vanished from existence. As he gradually pieces together the bizarre history of Carax, Daniel

uncovers ugly secrets of the Spanish Civil War and the silent victims of this conflict. Carlos Ruiz's gift for suspense and multi-layered plots landed this novel at the top of several international best seller lists. This is a highly recommended read for anyone interested in mystery, thrillers, and/or historical fiction related to the Spanish Civil War.

∞ Michelle Peck, History
The Geography of Bliss ~ Eric Weiner

One of the more interesting books I read this past year was, *The Geography of Bliss* by Eric Weiner. Mr. Weiner travels to ten different countries to investigate how each of the countries was rated on the World Database of Happiness. He visits countries such as Thailand, Bhutan, India, Qatar and the U.S. and asks the question, "What makes people happy here?" His observations and conclusions are humorous as well as thought provoking. Does money or efficiency bring happiness? How can the darkness and merriment of Iceland compare to the dark moods and depression of Moldova? It is light reading but the book can allow us to ask some heavy questions about our lives.

∞ Robin Singer, Math
The Tender Bar: A Memoir ~ J.R. Moehringer

J.R. Moehringer's palpable honesty, as he describes his fatherless upbringing in Manhasset, NY, makes this memoir heart-warming, intimate, and memorable. He does not hide the sordid nature of the world he encounters in his search for male role models at the local bar, nor his own alcoholism. Yet through the lens of his love for the aimless souls he finds in "Publicans" where he basically grows up, we see the humanity and strength there. He also lets us see, through his adoring eyes, his perennially tired and barely surviving single mother, who loves him deeply and wisely, despite her own difficult life. His early stories of neglect and exposure at a tender age to the crudeness and violence of drunkards and gamblers begin to recede as he writes about his life. These topics resurface later with new and more



mature insight, while we are hearing about his unconventional introduction to literature, his struggles to get into and graduate from Yale, and his arduous path to a successful career as a newspaper columnist.

The combination of J.R.'s unique view of the painful world he is trying to understand, his creative approach to coming of age in that challenging world, his very likeable personality and the honest intimacy he grants without reservation to the reader, turn this book into something special. It was hard to put down and it was very satisfying to get a sense in the epilogue that that through his writing he had come to terms with his past and would be moving forward.

∞ Robin Singer, *continued*
My Stroke of Insight ~ Jill Bolte Taylor

Making applesauce out of bruised apples is a simile for turning a misfortune into a gift. Jill Bolte Taylor was a 37 year old neuroscientist, when she had a massive stroke in 1996, due to a congenital arteriovenous malformation. Her book, *My Stroke of Insight*, tells the story of her stroke and subsequent recovery. She also shares some fascinating and unique insights about the brain which she had during this intense experience. Her stroke became an epiphany.

In this book, she explains how the brain works, in simple terms, and explains exactly what happened in her brain during her stroke and recovery. She tells us how it feels to use the existential right brain without the analytical left brain and how she has chosen to preserve that feeling of peace and connectedness even after recovering her left brain function. The book includes her recommendations for helping people with brain injury and it describes the attitudes she adopted to make her recovery possible. She also shares the lessons she learned about lowering anxiety, staying in tune with one's body, and experiencing the world more fully through our senses.

Her many insights are fascinating, and one gets a true understanding of how the brain works. I suspect this book will send many students down a career path to neuroscience.

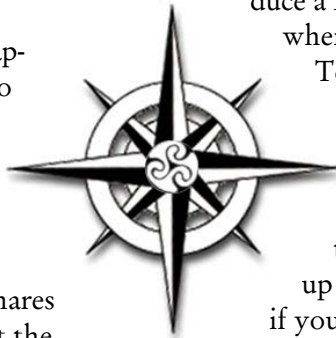
∞ Peter Steedman, Theory of Knowledge
and IB Coordinator

*The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic,
and Madness at the Fair that Changed America*
~ Erik Larson

The Devil in the White City came to me highly recommended by Chris Andre. It was a remarkable read. At the turn of the century, the U.S. was at the intersection of two diametrically opposing forces. Modernity and barbarism collided at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Even though pumping raw sewage out of the city was still a problem and the widespread use of electricity was a relatively new phenomenon, Chicago was selected to hold one the most prestigious spectacles the world had to offer. Attempting to produce a Fair that would top the Paris exposition, where the world was introduced to the Eiffel Tower, proved to be an enormous undertaking. The story of how Chicago propelled itself into the 20th century is one not to miss. The book is enthralling as one learns that one major dilemma faced by the organizers was that a mass murderer set up shop just a few blocks from the Fair. Even if you do not like history, I guarantee you will not be able to put this down. I look forward to even more recommendations from the Assistant Director.

∞ Jim Stewart, Latin
*Dangerous Games: The Use and Abuse of
History* ~ Margaret MacMillan

I was attracted to this book because I had read MacMillan's work on 1919, and I was certainly not disappointed. She uses many examples from history of all periods and all regions of the world to show how the media, the government and historians themselves sometimes "change" history as we know it for their own specific purposes, or sometimes for no reason at all - it is simply an accident that happens, much like when monks of the Middle Ages copied classical works and sometimes made mistakes which changed the texts we read. It is a short, but very thought-provoking book - one that Sturgis students, especially those studying IB History, would





benefit from reading and thinking about the issues the author raises.

∞ Rachel Todoroff, Administrative Assistant
Blue Like Jazz ~ Donald Miller

Blue Like Jazz is a refreshing book of essays by Donald Miller. I first came across this book through my son Joel and the Campus Crusade ministries at Brandeis. They would hand it out to anyone interested in learning about the nature of God and Jesus. The book really surprised me with its candid and often humorous writing. The subtitle explains the content: "Non-religious thoughts on Christian Spirituality." I like to be challenged by what I read. *Blue Like Jazz* caused me to examine why I believe what I believe. That is always a good thing! I was especially delighted by the author's engagement of students at Reed College, and the way he demonstrates his faith in a relevant and powerful manner. Donald Miller's second book, *Searching for God Knows What*, is perhaps even more delightful.

∞ Marion Weeks, Librarian
Unaccustomed Earth ~ Jhumpa Lahiri

Lahiri delivers another great read with her third book. This collection of eight stories opens with an epigraph from *The Custom House* by Nathaniel Hawthorne: "Human nature will not flourish, any more than a potato, if it be planted and replanted, for too long a series of generations, in the same worn-out soil. My children have had other birthplaces, and, so far as their fortunes may be within my control, shall strike their roots in unaccustomed earth."

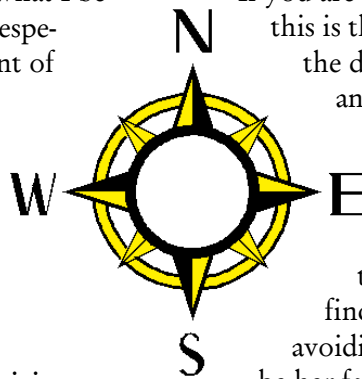
Unaccustomed Earth explores the struggles faced by Bengali families who move to America in pursuit of professional careers. As in *The Namesake*, Lahiri writes poignantly of rifts between parents and American-born Bengali children who distance themselves from family traditions to become assimilated in American culture. Her characters are an interesting mix of children and young professionals who are pulled between influences of American

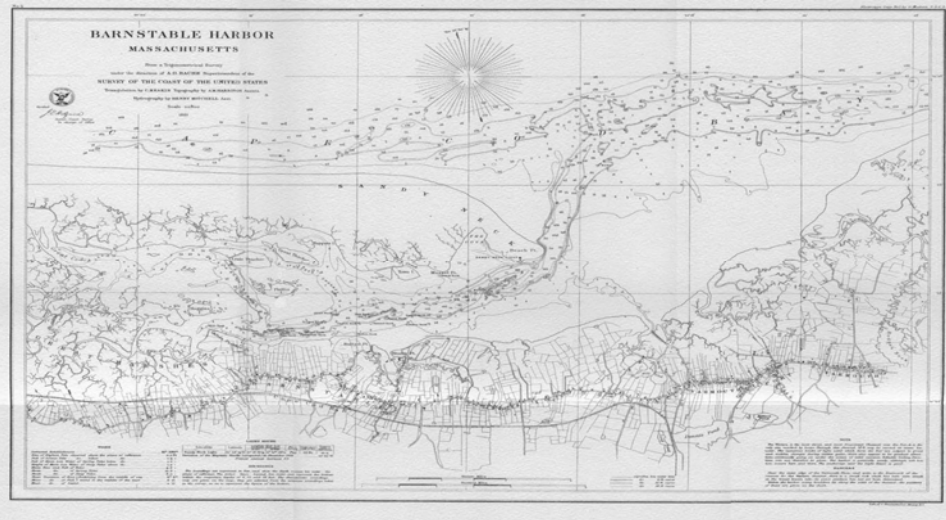
individualism and Bengali tradition.

Kaushik appears in three stories, once as the classic Angry Young Man and later as an AP photojournalist who documents war zone disasters. Perhaps, the experience of growing up in a Bengali family in Cambridge, MA gave him the gift of perspective. After all, he spent his childhood caught between two cultures, trying to make sense of confusing and often contradictory customs. Jhumpa Lahiri is an extremely talented writer. I always look forward to her next book.

∞ Marsha Yalden, English and Theatre
How to Be Lost ~ Amanda Eyre Ward

If you are looking for a great easy read for the beach, this is the book for you! While the central plot -- the disappearance/kidnapping of a young girl and her sister's desperate search to find her -- doesn't initially strike one as "light" reading, Ward's breezy style makes this a page turner which manages to be quite funny at the same time. Caroline Winters, the protagonist, is a lost soul trying to find meaning in her life. While drinking and avoiding spending time with her family seem to be her favorite pastimes, she eventually becomes obsessed with finding her younger sister who disappeared when they were children. Caroline's odyssey is both poignant and humorous causing the reader to easily become caught up in the mystery. Interspersed between each chapter are letters written by a woman named Agnes and the "hunk" she meets through a dating service. Agnes' connection to Caroline and her plight don't become clear until the end, but it's worth the wait. I wouldn't call this book great literature, but it was definitely a fun book to read over the summer.





Soundings

“The Soundings are expressed in feet, and show the depth at mean low water – the plane of reference. The dotted lines beyond low-water mark represent the bottom within the respective depths of 6, 12, and 18 feet. The characteristic soundings only are given on the map; they are selected from the numerous soundings taken in the survey, so as to represent the figure of the bottom.”

[Chart] Barnstable Harbor. Massachusetts: *Survey of the Coast of the United States*. Washington, DC: Coast Survey Office, 1861.

Editors' Note: Upcoming Literary Events

- ∞ **Mary Oliver**, Pulitzer Prize winning poet, will "lead a talk" about her work at the Tilden Arts Center at the Cape Cod Community College on October 14th at 7 pm. Some of her books are *Evidence*, *Truro Bear* and *Red Bird*. The event is free and open to the public.
- ∞ **Jeannette Walls**, best selling author of *The Glass Castle*, will discuss her new book, *Half Broke Horses*, a fictionalized biography of her maternal grandmother. She will be at the Sandwich High School Auditorium on October 28th at 7pm. The event is free and open to the public.

Sturgis Soundings is a compilation of book reviews by faculty, staff and students. These reviews represent the various interests and enthusiasms of the Sturgis community.

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