



NU STAFF'S TOP FIVE BOOKS: FEBRUARY, 2012

Thanks to the many NU staff members who were kind enough to share their top five books with the library and the rest of the Nevada Union community. We had an excellent response, so we'll break it down into a few "installments." Also, it's definitely not too late to send in five books that have had meaning for you. Or, if you've already sent in your five, please feel free to go ahead and send in five more (like Minch did).

Alli Minch, English Teacher, Humanities

Five Most important books:

Anne of Green Gables: I think Anne was one of the first heroine's with whom I truly identified. I cried buckets, and still tear up a little, thinking about dear Matthew.

Pride and Prejudice: my freshman year in high school I had this crazy English teacher who told the class that we should read the book...and I did. Annually. For twenty years. [Ed. note: the "crazy" English teacher *may* have been Irene Frazier.]

The Unbearable Lightness of Being: Another book that just resonated for me: I understood these characters, felt like I'd been friends with them, or at least acquainted with them, for much longer than it took me to read the book.

Backlash: This book shaped about a decade of my life, and continues to inform my analysis of public policy. Sadly, though, I read it in one sitting. By the end of the weekend, I was ready to hurt someone with a butter knife, I was so angry.

But Not the Hippopotamus: this tiny little Boynton board book was a bedtime staple when my kids were tiny (so, through the age of 2), and I loved that they always wanted to include the armadillo. Not many words rhyme with armadillo.



John McDaniel, Physics Teacher and Girls' Basketball coach

Here are my top 5:

Atlas Shrugged- It gives me hope that the "individual" is not dead.

Outliers- Amazing studies that will blow your mind and not make you feel bad about not having a 160 IQ.

Separate Peace- Classic, an amazing story told by a great writer.

Candide- One of the most hilarious books I have ever read, also shows how you can grow up believing something but everything can change based on your own life experiences.

Anthem- Shows us why the individual is so important and why our current slide toward socialist ideas is very dangerous.



Mike Blake, NU Principal (and yes, clearly a former English Teacher)

Well, Jill, talk about a difficult task..... if you ask me on a different day, the results might be different, but for today, here they are....

First, I'm actually choosing 6 because *The Bible* is one by default for me. The other 5 in no particular order:

Hemingway: the short stories more so than the novels. Nick Adams, "Hills Like White Elephants," "A Clean Well-Lighted Place..." Who is his equal at conveying complex thought in simplistic style? [Ed. note: "No comment."]

Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*- the best of the coming of age stories ever.... I learn something new upon every reading that's been made even more evident now that theatre companies like Foothill and Ashland are bringing the story to stage. I'd rather be in Maycomb than on the river with Huck. A beautiful book that makes us see our "unbeautiful" human qualities.

Robert Parker: I'm addicted to the Spenser novels. Parker's style and characters are just plain fun besides offering something to learn. Spenser, Hawk, Susan, Vinnie, Chollo, Ty Bop, and the other characters transport us into the seamy Boston underbelly where good can still prevail.

F. Scott: *The Great Gatsby*—one of the best novels ever written; what's your green light?

Dan Millman: *Way of the Peaceful Warrior*-hard for me to explain why I like this book so much, but I find myself reading it every year or two. I think it's just a reminder of what life should be and how we should seek to find that meaning. A good read for someone who loves competition. [Ed. note: Millman is scheduled to speak this Friday, February 4th at Unity.]

It's difficult for me to not include *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton, definitely one of the funniest books I've ever read.



Photo credit: The Union

Two More "Top Fives" from the "Outside":

Woody Allen's Top Five Books:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011/may/06/woody-allen-top-five-books>

NPR's 2011 Top Five Book Club Picks:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/01/01/143163729/conversation-starters-2011s-top-5-book-club-picks>



Alicia Bertoli, Student Activities

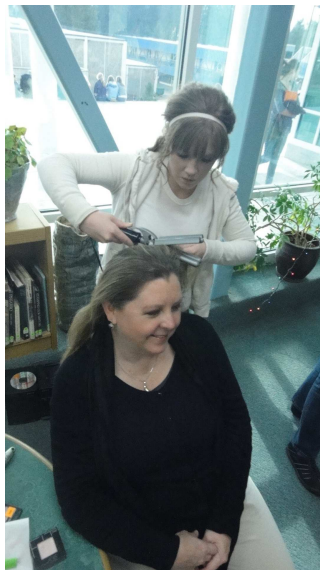
Here are my top 5 books...sorry actually 6...it was a great series.

Into the Wilderness
Dawn on a Distant Shore
Lake in the Clouds
Fire Along the Sky
Queen of Swords
The Endless Forest

(Author Sara Donati)

[Ed. note: When Alicia says that these are her all-time favorite books, this is really saying something, considering she is one of the more prolific readers on campus—just check out her Shelfari* page.]

[Ed. note: It was incredibly interesting to see *how* people submitted their top five, along with the books that they chose. Mr. Blake, for example, gave credit first to the authors before the works, but many people did not mention the authors whatsoever. Also, I found myself completely surprised by the choices of some of the staff, not at all expecting to see some of the books that popped up on different people's lists. What amazed me most of all, though, was everyone's readiness to submit something that could easily be considered quite personal. As Andre Mauriois put it so well, "In literature as in love, we are astonished at what is chosen by others."]



Joy being a sport during Beauty Week!

[Ed. note: Joy is one of our great new teachers on campus, and the library has had the good fortune of getting to work with her. Joy is someone you want to be sure to meet—pay her a visit in D-6]

Joy Davis, Resource Teacher

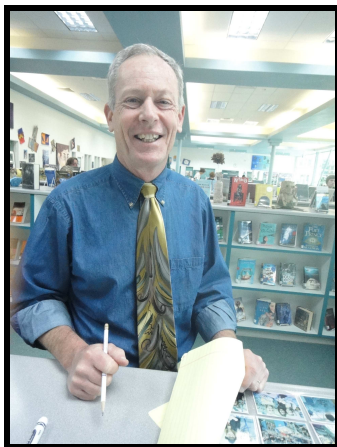
The Razor's Edge by Somerset Maugham
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll
The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant, the Unbeliever by Stephen R. Donaldson (a trilogy)
 (also the second *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant* and the last *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant*)
The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula LeGuin
The Story of my Life by Helen Keller
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave by Frederick Douglass
 And I love any book written by Roald Dahl but especially *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *the Witches*.
 Also as an added bonus I will throw in that I love to read poetry. I have many collections of poetry that I love to read frequently. However, my all time favorite poem is "The Second Coming" by William Butler Yeats.

Jordan Horowitz, Math Teacher

Great! My list:
Of Course, Lord of the Rings, JRR Tolkien
Stranger in a Strange Land, Then Moon is a Harsh Mistress and *Starship Troopers*, by Robert Heinlein
Foundation (series): Isaac Asimov
Macbeth, Shakespeare
The Lorax, Dr. Seuss
Shogun, James Clavell
Belgariad and Mallorean (series), by David Eddings
 Anything by my father, Dr. Mardi Horowitz



Jordan "on location" in G-1



Mr. Cartan, seldom seen without a pencil in hand

Mike Cartan, English Teacher

Favorite Books/ Most Important Books:

My favorite book: *The Sound and the Fury*: I love Faulkner: love his themes, love his style and sophisticated literary techniques, love his imagination and creativity. I think *The Sound and the Fury* is the single greatest book I have ever read.

My favorite book of poetry is *Leaves of Grass*: For me, modern poetry begins with Whitman. I love his bold, honest, powerful themes and style; and, how he melds theme and style together. *100 Love Poems* by Pablo Neruda and *Field Guide* by Robert Haas would be my follow up choices in poetry. I am also very fond of William Butler Yeats, Edwin Morgan and ee cummings.

Social Consciousness: *Cry The Beloved Country*, *Beloved*, *Power of One* are all obvious choices (but there are many others), not simply because of their content but also because of the beauty of the written prose found within them.

Other writers that I have thoroughly enjoyed, include: John Keats, Henry David Thoreau, Joseph Conrad, William Shakespeare, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Ernest Hemingway, Willa Cather, Norman Maclean, and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Favorite Contemporary Writer: Cormac McCarthy
Best book that I have read lately....*Cutting For Stone*



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

Mr. Blake has made a number of recommended reading titles available in the library for staff checkout. This is just a partial list, so please come by to see the entire selection.

Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning

Lost at School: Why Our Kids with Behavioral Challenges are Falling Through the Cracks and How We Can Help Them

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success

Yes, Your Teen is Crazy!: Loving Your Kid Without Losing Your Mind

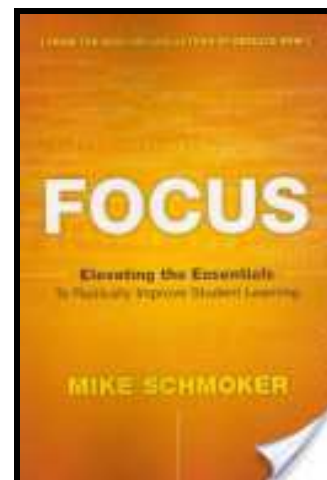
You Are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto

Troublemaker: A Personal History of School Reform Since Sputnik

NurtureShock: New Thinking about Children (Bronson)

The Ambitious Generation: America's Teenagers Motivated but Directionless (Schneider and Stevenson)

Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology (Turkle)



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR DATABASES (ONE PERMANENT, ONE TEMPORARY)



A quick reminder that as a campus, we are in continuous possession of the ***Opposing Viewpoints*** database, located on the library home page: <http://www.nuhsd.org/NevadaUnion.cfm?subpage=314630>. Just look for the purple widget that says "Opposing Viewpoints."

The username/password for the **Opposing Viewpoints** database is "miners/remote" (cryptic!). This database is very student-friendly, and also has a lot of potential for teachers, especially those teaching current affairs or persuasive writing.

Also, more recently, the state granted us a period of **limited free access to several databases** (including EBSCO, the periodicals powerhouse) through the new "California Learns" portal. Access to these resources will **not** be free to us in 2012-2013. The estimate for the cost to our site to have continued access to this portal is somewhere in the \$7000 range, so no guarantees. **The username/password for this portal is "nevadaunion/school" for both teachers and students.**

The professional development component of this portal is substantial. There are thousands of articles that relate to every field on campus. It would be great if we could pull as many articles from this database as possible before we lose our access in May. Please let the library staff know if you need any help navigating or mining these resources, or if you have an upcoming unit that we can work on together with the kids.

The link to login page for both the teacher and student portals: <http://portal.californialearns.org/>