

WHS SUMMER SUMMER READING

NON-FICTION 10 - 12

2023

Conkling, Winifred. **Ms. Gloria Steinem : a life**. Gloria Steinem was no stranger to injustice even from a young age. She never blamed her single, mentally ill mother for being unable to hold down a job, but rather blamed society's intrinsic hostility toward working women. This was the spark that lit a fire in her that would burn for decades, and continues to burn brightly today. Throughout the years, Gloria Steinem is perhaps the single-most iconic figure associated with women's rights, her name practically synonymous with feminism. Documenting everything from her boundary-pushing journalistic career to the foundation of Ms. magazine to being awarded the 2013 Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Cooke, Julia. **Come Fly the World: the jet-age story of the women of Pan Am**. Pan Am once represented the gold standard for jetsetters, largely due to the women that worked for it. In order to meet the requirements for the seemingly glamorous job, hopeful applicants were willing to endure strict height and weight requirements. The author chronicles the rise, and downfall, of Pan Am through the personal stories of the women who were the face of the company: stewardesses. This account is also an engaging work of cultural history. Cooke notes how the job of stewardess, though still rooted in sexism, paradoxically allowed women to find freedom, as they made their own money, lived independently, traveled abroad, and explored countries on their own.

Croll, Jennifer. **Bad Boys of Fashion: Style Rebels and Renegades Through the Ages**. Sashay away, ladies: it's the boys' turn for the fashion spotlight. From Louis XIV to Kanye West, Jennifer Croll takes us on a tour of daring and different men throughout history who have all used fashion to get what they want. Just as she did in her award-winning *Bad Girls of Fashion*, Croll shows us the power of clothes and the links between fashion and politics, art, social movements, and more. Croll's lively and engaging prose draws in the reader, providing enough information to satisfy both budding fashionistas and pop-culture junkies alike. Aneta Pacholska's illustrations are modern and fun, perfectly complementing the text and making the book as exciting to look at as it is to read. In-depth features include Louis XIV, Oscar Wilde, Marlon Brando, Malcolm X, Andy Warhol, Karl Lagerfeld, Clyde Frazier, Malcolm McLaren, David Bowie, and Kanye West, with a diverse array of shorter biographies enriching the text.

Deng, Achut. **Don't look back : a memoir of war, survival, and my journey from Sudan to America**. I want life. For ten years, Achut Deng survived at Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya after her family was ripped apart by the Second Sudanese Civil War. But Achut wanted to do more than merely survive. She wanted to live. The twenty-two-year civil war essentially orphaned over 20,000 children and drove them from their villages in southern Sudan. Some of these children walked over a thousand miles, through dangerous war zones and across unforgiving deserts. They are often referred to as The Lost Boys. But there were girls, too. Achut Deng was one of them. This is her story. It's a story of unimaginable hardship and selfless bravery, of tormenting physical pain and amazing emotional resilience, of unbreakable bonds of friendship and family. It's a story about what happens when your dream comes true, only to give way to a new nightmare. It's about how hard you will fight to save your own life.

DiMarco, Nyle. **Deaf Utopia: a memoir--and a love letter to a way of life.** Before becoming the actor, producer, advocate, and model that people know today, Nyle DiMarco was half of a pair of Deaf twins born to a multi-generational Deaf family in Queens, New York. At the hospital one day after he was born, Nyle 'failed' his first test--a hearing test--to the joy and excitement of his parents. In this engrossing memoir, Nyle shares stories, both heartbreaking and humorous, of what it means to navigate a world built for hearing people. From growing up in a rough-and-tumble childhood in Queens with his big and loving Italian-American family to where he is now, Nyle has always been driven to explore beyond the boundaries given him. A college math major and athlete at Gallaudet--the famed university for the Deaf in Washington, DC--Nyle was drawn as a young man to acting, and dove headfirst into the reality show competitions America's Next Top Model and Dancing with the Stars--ultimately winning both competitions.

Dowd, Michelle. **Forager: Field Notes on Surviving a Family Cult.** Dowd recounts her calamitous youth growing up in an apocalyptic cult. As the progeny of the cult's prophet, Dowd was expected to strictly adhere to all rules without question and learn how to survive in the wilderness. Affection, whether familial, platonic, or romantic, was forbidden. Outsiders were not to be trusted, even blood relatives. Dowd was subjected to starvation, neglect, and abuse as tests of strength and punishment for alleged misdeeds. In her early teens, Dowd was struck with a serious illness that left her hospitalized for long stretches of time. Throughout her recovery, she realized that escape was her only means of survival. Drawing on skills she learned from the cult, Dowd is ultimately able to break free

Edinger, Monica. **Nearer my freedom : the interesting life of Olaudah Equiano by himself.** Millions of Africans were enslaved during the transatlantic slave trade, but few recorded their personal experiences. Olaudah Equiano's The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano is perhaps the most well known of the autobiographies that exist. Follow Equiano from his life in Africa as a child to his enslavement at a young age, his travels across the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, his liberation, and his life as a free man

Estes, Fred. **Teen Innovators: nine young people engineering a better world with creative inventions.** Teen Innovators celebrates the determination and ingenuity of ten young people who created their own original inventions. From water testing to windmills, these youth use unique methods to overcome real world problems.

Fleming, Candace. **Murder Among Friends: how Leopold and Loeb tried to commit the perfect crime** How did two teenagers brutally murder an innocent child...and why? And how did their brilliant lawyer save them from the death penalty in 1920s Chicago? This is a compulsively readable true-crime story based on an event dubbed the "crime of the century." In 1924, eighteen-year-old college students Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb made a decision: they would commit the perfect crime by kidnapping and murdering a child they both knew. But they made one crucial error: as they were disposing of the body of young Bobby Franks, whom they had bludgeoned to death, Nathan's eyeglasses fell from his jacket pocket. Multi-award-winning author Candace Fleming depicts every twist and turn of this harrowing case--how two wealthy, brilliant young men planned and committed what became known as the crime of the century, how they were caught, why they confessed, and how the renowned criminal defense attorney Clarence Darrow enabled them to avoid the death penalty.

Florio, John. **Sacco, Vanzetti, and the end of the American dream**. This book recounts the heartbreaking case of Sacco and Vanzetti, two Italian immigrants who were wrongfully executed for murder. In the early 1920s, a Red Scare gripped America. Many of those targeted were Italians, Eastern Europeans, and other immigrants. When an armed robbery resulting in the death of two people broke headlines in Massachusetts, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti--both Italian immigrants--were quick to be accused. A heated trial ensued, but through it all, the two men maintained their innocence. The controversial case quickly rippled past borders as it became increasingly clear that Sacco and Vanzetti were fated for a death sentence. Protests sprang up around the world to fight for their lives.

Guinan, Stephen. **We are the Troopers : the women of the winningest team in pro football history**. Amid a national backdrop of the call to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, the National Women's Football League was founded as something of a gimmick. However, the league's star team, the Toledo Troopers, emerged to challenge traditional gender roles and amass a win-loss record never before or since achieved in American football. The players were housewives, factory workers, hairdressers, former nuns, high school teachers, bartenders, mail carriers, pilots, would-be drill sergeants, Black, white, Latina, mothers and daughters and aunts and sisters. But most of all, they were athletes who were denied the opportunity to play a game they were born to play.

Iftin, Abdirisack Nor. **Call Me American: The Extraordinary True Story of a Young Somali Immigrant**. Abdi Nor Iftin grew up amidst a blend of cultures, far from the United States. At home in Somalia, his mother entertained him with vivid folktales and bold stories detailing her rural, nomadic upbringing. As he grew older, he spent his days following his father, a basketball player, through the bustling street of the capital city of Mogadishu. But when the threat of civil war reached Abdi's doorstep, his family was forced to flee to safety. Through the turbulent years of war, young Abdi found solace in popular American music and films. Nicknamed Abdi the American, he developed a proficiency for English that connected him—and his story—with news outlets and radio shows, and eventually gave him a shot at winning the annual U.S. visa lottery.

Kepner, Tyler. **The Grandest Stage. A History of the World Series**. In seven (that most important of numbers in Series history) distinct chapters, topics range from unlikely heroes, the perils of managing in a World Series, and the infamy that comes from making the ultimate error that loses the whole thing, allowing for anecdotes and stories that span the entire breadth of Series play. Kepner, the national baseball reporter for the New York Times, uses his own baseball knowledge, acquired since attending his first World Series game in 1983, along with his extensive access to current and former players, managers, and fellow baseball reporters, to find the stories beyond the stats.

Liu, Simu. **We Were Dreamers: an immigrant superhero origin story**. Simu Liu chronicles his family's journey from China to the bright lights of Hollywood. Simu's parents left him in the care of his grandparents, then brought him to Canada when he was four. Life as a Canuck, however, is not all that it was cracked up to be; Simu's new guardians lack the gentle touch of his grandparents, resulting in harsh words and hurt feelings. His parents, on the other hand, find their new son emotionally distant and difficult to relate to. But as time passes, he grows increasingly disillusioned with the path that has been laid out for him. Less than a year out of college, at the tender age of 22, his life hits rock bottom when he is laid off from his first job as an accountant. Left to his own devices, and with nothing left to lose, Simu embarks on a journey that will take him far outside of his comfort zone into the world of show business. Through a swath of rejection and comical mishaps, Simu's determination to carve out a path for himself leads him to not only succeed as an actor, but also to open the door to reconciling with his parents.

Masters, Oksana. **The Hard Parts: A Memoir of Courage and Triumph**. Oksana Masters was born in Ukraine--in the shadow of Chernobyl--seemingly with the world against her. She was born with one kidney, a partial stomach, six toes on each foot, webbed fingers, no right bicep, and no thumbs. Her left leg was six inches shorter than her right, and she was missing both tibias. Relinquished to the orphanage system by birth parents daunted by the staggering cost of what would be their child's medical care, Oksana encountered numerous abuses, some horrifying. Salvation came at age seven when she was adopted by an American. In America, Oksana endured years of operations that included a double leg amputation. Determined to prove herself, Oksana triumphed in not just one sport but four--winning against the world's best in elite rowing, biathlon, cross-country skiing, and road cycling competitions. Now considered one of the world's top athletes, she is the recipient of seventeen Paralympic medals, the most of any US athlete of the Winter Games, Paralympic or Olympic.

Miller, Sarah. **Hanged! Mary Surratt & The Plot to Assassinate Abraham Lincoln**. A meticulously researched account of Mary Surratt, whose still-disputed role in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln led to her becoming the first woman executed by the United States government. From the start, newspapers reviled her and, during the trial, wrote sexist, prejudicial accounts of her description and actions. The trial itself, run by a military tribunal, was biased in favor of the guilt of the accused. Surratt was sentenced to death, refused clemency by President Andrew Johnson, and hung the following day.

Mukherjee, Siddhartha. **The song of the cell : an exploration of medicine and the new human** The Song of the Cell is the third book in this extraordinary writer's exploration of what it means to be human. Mukherjee begins this magnificent story in the late 1600s, when a distinguished English polymath, Robert Hooke, and an eccentric Dutch cloth-merchant, Antonie van Leeuwenhoek looked down their handmade microscopes. What they saw introduced a radical concept that swept through biology and medicine, touching virtually every aspect of the two sciences, and altering both forever. It was the fact that complex living organisms are assemblages of tiny, self-contained, self-regulating units. Our organs, our physiology, our selves--hearts, blood, brains--are built from these compartments. Hooke christened them cells. The discovery of cells--and the reframing of the human body as a cellular ecosystem--announced the birth of a new kind of medicine based on the therapeutic manipulations of cells.

Mundy, Liza. **Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers Who Helped Win World War II**. As the U.S. headed to war in 1941, two things became clear to military leaders: victory depended on successful code breaking and they didn't have nearly enough people working on it. The solution was for the Army and Navy to recruit women for cryptanalysis. Tens of thousands of women answered the call for this top-secret work. Drawing from recently declassified National Security Agency files, Mundy rescues these women's stories from anonymity and obscurity. She vividly describes the intricacies of code breaking while weaving in crucial historical information about the war and women's participation in it.

Nietfeld, Emi. **Acceptance: A Memoir**. As a child, Emi Nietfeld was caught between a hoarder mother who got her put on antipsychotic medication, but was also the only person to believe she was exceptional, and a state system exemplified by a foster mom who tried to ban her art history flash cards because they had naked pictures (of Michelangelo's David). Even after wrestling free of grim inpatient mental health institutions and getting into a prestigious boarding school, Emi scrambled for places to sleep during breaks. Realizing that her path to true independence lay in reinventing herself as a talented overcomer deserving of a full ride, she became obsessed with college admissions. While taking on the sad challenge of presenting herself as resilient to gain authorities' approval, Emi lived the untidy version of actual adversity at the same time--literally drafting her Common App statement while living out of her '92 Corolla. She found herself 'trading my past for my future' in college admissions essays and scholarship applications, in an extreme example of the immense pressure on teenagers from all backgrounds to build the foundations of their entire lives.

Noah, Trevor. **Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood**. Born during apartheid to a Swiss-German father and black Xhosa mother, Noah shares stories from his formative years when he often felt more like an outsider than the shining star he is today. His stories give insight into not only his personal history but the culture and history of South Africa. The subject matter is difficult, with violence, racism, and poverty all being part of his complex narrative. Despite his circumstances, Noah is able to find humor and love even in the worst of times, mostly owing to his strong-willed, independent, and devoutly Christian mother.

Obama, Michelle. **Becoming**. In a life filled with meaning and accomplishment, Michelle *Obama* has emerged as one of the most iconic and compelling women of our era. As First Lady of the United States of America, she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private. A deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations.

Ogle, Rex. **Punching Bag**. This is a searing account of adolescence in a household torn by domestic violence. It is the compelling true story of a high school career defined by poverty and punctuated by outbreaks of domestic abuse. Rex Ogle, describes his struggle to survive; reflects on his complex, often paradoxical relationship with his passionate, fierce mother; and charts the trajectory of his step dad's anger. Hovering over Rex's story is the talismanic presence of his unborn baby sister. Through it all, Rex threads moments of grace and humor that act as beacons of light in the darkness. Compulsively readable, beautifully crafted, and authentically told. It is a remarkable memoir about one teenager's cycle of violence, blame, and attempts to forgive his parents--and himself.

Pitzer, Andrea. **Icebound**. The most astonishing survival tale of all might be that of 16th-century Dutch explorer William Barents and his crew of sixteen, who ventured farther north than any Europeans before and, on their third polar exploration, lost their ship off the frozen coast of Nova Zembla to unforgiving ice. The men would spend the next year fighting off ravenous polar bears, gnawing hunger, and endless winter. In **Icebound**, Andrea Pitzer masterfully combines a gripping tale of survival with a sweeping history of the great Age of Exploration--a time of hope, adventure, and seemingly unlimited geographic frontiers. At the story's center is William Barents, one of the 16th century's greatest navigators whose larger-than-life ambitions and obsessive quest to chart a path through the deepest, most remote regions of the Arctic ended in both tragedy and glory.

Powell, Michael. **Canyon Dreams: A Basketball Season on the Navajo Team**. Deep in the heart of Arizona, in a small and isolated patch of the 17-1/2-million-acre Navajo reservation, sits Chinle High School. Here, basketball is the passion. It's a sport for winters where it can get dark fast; when there is not much else to do, the students and their parents say, but work and drink. The town has 4,500 residents but the high school arena seats 7,000. Fans drive from thirty, fifty, even eighty miles away to see highly competitive matchups that are more than just games to the players and the fans.

Quammen, David. **Breathless: the scientific race to defeat a deadly virus**. Breathless is the story of SARS-CoV-2 and its fierce journey through the human population, as seen by the scientists who study its origin, its ever-changing nature, and its capacity to kill us. David Quammen expertly shows how strange new viruses emerge from animals into humans as we disrupt wild ecosystems, and how those viruses adapt to their human hosts, sometimes causing global catastrophe. He explains why this coronavirus will probably be a 'forever virus,' destined to circulate among humans and bedevil us endlessly, in one variant form or another. As scientists labor to catch it, comprehend it, and control it, with their high-tech tools and methods, the virus finds ways of escape.

Scurry, Brianna. **My Greatest Save: the brave, barrier-breaking journey of a world-champion goalkeeper** Briana Scurry was a pioneer on the US Women's National Team. She won gold in Atlanta in 1996, the first time women's soccer was ever played in the Olympics. She was a key part of the fabled '99ers,' making an epic save in the decisive penalty-kick shootout in the final. Scurry captured her second Olympic gold in 2004, cementing her status as one of the premier players in the world. She was the only Black player on the team, and she was also the first player to be openly gay. It was a singularly amazing ride, one that Scurry handled with her trademark generosity and class--qualities that made her one of the most popular players ever to wear a US jersey. But Scurry's storybook career ended in 2010 when a knee to the head left her with severe head trauma. She was labeled 'temporarily totally disabled,' and the reality was even worse. She spiraled into depression, debt, and endured such pain that she closed out her closest friends and soccer soulmates. She pawned her gold medals. She walked to the edge of a waterfall and contemplated suicide. It seemed like the only way out until Scurry made her greatest save of all.

Wallace-Wells, David. **The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming** "The threat from climate change is more total than from the bomb. It is also more pervasive." The author observes, almost every major moment of "evolutionary reset" in Earth's history has been precipitated by climate change produced by an overproduction of greenhouse gasses and there is now more carbon in the air than at any point in the last 15 million years, leading him to open, grimly, with the warning, "It is worse, much worse, than you think." The results will be catastrophic, from untold millions of environmental refugees to summers that, even in Scandinavia, will be accompanied by killer heat waves.

Wilkerson, Isabel. **Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents**. Readers will be fascinated by this young adult adaptation of the New York Times bestselling nonfiction work as they follow masterful narratives about real people that reveal an insidious phenomenon in the United States: a hidden caste system. Caste is not only about race or class; it is about power--which groups have it and which do not. Isabel Wilkerson explores historical social hierarchies, including those in India and Nazi Germany, and explains how perpetuating these rankings dehumanizes vast sections of society. Once we learn the reasons behind caste and see the often heartbreaking effects, Wilkerson says, we can bridge the divides and make way for an inclusive future where we are all equal.

Wimberly, Ronald. **Now Let Me Fly: A Portrait of Eugene Bullard**. On the eve of World War I, Eugene Bullard was a refugee of the Jim Crow South who was determined to find a place where a Black man would be treated as a fellow human being. His search took him from rural Georgia to the streets of Paris, from the vaudeville stage to the boxing ring, and finally, from the muddy trenches to the open skies. In 1914, Bullard joined the fight to defend France--and made history as the world's first African American fighter pilot. In this candid but sensitive portrait of Bullard, author Ronald Wimberly balances the personal and the historical to interrogate concepts of cynicism, idealism, fear, glory, and the pervasiveness of anti-Black racism