

Opportunities to

affect:

Reading Guides 2020-21

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AUGUST

Deacon King Kong by James McBride

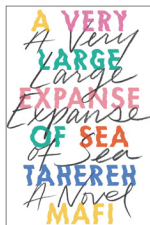
In September 1969, a cranky old church deacon known as Sportcoat shoots a neighborhood drug dealer at point-blank range. *Deacon King Kong* brings to life the people affected by the shooting.



JANUARY

The Water Dancer by Ta-Nehisi Coates

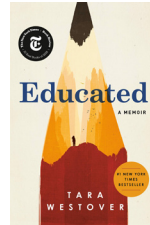
Hiram Walker was born into bondage but was gifted with a mysterious power. Years later, when Hiram almost drowns in a river, that same power saves his life. *The Water Dancer* traces Hiram's escape from the coffin of the Deep South to the idealistic movements in the North.



SEPTEMBER

A Very Large Expanse of Sea by Tahereh Mafi

After 9/11, Shirin is tired of being stereotyped as a result of her race, her religion, and the hijab she wears every day. But then she meets Ocean James, the first person who seems to want to get to know her. (YA)



FEBRUARY

Educated by Tara Westover

An unforgettable memoir about a young girl who, kept out of school, leaves her survivalist family and goes on to earn a PhD from Cambridge University.

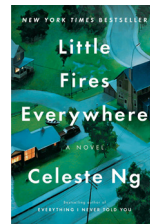


OCTOBER

Miracles and Other Reasonable Things

by Sarah Bessey

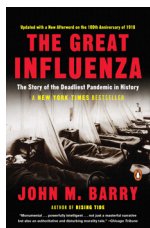
Weaving together theology and memoir in her trademark narrative style, Bessey tells us the story of the moment that changed her body and how it ultimately changed her life. She invites us to a path of knowing God that is filled with ordinary miracles, hope in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, and other completely reasonable things.



MARCH

Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

In Shaker Heights, everything is planned, and no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. The arrival of Mia Warren and her daughter Pearl upends this carefully ordered community. *Little Fires Everywhere* explores motherhood, the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.



NOVEMBER

The Great Influenza by John M. Barry

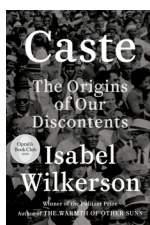
The Great influenza tells the story of the 1918 influenza pandemic that broke out in an army camp during World War I and killed up to a 100 million people in a matter of months.



APRIL

Exhalation by Ted Chiang

This much-anticipated second collection of stories by Ted Chiang is full of revelatory ideas and deeply sympathetic characters. Chiang wrestles with the oldest questions on earth—What is the nature of the universe? What does it mean to be human?—and ones that no one else has even imagined.



DECEMBER

Caste by Isabel Wilkerson

Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Isabel Wilkerson provides an eye-opening story of people and history, and a reexamination of what lies under the surface of ordinary lives and of American life today.



MAY

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi

Yaa Gyasi's first novel delivers unforgettable characters whose lives were shaped by historical forces beyond their control. Tracing three hundred years in Ghana and America through the lives of two half-sisters, *Homegoing* makes history visceral and captures how the memory of captivity came to be inscribed in the soul of a nation.