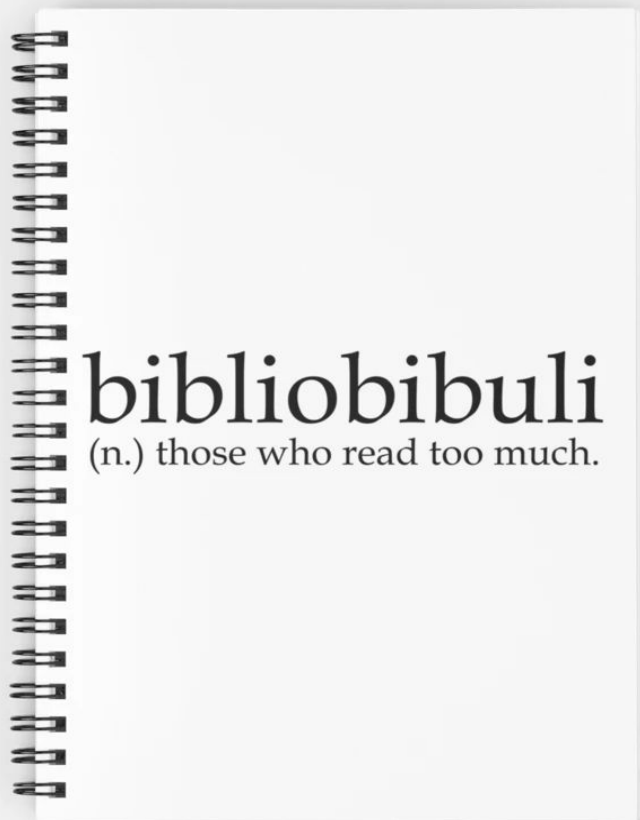


The Ten Books You Should Read This Year

*Sue Corner
Dean of Undergraduate Admissions
Willamette University*





The term bibliobibuli was coined in 1957 by H.L. Mencken, from the Greek “biblio” (meaning books) and the Latin “bibulous” from “bibere” (meaning to drink).

A bibliobibuli is one who goes through life drunk on books.

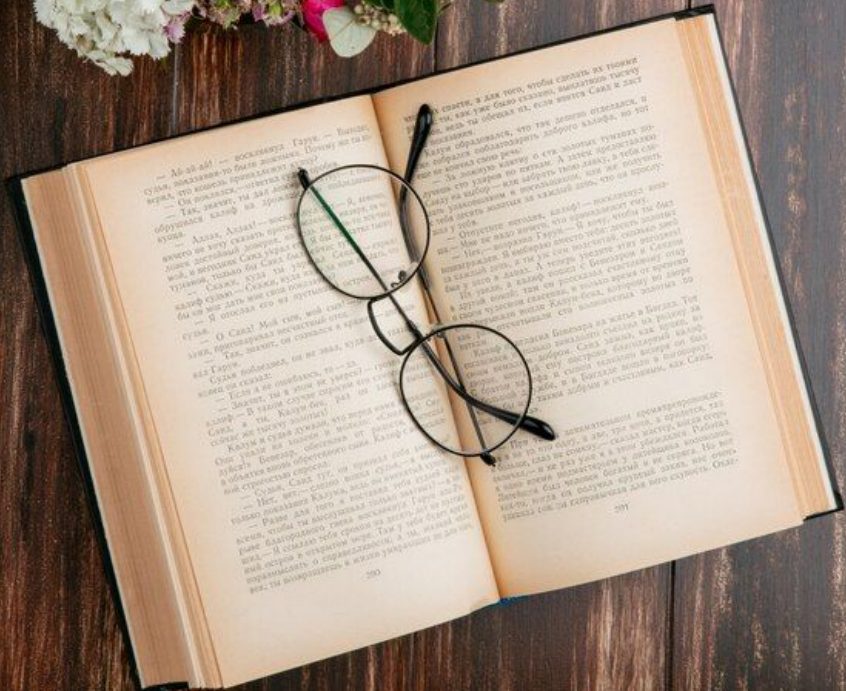




*“I have always imagined
that paradise will be a kind
of library.”*

– Jorge Luis Borges





*“You buy a book
to take a break,
not to be taught
a lesson.”*

– Barbara
Kingsolver



As professionals navigating the ever-challenging world of work, we at times feel weary, disillusioned, and just plain overwhelmed. We need sources of inspiration and motivation as well as outlets for escape and rejuvenation.

Let's explore a reading list that will inform your work, give you rest from the daily grind, and enrich your life both professionally and personally.



Disclaimers:

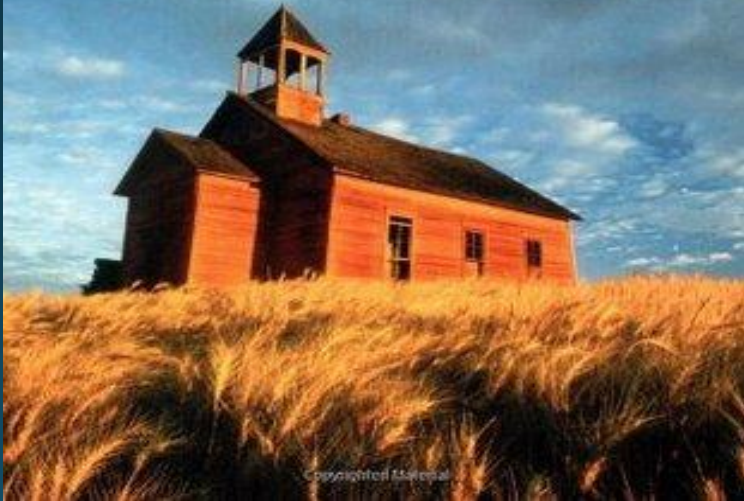
- *No particular order*
- *Chosen for themes and quality of stories rather than diversity or identity of author*
- *I gravitate to strong characters and storytelling*
- *These are not necessarily hot-off-the presses books - many may be familiar to you*



IVAN DOIG

The Whistling Season

a novel



Written in 2006 by Ivan Doig, a native of Montana. Doig was known for his vivid description of landscape and characters in the American West.

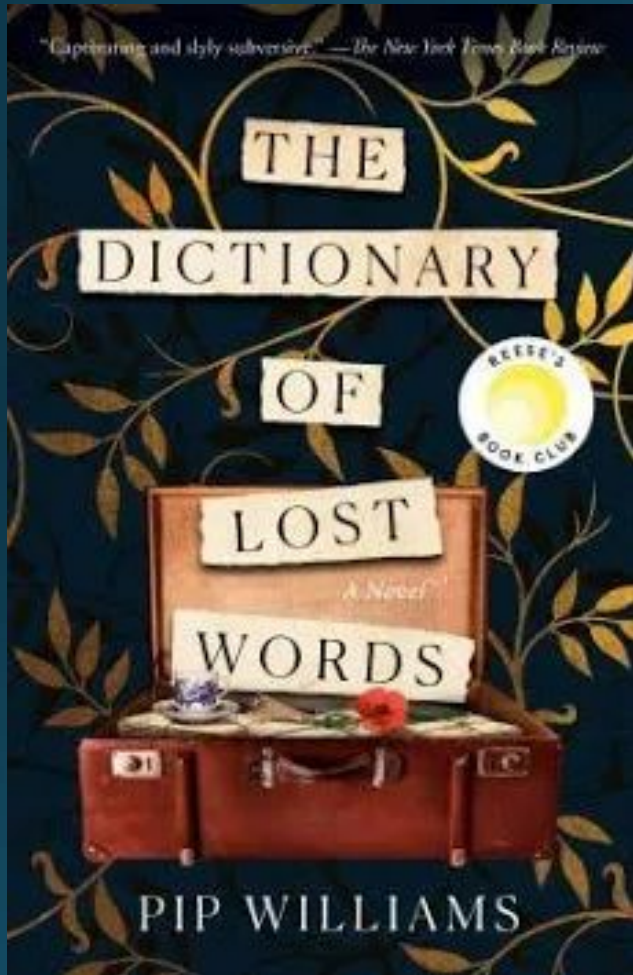
Themes:

- History of education system
- One-room schoolhouse
- Rural students and communities
- Importance of teachers and mentors
- Parents and children



“Life is an unpredictable mixture of wonders and setbacks, and we must embrace them both with equal fervor.”





Historic fiction and the debut novel of Australian author, Pip Williams. Tells the story of the evolution of the dictionary set in a great human story.

Themes:

- Importance and evolution of language
- Who has access to books and education
- Socioeconomic disparity
- Impact of war
- Love and loss



“Words define us, they explain us, and, on occasion, they serve to control or isolate us.”



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

The Beauty of Dusk

"Frank Bruni is one of my favorite people in the world. . . . *The Beauty of Dusk* is a positive message, a powerful reminder that with great vulnerability also comes great reward."
—OPRAH

ON VISION LOST AND FOUND

Frank
Bruni

A nonfiction memoir by Pulitzer Prize winning NYT journalist, Frank Bruni, author of *Where You Go is Not Who You'll Be*.

Themes:

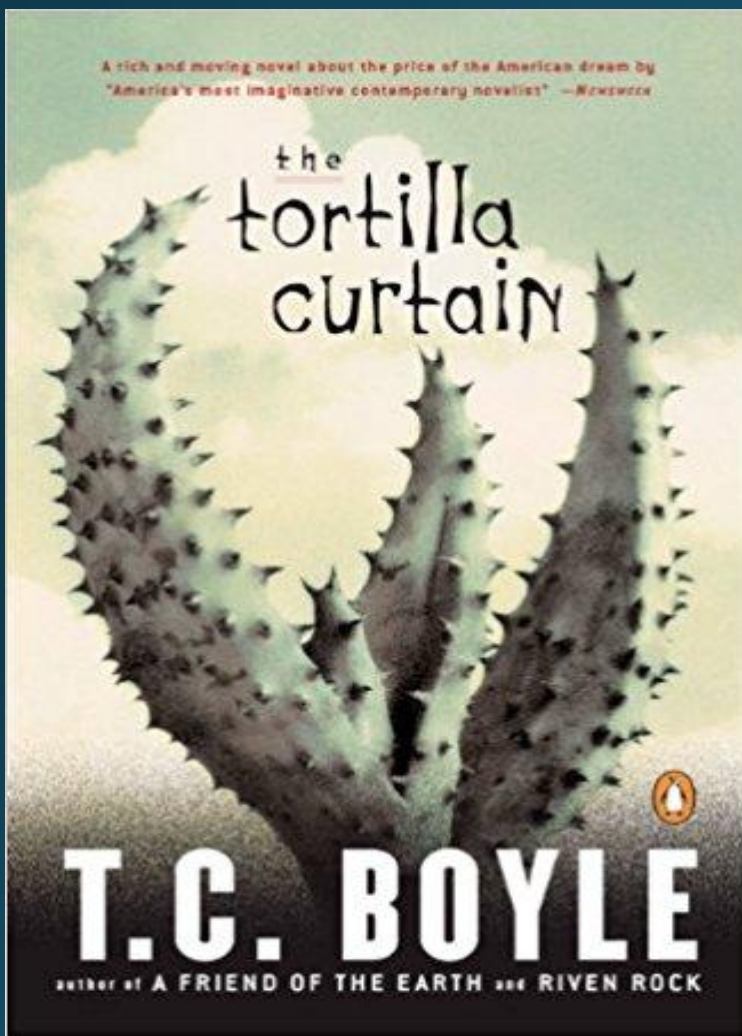
- Perseverance
- Living with disability
- Compassion
- Setting life priorities
- Perspective
- Gratitude

Highly recommend audio version read by author



“As our physical muscles grow weaker, our emotional muscles grow stronger, and we’re better at seeing the comedy in the tragedy, the advance in the setback, the good in the bad.”





T.C. Boyle is a product of the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop and a Distinguished Professor of English at USC. This is a difficult story that really makes you think.

Themes:

- Immigration
- Survival of species
- Demographic change
- Racism and racial tension
- The American Dream
- Walls



“He thought of the development he’d grown up in, the fenceless expanse of lawns, the shared space, the deep lush marshy woods where he’d first discovered ferns, frogs, garter snakes, the whole shining envelope of creation. There was nothing like that anymore. Now there were fences. Now there were gates.”



#1 NEW YORK TIMES bestselling author

ANNA QUINDLEN

Miller's Valley

A NOVEL

Anna Quindlen was a long-time columnist for the New York Times and won a Pulitzer for work on her syndicated column that explored life as a woman, mother, daughter, and writer. Also the author of numerous novels about complex family life.

Themes:

- First generation students
- Government control
- Impact of teachers
- Rural communities
- Parents and children



*“But no one ever leaves the town where they grew up,
not really, even if they go.”*

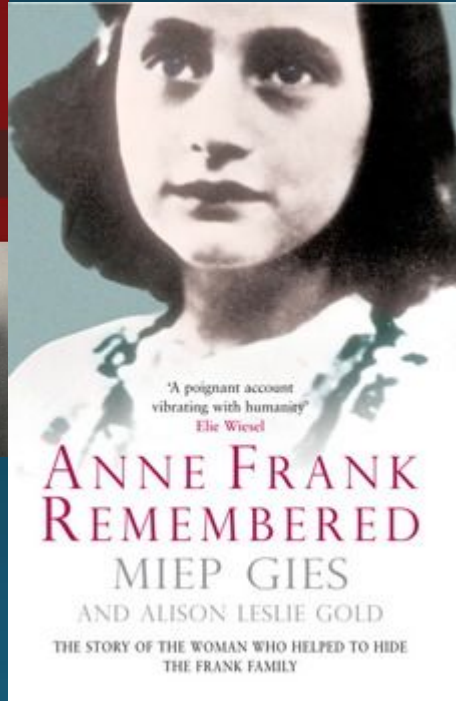




ANNE FRANK

The Diary of a Young Girl

With an introduction by Eleanor Roosevelt



Autobiography & Memoir

Themes:

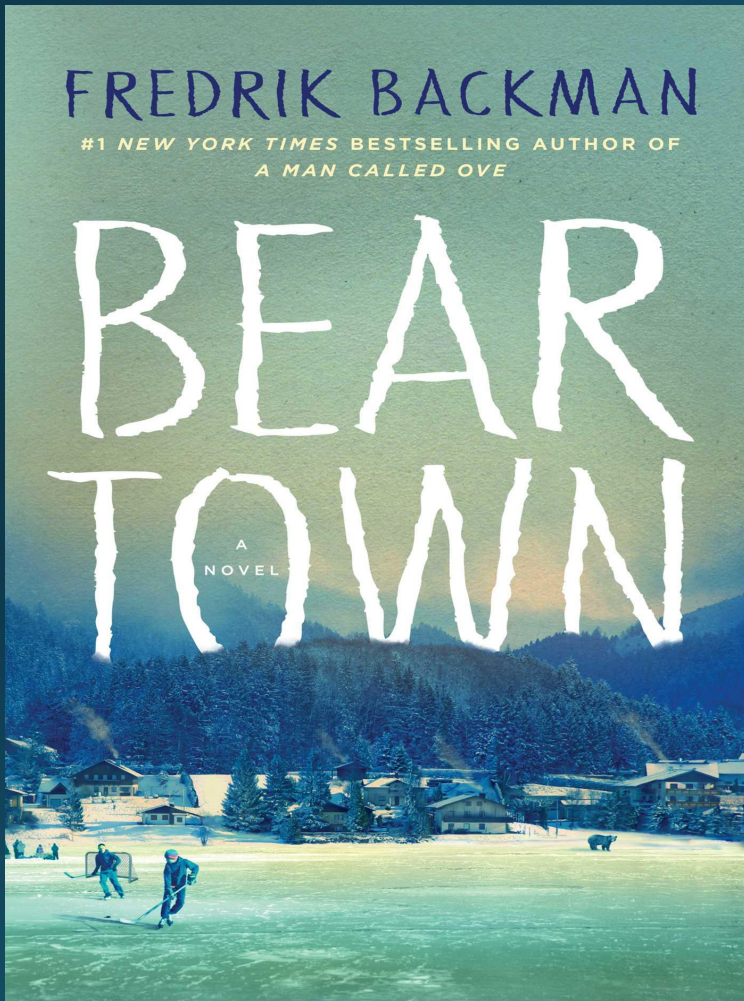
- Identity through adolescence
- Family - biological, chosen and unchosen - & love
- Isolation & loneliness
- Self-sacrifice
- Antisemitism

It is key that you read the expanded “Definitive Edition”



“There is nothing special about me. I have never wanted special attention. I was only willing to do what was asked of me and what seemed necessary at the time.”





Fredrik Backman is the Swedish author of *A Man Called Ove*.

Themes:

- Student athlete experience
- Influence of coaches
- Small town politics
- Sexual assault
- Sexual identity
- Truth, integrity, and courage



“If you are honest, people may deceive you. Be honest anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfishness. Be kind anyway. All the good you do today will be forgotten by others tomorrow. Do good anyway.”





Historic Fiction / Saga by Canadian author, Lesley Crewe.

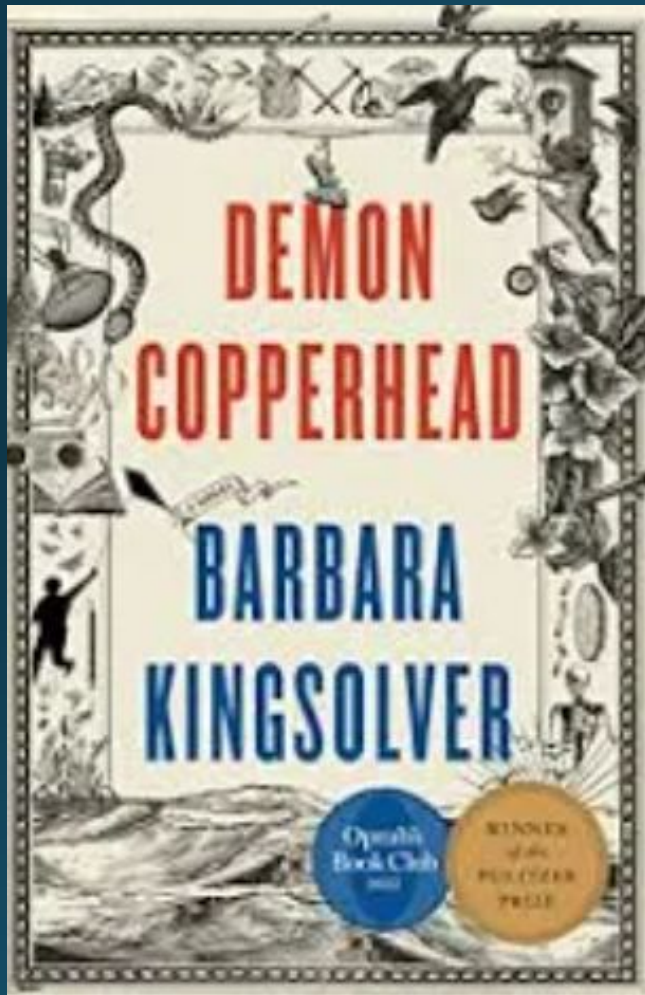
Themes:

- Female independence
- Grief and loss
- Work ethic
- Loyalty and friendship
- Impact of war

Delightful unexpected twist at the end which represents another major theme

“What happens to one member of a family sends ripples through the nervous system of others. You are not one individual. You belong together.”





Barbara Kingsolver won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2023 for this modern retelling of Dickens' *David Copperfield*.

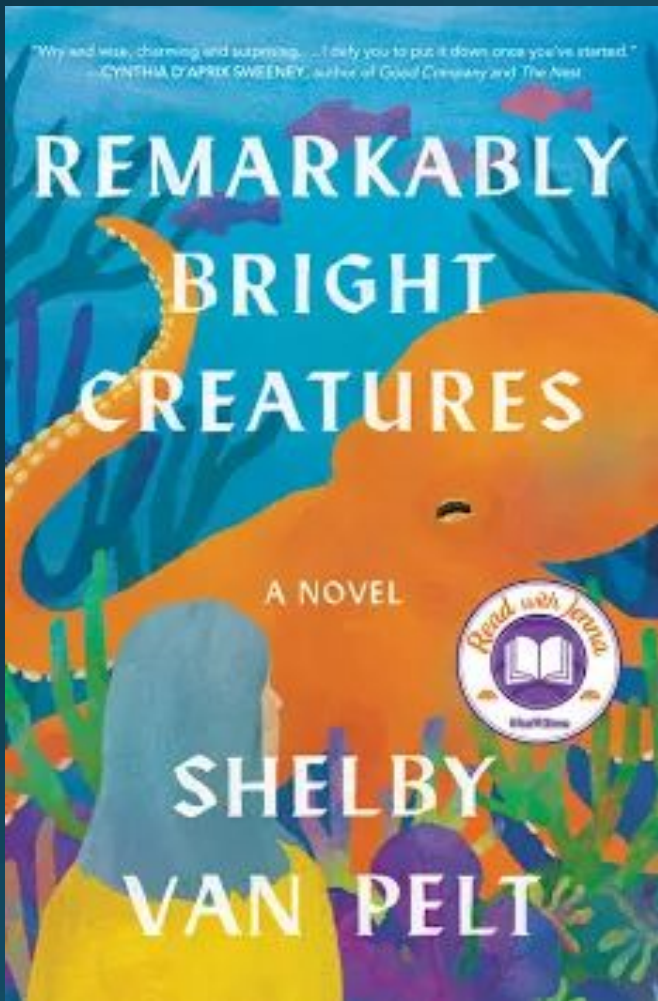
Themes:

- Poverty
- Social hierarchy
- America's opioid crisis
- Education
- Hope and resilience
- The foster care system
- Community and belonging



“The wonder is that you could start life with nothing, end with nothing, and lose so much in between.”





Upmarket fiction and the debut novel of Shelby Van Pelt; set in the Pacific Northwest.

Themes:

- Power of teamwork
- Complex family dynamics
- Friendship and human connection
- Work ethic
- Grief and loss

It seems odd to read a book where an octopus is a main character...but trust me...the story speaks to so much more.



“The brightest creatures are often the ones that are the most misunderstood.”



What titles are you inspired to share?

