

# ST. THOMAS AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL

## SUMMER READING 2019

The goals of the Summer Reading program at STA are to enhance the reading life of our students, to expand the curriculum and to promote the belief that reading is one of life's great pleasures. To that end, the Summer Reading Program consists of two parts. One is required of all students, while the other is completely optional and open to any student who might enjoy reading some of our faculty's favorite books.

**PART I – THE REQUIRED BOOK:** Each student is required to read ONE book designated by grade level. That is, all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students will read the same book, etc. The book for each grade level has been chosen by one of the academic departments and will be discussed at the beginning of the school year in a given class. This year, for instance, students in 12<sup>th</sup> Grade will be required to read a book for their English classes. (11<sup>th</sup> Grade-Social Studies; 10<sup>th</sup> Grade -Theology; 9<sup>th</sup> Grade-Science)

**IMPORTANT:** You will take a test on the required book during the first week of school next fall.

### Grade 9: *The Hot Zone* by Richard Preston

*The Hot Zone* begins in central Africa, where a mysterious virus appeared and killed a large number of people in a fast acting epidemic – the first Ebola outbreak. Since the Ebola virus was identified, great care has been taken to isolate and prevent its spread. Preston's frightening account of the reappearance of Ebola in a laboratory near Washington, DC is a mesmerizing story of the power of nature and the need for scientists to be on guard against its dangers. The story, written in 1994, warned of future outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics as a result of global ecosystem imbalance. Preston's *The Hot Zone* presents a challenging backdrop, as 9<sup>th</sup> grade students study emerging disease and the relationship that climate change and ecosystem imbalance has on these outbreaks and potential epidemics.

### Grade 10: *Same Kind of Different as Me: A Modern-Day Slave, an International Art Dealer, and the Unlikely Woman who Bound Them Together* by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, and Lynn Vincent

A homeless drifter beaten by a hard life, friendless and dangerous, meets a well-off, jet setting art dealer thanks to the efforts of his down to earth wife. Through her deep faith and a deeply felt conviction about serving the poor, the two men share an unusual journey that leads them both to develop a friendship, learn from each other and help each other in unexpected ways. Their relationship, faith and love transform all of them as they face life's trials.

### Grade 11: CP and Honors US History: *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd

"Hetty 'Handful' Grimke, an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, yearns for life beyond the suffocating walls that enclose her within the wealthy Grimke household. The Grimkes' daughter, Sarah, has known from an early age she is meant to do something large in the world, but she is hemmed in by the limits imposed on women. Kidd's sweeping novel is set in motion on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership of ten year old Handful, who is to be her handmaid. We follow their remarkable journeys over the next thirty five years, as both strive for a life of their own, dramatically shaping each other's destinies and forming a complex relationship marked by guilt, defiance, estrangement and the uneasy ways of love." --- Barnes and Noble

### Grade 11: AP US History: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe

"Nearly every young author dreams of writing a book that will literally change the world. A few have succeeded, and Harriet Beecher Stowe is such a marvel. Although the American anti-slavery movement had existed at least as long as the nation itself, Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) galvanized public opinion as nothing had before. The book sold 10,000 copies in its first week and 300,000 in its first year. Its vivid dramatization of slavery's cruelties so aroused readers that it is said Abraham Lincoln told Stowe her work had been a catalyst for the Civil War...*Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a living, relevant story, passionate in its vivid depiction of the cruelest forms of injustice and inhumanity—and the courage it takes to fight against them." -- Barnes and Noble

### Grade 12: *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien

Based on his own experiences as a soldier in Vietnam, O'Brien writes of the life of a soldier – an ordinary American boy, a human being faced with the terrible truths of war. In doing so, he also writes about writing, claiming that works of fiction convey human truth more effectively than do reality or memory. This is an amazing novel, one which is clearly a blend of the real experiences and straightforward voice of a soldier of the 1960's, with the imagination of a writer looking back and trying to understand his life. This is truly one of those books we all should read.

## **PART II -- THE OPTIONAL PORTION:**

The second component is optional. Any student may choose to read a book from the list of "Faculty and Staff Favorites." In September, you will complete an assessment on the book(s) you read, to be given by the teacher who nominated the book. At that time, you will choose to have your score count as **an extra credit grade in any subject you wish.** (For example, you might read Mr. Tinney's book, but have it count for your Physics class.)

**NOTE:** \*\*Students will be limited to **THREE** books for extra credit, but you can read as many books as you wish!

# **FACULTY AND STAFF FAVORITES**

## **Mr. Adams – *The Shack* by William Paul Young**

**FICTION**

"Mackenzie Allen Phillips' youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later in the midst of his great sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back into the shack for the weekend. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever. "In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant *The Shack* wrestles with the timeless question, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" The answer Mack gets will astound you and perhaps transform you as much as it did him. You'll want everyone you know to read this book!" -- from the cover description

## **Mr. Adams – *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life* by James Martin, SJ**

**NONFICTION / FAITH**

"*The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything* by the Reverend James Martin, SJ (*My Life with the Saints*) is a practical spiritual guidebook based on the life and teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus. Centered around the Ignatian goal of 'finding God in all things,' *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything* shows us how to manage relationships, money, work, prayer, and decision-making, all while keeping a sense of humor. Filled with user-friendly examples, humorous stories, and anecdotes from the heroic and inspiring lives of Jesuit saints and average priests and brothers, *The Jesuit Guide to Almost Everything* is sure to appeal to fans of Kathleen Norris, Richard Rohr, Anne Lamott, and other Christian Spiritual writers." --*Amazon.com*

## **Mr. Adams – *The American Spirit: Who We Are and What We Stand For* by David McCullough**

**NONFICTION**

"A timely collection of speeches by David McCullough, the most honored historian in the United States—winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, two National Book Awards, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, among many others—that reminds us of fundamental American principles. . . . Over the course of his distinguished career, David McCullough has spoken before Congress, the White House, colleges and universities, historical societies, and other esteemed institutions. Now, at a time of self-reflection in America following a bitter election campaign that has left the country divided, McCullough has collected some of his most important speeches in a brief volume designed to identify important principles and characteristics that are particularly American. *The American Spirit* reminds us of core American values to which we all subscribe, regardless of which region we live in, which political party we identify with, or our ethnic background. This is a book about America for all Americans that reminds us who we are and helps to guide us as we find our way forward." --*Amazon.com*

## **Mr. Bennett – *Never Give Up: My Stroke, My Recovery, and My Return to the NFL* by Tedy Bruschi**

**NONFICTION/SPORTS**

"Tedy gives you something to believe in. Whether we're winning or losing, he holds his head high, and he knows himself and handles himself so well, others can't help but follow him. The way he practices and plays forces you to become a better teammate; the way he demands hustle and toughness forces you to become a better leader; and the way he carries himself inspires you to become a better person. This made his return to playing on October 30 against Buffalo all the more electrifying. The stadium was louder that night than the nights we had raised our Super Bowl banners. Our captain, our leader, our inspiration was back on the field doing what he loved to do. Tedy had spent months rehabbing, had countless doctor visits, and had undergone hundreds of tests trying to play again. Just eight months after our victory in Super Bowl XXXIX, here we were celebrating a much bigger victory on our home field. Sure it was great to win the game, but that night we were celebrating Tedy's return as he showed us teammates, fans, family, and friends what it takes to become victorious in life." -- *Amazon.com*

## **Mme. Chamberlain – *Winter Garden* by Kristen Hannah.**

**FICTION**

"Set in WWII Russia, this epic love story is an intimate portrait of contemporary mothers and daughters poised at the crossroads of their lives; it explores the heartbreak of war, the cost of survival, and the ultimate triumph of the human spirit." (from the cover) If you have read Kristen Hannah before, you will also love this book!

## **Mr. Collins – *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate**

**FICTION**

Set in Tennessee in the 1930's this book centers on Rill Foss, a story of a twelve year old girl who is left on their houseboat to mind the younger children while their mother is rushed to the hospital. Suddenly, strangers arrive on their Mississippi houseboat and whisk the children off to a local orphanage. While told that their family will be reunited, the kids soon realize something else is going on. Based on a real life American scandal, in which a Tennessee orphanage kidnapped poor children and sold them to wealthy families for adoption, this novel speaks of endurance, hope, redemption and most of all, family.

## **Mrs. Collins – *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens**

**FICTION**

This is one of the most beautiful novels ever written, and certainly the most perfect of the works of Charles Dickens. Set against the backdrop of the French Revolution, it tells of two men who look alike, but whose choices take them down very different roads. One is French and one is English, and both of them are in love with Lucy Manette, daughter of a man freed from the Bastille. The lives of the characters intertwine in ways they never could have imagined, with a grand finish that is both moving and profoundly meaningful.

## **Mrs. Collins – *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez**

**HISTORICAL FICTION**

In the Dominican Republic of the 1950's, the dictator Trujillo ruled with an iron fist. The four Mirabal sisters grew up under his rule, gradually becoming aware of the oppression under which they lived. This story is told from four different perspectives, as we follow the story of the four women who became known as *Las Mariposas*, heroes of the revolution. I read this book several years ago and fell in love with it for its powerful story, the blend of history and fiction, and the amazing characters I met. I love a book that makes me look up history, maps, pictures and more. I hope you enjoy it too!

**Mrs. Collins – *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte**

**FICTION**

Set in England in the early 1800's, *Jane Eyre* tells the story of an orphaned girl left in the care of a cruel aunt, who is sent to a school for poor children and has to make her way in the world. She becomes governess to a little girl, and when she meets her employer, the mysterious Mr. Rochester, the romance begins. *Jane Eyre* is a magnificent classic in the gothic style, full of strange twists, rich detail and a few surprises. This is one of those novels you can get lost in – a window to another time and place.

**Mrs. Collins – *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick**

**NONFICTION/HISTORY**

In 1821, the whale ship *Essex* out of Nantucket was attacked by a large sperm whale in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. All members of the crew boarded lifeboats as they watched their ship sink to the depths of the ocean; in the weeks that followed, they faced horrendous conditions and struggled to survive. The world was horrified to learn just how the survivors managed to find their way home. Nathaniel Philbrick draws on the history of shipbuilding in New England, the close knit Quaker community of Nantucket which formed the center of the whaling industry, and the power of nature over a crew of young men and boys, to tell a fascinating story of a pivotal incident in maritime and literary history. And yes, this *is* the story upon which Melville based *Moby-Dick*.

**Mr. Cullen – *Shoe Dog* by Phil Knight**

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY/SPORTS**

This is the autobiography of the founder of Nike, who grew a passion for sports into a company and a personal fortune of \$32 billion. Did you know Nike's first US factory was located in the mills in Exeter, NH? A good read for anyone interested in sports and entrepreneurship.

**Mr. Cullen – *Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner**

**NONFICTION/ECONOMICS**

Which is more dangerous, a gun or a swimming pool? Why do so many drug dealers live with their moms? A counter-intuitive look at how economics and incentives affect behavior using entertaining examples.

**Mr. Cullen – *Millionaire Next Door* by Thomas Stanley**

**NONFICTION/SOCIOLOGY**

People who accumulate significant wealth may not fit the image you have in mind. They are less likely to come from inherited wealth or prestige professions, and more likely to be self-made, self-employed people who work in dull-ordinary industries and live frugally. Examples: How the decision about whether, when and whom to marry impacts one's finances (short answer: More than any other single decision a person makes in their entire life); how buying quality used cars instead of new ones compounds to hundreds of thousands of dollars over a lifetime.

**Mr. Cullity – *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* – Philip K. Dick**

**SCIENCE FICTION**

Since his untimely death at age 53, there has been an extraordinary growth of interest in Philip K. Dick's writings, which during his lifetime were largely ignored by serious mainstream critics and readers. Such is no longer the case, and the novels of Philip K. Dick frequently appear on university curricula devoted to modern American literature. Many of his novels and short stories have also been adapted as films and TV series, the most recent being the Amazon series, *The Man in the High Castle*, adapted from Dick's novel of the same name. This novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* inspired the classic sci-fi film, *Blade Runner*. Here's a brief excerpt from Amazon's description of the book: "Driven into hiding, unauthorized androids live among human beings, undetected. Rick Deckard, an officially sanctioned bounty hunter, is commissioned to find rogue androids and "retire" them. But when cornered, androids fight back—with lethal force."

**Mr. Cullity – *Dracula* by Bram Stoker**

**FICTION**

Irish writer Abraham "Bram" Stoker awoke from an eerie dream with the idea for a novel wholly different from anything he had written before. *Dracula* (1897) chronicles the experiences of several ordinary members of Victorian society as they come into dangerously close contact with the utterly mysterious and morbidly sinister Count Dracula. Stoker presents the story in a series of highly detailed letters from one character to another, a technique which offers a wide range of perspectives. Horror abounds as the devilish Count infiltrates English society, greedily searching for potential victims. If you have a thirst for a truly blood-curdling tale this summer, look no further than one of the original (and definitely the most famous) vampire stories, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

**Mr. Cullity – *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut**

**FICTION**

Short chapters, a fast pace, unforgettable characters, and a truly wild plot are just some of the pluses of this classic, sort-of-sci-fi novel. It's all strung together (pun intended!) by Kurt Vonnegut's trademark ironic wit and blackly humorous vision. Here's what Amazon.com has to say: "*Cat's Cradle* is Kurt Vonnegut's satirical commentary on modern man and his madness. An apocalyptic tale of this planet's ultimate fate, it features a midget as a main character, a complete, original theology created by a calypso singer, and a vision of the future that is at once darkly fatalistic and hilariously funny. A book that left an indelible mark on an entire generation of readers, *Cat's Cradle* is one of the twentieth century's most important works—and Vonnegut at his very best."

**Ms Cummings - *The Magnolia Story* by Chip Gaines, Joanna Gaines, with Mark Dagostino**

**NONFICTION**

"Are you ready to see your fixer upper?" These famous words are now synonymous with the dynamic husband-and-wife team Chip and Joanna Gaines, stars of HGTV's *Fixer Upper*...*The Magnolia Story* is the first book from Chip and Joanna, offering their fans a detailed look at their life together. From the very first renovation project they ever tackled together, to the project that nearly cost them everything; from the childhood memories that shaped them, to the twists and turns that led them to the life they share on the farm today." - [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com)

**Ms Cummings -- *We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories From Refugee Girls Around the World* by Malala Yousafzai.**

**NONFICTION/HUMAN RIGHTS**

"In her powerful new book, Nobel Peace Prize winner and *New York Times*-bestselling author Malala Yousafzai introduces some of the people behind the statistics and news stories about the millions of people displaced worldwide. Malala's experiences visiting refugee camps caused her to reconsider her own displacement -- first as an Internally Displaced Person when she was a young child in Pakistan, and then as an international activist who could travel anywhere in the world except to the home she loved. In *We Are Displaced*, which is part memoir, part communal storytelling, Malala not only explores her own story, but she also shares the personal stories of some of the incredible girls she has met on her journeys -- girls who have lost their community, relatives, and often the only world they've ever known." – [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

**Dr. DiPietro -- *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Who Helped Win the Space Race* by Margot Lee Shetterly**

**NONFICTION**

"The phenomenal true story of the black female mathematicians at NASA whose calculations helped fuel some of America's greatest achievements in space. ... 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." [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

- Dr. Dipietro – *The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars* by Dava Sobel** **NONFICTION/SCIENCE**  
 “In the mid-nineteenth century, the Harvard College Observatory began employing women as calculators, or “human computers,” to interpret the observations their male counterparts made via telescope each night. At the outset this group included the wives, sisters, and daughters of the resident astronomers, but soon the female corps included graduates of the new women’s colleges—Vassar, Wellesley, and Smith. As photography transformed the practice of astronomy, the ladies turned from computation to studying the stars captured nightly on glass photographic plates.” *Amazon.com*
- Mrs. Durawa – *Educated* by Tara Westover** **NONFICTION/MEMOIR**  
 “An unforgettable memoir about a young girl who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. *Educated: A Memoir* is the story of Tara Westover, who started her education formally at the age of 17. This is a tale of survival and struggle.”
- Mr. Holtz – *Prey* by Michael Crichton** **FICTION**  
*Prey* tells the story of a mechanical plague and the desperate attempts of several scientists to destroy it. “A cloud of nanoparticles - microrobots - has escaped from the laboratory. This cloud is self-sustaining and self-reproducing. It is intelligent and it learns from experience. For all practical purposes, it is alive. It has been programmed as a predator. It is evolving swiftly, becoming more deadly with each passing hour. Every attempt to destroy it has failed. And we are prey.” -- from the book cover
- Mr. Holtz – *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot** **NONFICTION / SCIENCE**  
 “From a single, abbreviated life grew a seemingly immortal line of cells that made some of the most crucial innovations in modern science possible. And from that same life, and those cells, Rebecca Skloot has fashioned in *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* a fascinating and moving story of medicine and family, of how life is sustained in laboratories and in memory. Henrietta Lacks was a mother of five in Baltimore, a poor African American migrant from the tobacco farms of Virginia, who died from a cruelly aggressive cancer at the age of 30 in 1951. A sample of her cancerous tissue, taken without her knowledge or consent, as was the custom then, turned out to provide one of the holy grails of mid-century biology: human cells that could survive--even thrive--in the lab. Known as HeLa cells, their stunning potency gave scientists a building block for countless breakthroughs, beginning with the cure for polio. Meanwhile, Henrietta’s family continued to live in poverty and frequently poor health, and their discovery decades later of her unknowing contribution--and her cells’ strange survival--left them full of pride, anger, and suspicion. For a decade, Skloot doggedly but compassionately gathered the threads of these stories, slowly gaining the trust of the family while helping them learn the truth about Henrietta, and with their aid she tells a rich and haunting story that asks the questions, Who owns our bodies? And who carries our memories?” --*Tom Nissley (Amazon review)*
- Mrs. Kirsch – *Sing, Unburied, Sing* by Jesmyn Ward** **FICTION**  
 Expect to be blown away by the pain and beauty of *Sing, Unburied, Sing* by Jesmyn Ward. The story follows Jojo, as he navigates growing up in the rural south as a mixed-race teenager in an impoverished town, with a nearly-absent mother, doting but aging grandparents and a toddler sister. Readers get to hear equally from Leonie, Jojo’s mom, as she struggles with addiction and the absence of her husband, who is in jail. Another reviewer put it best: “This is a story of poverty, love, grief, loss, abuse, brutality, race, injustice, family, addiction, and ghosts” (*Goodreads.com*). Jojo and Leonie’s narratives are poetically written; we get to hear their struggles on the page. Ghosts of the family’s past arrive on scene as well—but in a way that seems so natural that they function as characters themselves. If you are curious how Jojo and his mother endure through their desperate situations, or if you’re just curious to read a novel that bends and breaks the rules of any genre you’ve read before, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* is the book for you.
- Mrs. Kirsch – *Turtles All the Way Down* by John Green** **FICTION**  
 “It all begins with a fugitive billionaire and the promise of a cash reward. *Turtles All the Way Down* is about lifelong friendship, the intimacy of an unexpected reunion, Star Wars fan fiction, and tuatara. But at its heart is Aza Holmes, a young woman navigating daily existence within the ever-tightening spiral of her own thoughts.” (*Goodreads.com*)
- Ms Manfro – *The Zookeeper’s Wife: A War Story* by Diane Ackerman** **NONFICTION / HISTORY**  
 Based on a true story, a Christian couple chooses to use their Polish zoo to save the lives of those fleeing from Nazis during WWII. This account tells the story of true heroism, the Resistance and the harrowing tale of the human and animal lives that were being hunted by the Nazis. More than just a couple and a zoo, “*The Zookeeper’s Wife*” covers the events of WWII in a depth of detail.
- Mrs. Mann – *Angela’s Ashes* by Frank McCourt** **AUTOBIOGRAPHY**  
 Frank McCourt was born in Depression-era Brooklyn to recent Irish immigrants and raised in the slums of Ireland. Frank’s mother, Angela, has no money to feed the children since Frank’s father rarely works, and when he does he drinks his wages. However, Frank lives for his father’s tales of Cuchullain, who saved Ireland, and of the angel who brings his mother babies. He endures poverty and the cruelty of relatives, neighbors and the world. It is an amazing story about survival and the pursuit of the American dream.
- Mrs. Mann – *House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende** **FICTION**  
 “In one of the most important and beloved Latin American works of the twentieth century, Isabel Allende weaves a luminous tapestry of three generations of the Trueba family, revealing both triumphs and tragedies. Here is patriarch Esteban, whose wild desires and political machinations are tempered only by his love for his ethereal wife, Clara, a woman touched by an otherworldly hand. Their daughter, Blanca, whose forbidden love for a man Esteban has deemed unworthy infuriates her father, yet will produce his greatest joy: his granddaughter Alba, a beautiful, ambitious girl who will lead the family and their country into a revolutionary future. *The House of the Spirits* is an enthralling saga that spans decades and lives, twining the personal and the political into an epic novel of love, magic, and fate.” – *New York Times*
- Mrs. Mann – *Three Sisters, Three Queens* by Philippa Gregory** **HISTORICAL FICTION**  
 Following the story of Henry VIII’s elder sister, Margaret, the book pulls together the lives of Margaret, her younger sister Mary, and Katherine of Aragon, sisters and queens of different nations (Scotland, France, and England, respectively). This allows her to look at Henry VIII’s life and age from a different vantage point, as well as exploring an interesting historical figure in her own right.

**Ms Pate -- *Broken Things* by Lauren Oliver**

**FICTION**

Who killed Summer Marks five years ago in the woods? It is not Mia and Brynn like everyone thinks. "On the anniversary of Summer's death, a seemingly insignificant discovery resurrects the mystery and pulls Mia and Brynn back together once again. But as the lines begin to blur between past and present and fiction and reality, the girls must confront what really happened in the woods all those years ago—no matter how monstrous" (Amazon). If you like suspenseful novels and enjoyed books like *One of Us Is Lying*, *Two Can Keep a Secret*, *We Were Liars*, or *Panic*, then this must be the next book on your reading list, like it is mine. I am excited to find out what happens as I read the book for the first time this summer, and I look forward to discussing it with you in the fall.

**Ms Pate and Dr. Pike -- *Circe* by Madeline Miller**

**FICTION/MYTHOLOGY**

Ms Pate has always enjoyed EPIC adventures about Odysseus. Dr. Pike has always found mythology fascinating. These two loves are combined in *Circe* by Madeline Miller. The story is told from Circe's point of view. Learn more about Circe, Helios, Scylla, the Minotaur, and of course, Odysseus. **Please note, this reading selection is only for upperclassmen (Grades 10 -1 2).**

**Dr. Pike -- *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman**

**SCIENCE FICTION**

Part of my fascination with science extends to science fiction and speculative fiction about alternate and often dystopian futures. "In Neal Shusterman's "Scythe" two teens must learn the "art of killing". A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control. Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the "art" of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own. *Scythe* is the first novel of a thrilling new series by National Book Award–winning author Neal Shusterman in which Citra and Rowan learn that a perfect world comes only with a heavy price" From Kirkus Reviews.

**Mr. Prince -- *The True Story of Fatima* by Fr. John de Marchi**

**NONFICTION / FAITH**

Surprisingly few people know about the story of Fatima, when the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children in Portugal in 1917. It is very important to read about what happened to the children at Fatima. It is very intimate and beautiful. It takes you straight to the heart of God in Fatima, so I think it's important that it be one of your first experiences of Fatima. So much of the material you find on the internet about Fatima is either difficult, or challenging, or controversial, that it's always good to come back, in a sense, to the source. The story of the children is easy to take as sticky-sweet, sentimental, and old-fashioned, but in reality those children are models for us as we consider our own reception of Our Lady's actual and decisive intervention at Fatima into our "modern" world.

I have only one copy of this book that I can loan for the summer. I used to have many, but now I am having difficulty getting more. The book can be read online at and/or downloaded from <http://fatima.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/The-True-Story-of-Fatima.pdf>. It can also be bought from Amazon for \$12. I am told that you can also purchase the book for \$3 by phone by dialing 1-800-263-8160. Another option would be to bring me a thumb drive and I can copy the pdf file from my computer.

**Mrs. Richburg -- *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown**

**NONFICTION / SPORTS**

Just over eighty years ago the boys from Washington State paddled out of Puget Sound and into Hitler's 1936 Berlin Games, representing the USA alongside Jesse Owens (of the 2016 film, *Race*) and Louis Zamperini (of Laura Hildebrand's *Unbroken*). Brown's story tells of their challenges and successes as athletes and Americans. Athlete or not, one can learn from the story about teamwork, loyalty, dedication, perseverance and commitment. Whether leading or just joining a team, many secrets to success lie in and between the lines. This is a highly recommended read for STA student athletes.

**Mrs. Richburg -- *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom**

**MEMOIR**

The story begins at Brandeis University in 1975, where Professor Morrie Schwartz and his students began a relationship that extended from the classroom to the Shapiro Dining Hall and beyond. The author, Mitch Albom, graduated from Brandeis in 1979, and became a popular Chicago sports writer before penning his story of ongoing friendship with Morrie. On the *NY Times* Best Seller List for four years, it is now considered the most widely read memoir ever.

**Mrs. Richburg -- *The First Phone Call from Heaven* by Mitch Albom**

**FICTION**

What you believe and whether you believe it all the time comes to question in this title by Mitch Albom, who pushes on the veil between heaven and earth and spins a fine wire from one to the other.

**Mr. Tinney -- *The Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison**

**FICTION**

"We rely, in this world, on the visual aspects of humanity as a means of learning who we are. This, Ralph Ellison argues convincingly, is a dangerous habit." This novel, published in 1952 as a first novel, won the National Book Award. Its confrontation with the questions of race that still trouble our country is more than relevant today. As the narrator takes us through his experience as a black man in America – the community of his youth, an all-black college that expelled him, and the experience of life in the city, he shows us how it feels to be in a world where he *feels* invisible. While the narrator's focus is on race, the topic he explores is much bigger: that of *identity*, and how we, different as we all are, can be individuals in a society that may not be perfect. **NOTE: Be sure to read *The Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, and not the one by H.G. Wells.**

**Mr. Tinney -- *Sapien* by Yuval Noah Harari**

**NONFICTION**

"Tackling evolutionary concepts from a historian's perspective, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, describes human development through a framework of three not-necessarily-orthodox "Revolutions": the Cognitive, the Agricultural, and the Scientific. His ideas are interesting and often amusing: *Why have humans managed to build astonishingly large populations when other primate groups top out at 150 individuals?* Because our talent for gossip allows us to build networks in societies too large for personal relationships between everyone, and our universally accepted "imagined realities"--such as money, religion, and Limited Liability Corporations—keep us in line." (Amazon.com) This is a fascinating study of what we call humanity, with a unique and interesting perspective.

**Mrs. Wade -- *Brooklyn* by Colm Tóibín**

**FICTION**

Eilis Lacey has come of age in small-town Ireland in the years following World War Two. Though skilled at bookkeeping, she cannot find a job in the miserable Irish economy. When an Irish priest from Brooklyn offers to sponsor Eilis in America--to live and work in a Brooklyn neighborhood "just like Ireland"--she decides she must go, leaving her fragile mother and her charismatic sister behind...

**Mrs. Wade -- *The White Queen* by Philippa Gregory**

**FICTION**

Elizabeth Woodville, a woman of extraordinary beauty and ambition, secretly marries the newly crowned boy king. While she rises to the demands of her exalted position and fights for the success of her family, her two sons become the central figures in a famous unsolved mystery that has confounded historians for centuries: the lost princes in the Tower of London.