



Brief Tender Light

DELVE DEEPER READING LIST



This list of fiction and nonfiction books provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Brief Tender Light*.

At the elite MIT, a Ghanaian alum follows four African students striving to become agents of positive change back home. Even as their dreams are anchored in the societies they left, their daily realities are defined by America. Each must refine their ideas about the world and about themselves, and ultimately, how to transform youthful ideals into action as adults.

Contributors



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ADULT NON-FICTION

Beltrán, Cristina. *Cruelty as Citizenship: How Migrant Suffering Sustains White Democracy*. University Of Minnesota Press, 2020.

Situating the contemporary debate on immigration within America's history of indigenous dispossession, chattel slavery, the Mexican-American War, and Jim Crow, Cristina Beltrán reveals white supremacy to be white democracy—a participatory practice of racial violence, domination, and exclusion that gave white citizens the right to both wield and exceed the law.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without Racists: Color-blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2009.

In the third edition of his highly acclaimed book, Bonilla-Silva continues to challenge color-blind thinking. He has now extended this challenge with a new chapter on Obama's election addressing the apparent miracle of a black man elected as the 44th President of the nation despite the fact that racial progress has stagnated since the 1980s and, in some areas, even regressed. In contrast to those who believe the election of President Obama is a watershed moment that signifies the beginning of a post-racial era in America, he suggests this development embodies the racial trends of the last 40 years including two he has addressed in this book: the rise of color-blind racism as the dominant racial ideology and the emergence of an apparently more flexible racial stratification system he characterizes as Latin America-like.

Brooms, Derrick R. *Being Black, Being Male on Campus: Understanding and Confronting Black Male Collegiate Experiences*. SUNY Press, 2017.

This work marks a radical shift away from the pervasive focus on the challenges that Black male students face and the deficit rhetoric that often limits perspectives about them. Instead, Derrick R. Brooms offers reflective counter-narratives of success. *Being Black, Being Male on Campus* uses in-depth interviews to investigate the collegiate experiences of Black male students at historically White institutions. Framed through Critical Race Theory and Blackmaleness, the study provides new analysis on the utility and importance of Black Male Initiatives (BMIs). This work explores Black men's perceptions, identity constructions, and ambitions, while it speaks meaningfully to how race and gender intersect as they influence students' experiences.

Bunch, William. *After the Ivory Tower Falls: How College Broke the American Dream and Blew Up Our Politics – and How to Fix it*. New York, William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins, 2022.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist presents a deeply researched look at the broken state of higher education in America and how we can work towards a new model that works for all Americans.

Givens, Jarvis R. *Fugitive Pedagogy: Carter G. Woodson and the Art of Black Teaching*. Harvard University Press, 2021.

Black education was a subversive act from its inception. African Americans pursued education through clandestine means, often in defiance of law and custom, even under threat of violence. They

developed what Jarvis Givens calls a tradition of “fugitive pedagogy”—a theory and practice of Black education in America. The enslaved learned to read in spite of widespread prohibitions; newly emancipated people braved the dangers of integrating all-White schools and the hardships of building Black schools. Teachers developed covert instructional strategies, creative responses to the persistence of White opposition. From slavery through the Jim Crow era, Black people passed down this educational heritage. There is perhaps no better exemplar of this heritage than Carter G. Woodson—groundbreaking historian, founder of Black History Month, and legendary educator under Jim Crow. Givens shows that Woodson succeeded because of the world of Black teachers to which he belonged: Woodson’s first teachers were his formerly enslaved uncles; he himself taught for nearly thirty years; and he spent his life partnering with educators to transform the lives of Black students. *Fugitive Pedagogy* chronicles Woodson’s efforts to fight against the “mis-education of the Negro” by helping teachers and students to see themselves and their mission as set apart from an anti-Black world. Teachers, students, families, and communities worked together, using Woodson’s materials and methods as they fought for power in schools and continued the work of fugitive pedagogy. Forged in slavery, embodied by Woodson, this tradition of escape remains essential for teachers and students today.

Golden, Daniel. *The Price of Admission: How America's Ruling Class Buys Its Way into Elite Colleges - and Who Gets Left Outside the Gates*. Crown, 2007.

Based on three years of investigative reporting, Pulitzer Prize winner Daniel Golden shatters the myth of an American meritocracy. Naming names, along with grades and test scores, Golden lays bare a corrupt system in which middle-class and working-class whites and Asian Americans are routinely passed over in favor of wealthy white students with lesser credentials—children of alumni, big donors, and celebrities. He reveals how a family donation got Jared Kushner into Harvard, and how colleges comply with Title IX by giving scholarships to rich women in “patrician sports” like horseback riding and crew.

Gorlewski, Julie & Tuck, Eve. *Who Decides Who Becomes a Teacher? Schools of Education as Sites of Resistance*. Taylor & Francis, 2019.

Who Decides Who Becomes a Teacher? extends the discussions and critiques of neoliberalism in education by examining the potential for Schools of Teacher Education to contest policies that are typical in K-12 schooling. Drawing on a case study of faculty collaboration, this edited volume reimagines teacher preparation programs as crucial sites of resistance to, and refusal of, unsound education practices and legislation. This volume also reveals by example how education faculty can engage in collaborative scholarly work to investigate the anticipated and unanticipated effects of policy initiatives on teaching and learning.

Harris, Adam. *The State Must Provide: Why America's Colleges Have Always Been Unequal - and How to Set Them Right*. New York, Ecco, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

Presents a definitive chronicle of the pervasiveness of racial inequality in American higher education, weaving through the legal, social, and political obstacles erected to block equitable education in the United States.

Henderson, George. *Race and the University: A Memoir*. University of Oklahoma Press, 2011.

In 1967, George Henderson, the son of uneducated Alabama sharecroppers, accepted a full-time professorship at the University of Oklahoma, despite his mentor's warning to avoid the "redneck school in a backward state." Henderson became the university's third African American professor, a hire that seemed to suggest the dissolving of racial divides. However, when real estate agents in the university town of Norman denied the Henderson family their first three choices of homes, the sociologist and educator realized he still faced some formidable challenges. In this stirring memoir, Henderson recounts his formative years at the University of Oklahoma, during the late 1960s and early 1970s. He describes in graphic detail the obstacles that he and other African Americans faced within the university community, a place of "white privilege, black separatism, and campus-wide indifference to bigotry." As an adviser and mentor to young black students who wanted to do something about these conditions, Henderson found himself at the forefront of collective efforts to improve race relations at the university. Henderson is quick to acknowledge that he and his fellow activists did not abolish all vestiges of racial oppression. But they set in motion a host of institutional changes that continue to this day. In Henderson's words, "we were ordinary people who sometimes did extraordinary things." Capturing what was perhaps the most tumultuous era in the history of American higher education, *Race and the University* includes valuable recollections of former student activists who helped transform the University of Oklahoma into one of the nation's most diverse college campuses.

Jack, Anthony Abraham. *The Privileged Poor: How Elite Colleges Are Failing Disadvantaged Students*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2019.

College presidents and deans of admission have opened their doors--and their coffers--to support a more diverse student body. But is it enough just to let them in? In *The Privileged Poor*, Anthony Jack reveals that the struggles of less privileged students continue long after they've arrived on campus. In their first weeks they quickly learn that admission does not mean acceptance. In this bracing and necessary book, Jack documents how university policies and cultures can exacerbate preexisting inequalities, and reveals why these policies hit some students harder than others. If we truly want our top colleges to be engines of opportunity, university policies and campus cultures will have to change. Jack provides concrete advice to help schools reduce these hidden disadvantages--advice we cannot afford to ignore.

James, C.L.R. *History of Pan-African Revolt*. PM Press, 2012.

Originally published in England in 1938 (the same year as his magnum opus *The Black Jacobins*) and expanded in 1969, this work remains the classic account of global black resistance. Robin D.G. Kelley's substantial introduction contextualizes the work in the history and ferment of the times, and explores its ongoing relevance today.

Korn, Melissa & Jennifer Levitz. *Unacceptable: Privilege, Deceit & the Making of the College Admissions Scandal*. New York, Random House, 2020.

The inside story of the college admissions scandal that shocked the nation and shattered myths about meritocracy, by the reporters who broke major developments in the story that exposed a rotten system.

Land, Stephanie. *Class*. Simon & Schuster, 2023.

In *Class*, Land takes us with her as she finishes college and pursues her writing career. Facing barriers at every turn including a byzantine loan system, not having enough money for food, navigating the judgments of professors and fellow students who didn't understand the demands of attending college while under the poverty line—Land finds a way to survive once again, finally graduating in her mid-thirties. *Class* paints an intimate and heartbreaking portrait of motherhood as it converges and often conflicts with personal desire and professional ambition. *Who has the right to create art? Who has the right to go to college? And what kind of work is valued in our culture?* In clear, candid, and moving prose, *Class* grapples with these questions, offering a searing indictment of America's educational system and an inspiring testimony of a mother's triumph against all odds.

Love, Bettina. *We Want to Do More than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*. Beacon Press, 2020.

Drawing on her life's work of teaching and researching in urban schools, Bettina Love persuasively argues that educators must teach students about racial violence, oppression, and how to make sustainable change in their communities through radical civic initiatives and movements. She argues that the US educational system is maintained by and profits from the suffering of children of color. Instead of trying to repair a flawed system, educational reformers offer survival tactics in the forms of test-taking skills, acronyms, grit labs, and character education, which Love calls the educational survival complex. To dismantle the educational survival complex and to achieve educational freedom—not merely reform—teachers, parents, and community leaders must approach education with the imagination, determination, boldness, and urgency of an abolitionist. Following in the tradition of activists like Ella Baker, Bayard Rustin, and Fannie Lou Hamer, *We Want to Do More Than Survive* introduces an alternative to traditional modes of educational reform and expands our ideas of civic engagement and intersectional justice.

Mandery, Evan J. *Poison Ivy: How Elite Colleges Divide Us*. New York, The New Press, 2022.

An eye-opening look at how America's elite colleges and suburbs help keep the rich rich—making it harder than ever to fight the inequality dividing us today.

Martis, Eternity. *They Said This Would Be Fun: Race, Campus Life, and Growing Up*. Penguin Random House, 2021.

A booksmart kid from Toronto, Eternity Martis was excited to move away to Western University for her undergraduate degree. But as one of the few Black students there, she soon discovered that the campus experiences she'd seen in movies were far more complex in reality. Over the next four years, Eternity learned more about what someone like her brought out in other people than she did about herself. She was confronted by white students in blackface at parties, dealt with being the only person of colour in class and was tokenized by her romantic partners. She heard racial slurs in bars, on the street, and during lectures. And she gathered labels she never asked for: Abuse survivor. Token. Bad feminist. But, by graduation, she found an unshakeable sense of self—and a support network of other women of colour. Using her award-winning reporting skills, Eternity connects her own experience to the systemic issues plaguing students today. It's a memoir of pain, but also resilience.

paperson, la. *A Third University Is Possible*. University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Drawing parallels to Third Cinema and Black filmmaking assemblages, *A Third University Is Possible* ultimately presents new ways of using language to develop a framework for hotwiring university “machines” to the practical work of decolonization.

Picower, Bree. *Reading, Writing, and Racism: Disrupting Whiteness in Teacher Education and in the Classroom*. Beacon Press, 2021.

When racist curriculum “goes viral” on social media, it is typically dismissed as an isolated incident from a “bad” teacher. Educator Bree Picower, however, holds that racist curriculum isn’t an anomaly. It’s a systemic problem that reflects how Whiteness is embedded and reproduced in education. In *Reading, Writing, and Racism*, Picower argues that White teachers must reframe their understanding about race in order to advance racial justice and that this must begin in teacher education programs. Drawing on her experience teaching and developing a program that prepares teachers to focus on social justice and antiracism, Picower demonstrates how teachers’ ideology of race, consciously or unconsciously, shapes how they teach race in the classroom. She also examines current examples of racist curricula that have gone viral to demonstrate how Whiteness is entrenched in schools and how this reinforces racial hierarchies in the younger generation. With a focus on institutional strategies, Picower shows how racial justice can be built into programs across the teacher education pipeline—from admission to induction. By examining the who, what, why, and how of racial justice teacher education, she provides radical possibilities for transforming how teachers think about, and teach about, race in their classrooms.

Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Verso Books, 2018.

How Europe Underdeveloped Africa is an ambitious masterwork of political economy, detailing the impact of slavery and colonialism on the history of international capitalism. In this classic book, Rodney makes the unflinching case that African maldevelopment is not a natural feature of geography, but a direct product of imperial extraction from the continent, a practice that continues up into the present. Meticulously researched, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* remains an unshakably relevant study of the so-called “great divergence” between Africa and Europe, just as it remains a prescient resource for grasping the the multiplication of global inequality today. In this new edition, Angela Davis offers a striking foreword to the book, exploring its lasting contributions to a revolutionary and feminist practice of anti-imperialism.

Ross, Lawrence. *Blackballed: The Black and White Politics of Race on America's Campuses*. St. Martin's Griffin imprint of MacMillan Publishers, 2017.

From Lawrence Ross, author of *The Divine Nine* and the leading expert on sororities and fraternities, *Blackballed* is an explosive and controversial book that rips the veil off America's hidden secret: America's colleges have fostered a racist environment that makes them a hostile space for African American students. *Blackballed* exposes the white fraternity and sorority system, with traditions of racist parties, songs, and assaults on black students; and the universities themselves, who name campus buildings after racist men and women. “College” is a word that means many things to many people: a space for knowledge, a place to gain lifelong friends, and an opportunity to transcend one's socioeconomic station. Today, though, this word also recalls a slew of headlines that have revealed a dark and persistent world of racial politics on campus. Does this association disturb our idealized visions of what happens behind the ivied walls of higher learning? It should - because campus racism

on college campuses is as American as college football on Fall Saturdays. It also takes a deep dive into anti-affirmative action policies, and how they effectively segregate predominately white universities, providing ample room for white privilege. A bold mix of history and the current climate, *Blackballed* is a call to action for universities to make radical changes to their policies and standards to foster a better legacy for all students.

Selingo, Jeffrey J. *Who Gets In and Why: A Year Inside College Admissions*. New York, Scribner, 2020.

A higher-education journalist draws on insider access to explain the nuts and bolts of college admissions today, outlining the unexpected agendas that reflect which and why prospective students receive admission into better schools.

Judith Shapiro. *Community of Scholars, Community of Teachers*. The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Academics routinely engage with colleagues in the research community as a critical part of their work. But, although many researchers are also dedicated teachers, teaching tends to be seen as a private matter between a teacher and his or her students. But why shouldn't faculty members feel a similar impulse to be aware of what their colleagues are doing in the area of teaching? What do we miss when the conversation, especially at major research universities, is focused almost exclusively on research? In this revised and expanded collection of essays, Judith Shapiro, former president of Barnard College, issues an impassioned clarion call for a renewed focus on the role of community in teaching. When faculty members feel that they are not only a community of scholars, but also a community of teachers, teaching becomes more engaging for both students and teachers. Encouraging high-quality conversation about the pedagogical approaches that have proven most effective also puts the contributions of virtual, online communication into proper perspective and brings into clearer focus the advantages of a liberal arts education. With an argument that is controversial and sure to spark discussion and debate, *Community of Scholars, Community of Teachers* shows how higher education can become even more of a true community.

Spring, Joel. *American Education: Sociocultural, Political, and Historical Studies in Education*. Routledge, 2019.

American Education introduces readers to the historical, political, social, and legal foundations of education and to the profession of teaching in the United States. In his signature straightforward and concise approach to describing complex issues, Spring illuminates events and topics that are often overlooked or whitewashed, giving students the opportunity to engage in critical thinking about education. In this edition he looks closely at the global context of education in the U.S. Featuring current information and challenging perspectives?With scholarship that is often cited as a primary source, students will come away from this clear, authoritative text informed on the latest topics, issues, and data and with a strong knowledge of the forces shaping the American educational system.

ADULT FICTION

Darma, Budi. *People from Bloomington*. Penguin Random House, 2022.

In these seven stories of *People from Bloomington*, our peculiar narrators find themselves in the most peculiar of circumstances and encounter the most peculiar of people. Set in Bloomington, Indiana, where the author lived as a graduate student in the 1970s, this is far from the idyllic portrait of small-town America. Rather, sectioned into apartment units and rented rooms, and gridded by long empty streets and distances traversable only by car, it's a place where the solitary can all too easily remain solitary; where people can at once be obsessively curious about others, yet fail to form genuine connections with anyone. The characters feel their loneliness acutely and yet deliberately estrange others. Budi Darma paints a realist world portrayed through an absurdist frame, morbid and funny at the same time. For decades, Budi Darma has influenced and inspired many writers, artists, filmmakers, and readers in Indonesia, yet his stories transcend time and place. With *The People from Bloomington*, Budi Darma draws us to a universality recognized by readers around the world—the cruelty of life and the difficulties that people face in relating to one another while negotiating their own identities. The stories are not about “strangeness” in the sense of culture, race, and nationality. Instead, they are a statement about how everyone, regardless of nationality or race, is strange, and subject to the same tortures, suspicions, yearnings, and peculiarities of the mind.

Everett, Percival. *Dr. No: A Novel*. Graywolf Press, 2022.

The protagonist of Percival Everett's puckish new novel is a brilliant professor of mathematics who goes by Wala Kitu. (Wala, he explains, means “nothing” in Tagalog, and Kitu is Swahili for “nothing.”) He is an expert on nothing. That is to say, he is an expert, and his area of study is nothing, and he does nothing about it. This makes him the perfect partner for the aspiring villain John Sill, who wants to break into Fort Knox to steal, well, not gold bars but a shoebox containing nothing. Once he controls nothing he'll proceed with a dastardly plan to turn a Massachusetts town into nothing. Or so he thinks. With the help of the brainy and brainwashed astrophysicist-turned-henchwoman Eigen Vector, our professor tries to foil the villain while remaining in his employ. In the process, Wala Kitu learns that Sill's desire to become a literal Bond villain originated in some real all-American villainy related to the murder of Martin Luther King Jr. As Sill says, “Professor, think of it this way. This country has never given anything to us and it never will. We have given everything to it. I think it's time we gave nothing back.” *Dr. No* is a caper with teeth, a wildly mischievous novel from one of our most inventive, provocative, and productive writers. That it is about nothing isn't to say that it's not about anything. In fact, it's about villains. Bond villains. And that's not nothing.

GauZ'. *Standing Heavy*. Biblioasis, 2023.

All over the city, they are watching: Black men paid to stand guard, invisible among the wealthy flâneurs and yet the only ones who truly see. From Les Grands Moulins to a Sephora on the Champs-Élysées, Ferdinand, Ossiri, and Kassoum find their way as undocumented workers amidst political infighting and the ever-changing landscape of immigration policy. Fast-paced and funny, poignant and sharply satirical, *Standing Heavy* is a searing deconstruction of colonial legacies and capitalist consumption and an unforgettable account of everything that passes under the security guards' all-seeing eyes.

Gurnah, Abdulrazak. *Paradise*. The New Press, 1995.

Shortlisted for the Booker Prize and the Whitbread Award, *Paradise* was characterized by the Nobel Prize committee as Abdulrazak Gurnah's "breakthrough" work. It is at once the chronicle of an African boy's coming-of-age, a tragic love story, and a tale of the corruption of African tradition by European colonialism. Sold by his father in repayment of a debt, twelve-year-old Yusuf is thrown from his simple rural life into complexities of pre-colonial urban East Africa. Through Yusuf's eyes, Gurnah depicts communities at war, trading safaris gone awry, and the universal trials of adolescence. The result is what *Publishers Weekly* calls a "vibrant" and "powerful" work that "evokes the Edenic natural beauty of a continent on the verge of full-scale imperialist takeover."

Hamilton, Richard. *Discordant*. Autumn House Press, 2022.

Richard Hamilton's second poetry collection, *Discordant*, is a searing examination of injustice both within the United States and abroad, from criticisms of the US military-industrial complex and failing healthcare system to multilayered observations of marginalization through the lenses of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Hamilton's poems look closely at increased austerity measures, commitment to mass incarceration and private prisons, disdain for workers and labor resistance, the expansion of the US military budget, the disappearance of federal subsidies for the working poor, failing schools and teacher shortages, market inflation and price gouging, and the rising tide of right-wing fascism. Hamilton's lyrical writing brings together free-form essays and personal narratives full of keen-eyed and urgent observations. Told from the perspective of a speaker who is unemployed and pensive, Hamilton shows how history haunts us while keeping the present in the foreground, constantly challenging oppression that has long been commonplace.

Korelitz, Jean Hanff and Colleen Werthmann. *Admission: A Novel*. New York, Grand Central Publishing, 2012.

Princeton University admissions officer Portia Nathan must suddenly confront a secret from her past just as thousands of the nation's brightest students await her decision regarding their academic admission.

Flournoy, Angela. *The Turner House*. Mariner Books, 2016.

A story about the Black American diaspora, segregation and gentrification. The Turners have lived on Yarrow Street for over fifty years. Their house, which is apparently haunted, has seen children come and go and the arrival of grandchildren. The house still stands despite abandoned lots, an embattled city, and suburban flight. The Turner children must decide what to do with a house worth just a tenth of its mortgage.

Mukasonga, Scholastique. *Igifu*. Archipelago Books. 2020.

Scholastique Mukasonga's autobiographical stories rend a glorious Rwanda from the obliterating force of recent history, conjuring the noble cows of her home or the dew-swollen grass they graze on. In the title story, five-year-old Colomba tells of a merciless overlord, hunger or *igifu*, gnawing away at her belly. She searches for sap at the bud of a flower, scraps of sweet potato at the foot of her parent's bed, or a few grains of sorghum in the floor sweepings. *Igifu* becomes a dizzying hole in her stomach, a plunging abyss into which she falls. In a

desperate act of preservation, Colomba's mother gathers enough sorghum to whip up a nourishing porridge, bringing Colomba back to life. This elixir courses through each story, a balm to soothe the pains of those so ferociously fighting for survival.

***No Edges: Swahili Stories.* Two Lines Press, 2023.**

Swahili is the future. The first collection of Swahili fiction in English translation, *No Edges* introduces eight East African writers from Tanzania and Kenya as they share tales of sorcerers, Nairobi junkyards, cross-country bus rides, and spaceships that blast prisoners into eternity. Here we're encouraged to explore the chaos of life on a crowded Earth, as well as the otherworldly realms lying just beyond our reach. Through language bursting with rhythm and vivid Africanfuturist visions, these writers summon the boundless future into being.

Ogundimu, Alexandrine. *Agitation. Amphetamine Sulphate*, 2022.

"The reality of it was this: He had until the end of the week, the first of February, this Thursday which he could plainly see from today, being Sunday, to get the money together to pay overdue rent and not be evicted. This was money he didn't have, because he had just enough to get some takeout and booze, but not enough to pay rent in the darkly booming city of Bloomington, Indiana."

Ordorica, Andrés N. *How We Named the Stars*. Tin House Press, 2024.

When Daniel de La Luna arrives as a scholarship student at an elite East Coast university, he bears the weight of his family's hopes and dreams, and the burden of sharing his late uncle's name. Daniel flounders at first—but then Sam, his roommate, changes everything. As their relationship evolves from brotherly banter to something more intimate, Daniel soon finds himself in love with a man who helps him see himself in a new light. But just as their relationship takes flight, Daniel is pulled away, first by Sam's hesitation and then by a brutal turn of events that changes Daniel's life forever. As he grapples with profound loss, Daniel finds himself in his family's ancestral homeland in México for the summer, finding joy in this setting even as he struggles to come to terms with what's happened and faces a host of new questions: How does the person he is connect with this place his family comes from? How is his own story connected to his late uncle's? And how might he reconcile the many parts of himself as he learns to move forward? Equal parts tender and triumphant, Andrés N. Ordorica's *How We Named the Stars* is a debut novel of love, heartache, redemption, and learning to honor the dead; a story of finding the strength to figure out who you are—and who you could be—if only the world would let you.

Soyinka, Wole. *The Interpreters*. Penguin Random House, 2021.

From the first Black winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature—his debut novel about a group of young Nigerian intellectuals trying to come to grips with themselves and their changing country. First published in 1965. Friends since high school, the five young men at the heart of *The Interpreters* have returned to Lagos after studying abroad to embark on careers as a physician, a journalist, an engineer, a teacher, and an artist. As they navigate wild parties, affairs of the heart, philosophical debates, and professional dilemmas, they struggle to reconcile the cultural traditions and Western influences that have shaped them—and that still divide their country. Soyinka deftly weaves memories of the past through scenes of the present as the five friends move toward an uncertain future. The result is a vividly realized fictional world rendered in prose that pivots easily from satire to tragedy and manages to be both wildly funny and soaringly poetic.

YOUNG ADULT NON-FICTION

Bruni, Frank. *Where You Go is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania*. New York Grand Central Publishing, 2015.

Over the last few decades, Americans have turned college admissions into a terrifying and occasionally devastating process, preceded by test prep, tutors, all sorts of stratagems, all kinds of rankings, and a conviction among too many young people that their futures will be determined and their worth established by which schools say yes and which say no. That belief is wrong. It's cruel. And in *Where You Go Is Now Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania*, Frank Bruni explains why, giving students and their parents a new perspective on this brutal, deeply flawed competition and a path out of the anxiety that it provokes. Bruni, a bestselling author and a columnist for the New York Times, shows that the Ivy League has no monopoly on corner offices, governors' mansions, or the most prestigious academic and scientific grants. Through statistics, surveys, and the stories of hugely successful people who didn't attend the most exclusive schools, he demonstrates that many kinds of colleges-large public universities, tiny hideaways in the hinterlands-serve as ideal springboards. And he illuminates how to make the most of them. What matters in the end are a student's efforts in and out of the classroom, not the gleam of his or her diploma. Where you go isn't who you'll be. Americans need to hear that-and this indispensable manifesto says it with eloquence and respect for the real promise of higher education.

Fields, Timothy L. and Shereem Herndon-Brown. *The Black Family's Guide to College Admission: A Conversation about Education, Parenting and Race*. Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 2022.

The goal of the book is to provide Black families with information about the college admission process so that they can explore college options for their child.

Murch, Donna. *Assata Taught Me: State Violence, Racial Capitalism, and the Movement for Black Lives*. Haymarket Books, 2022.

Black Panther and Cuban exile Assata Shakur has inspired generations of radical protest, including the contemporary movement for Black lives. Drawing its title from one of America's foremost revolutionaries, this collection of thought-provoking essays by award-winning Panther scholar Donna Murch explores how social protest is challenging our current system of state violence and mass incarceration. Murch exposes the devastating consequences of overlapping punishment campaigns against gangs, drugs, and crime on poor and working-class populations of color. Through largely hidden channels, these punishment campaigns generate enormous revenues for the state. Under such conditions, organized resistance to the advancing tide of state violence and mass incarceration has proven difficult. This timely and urgent book shows how a youth-led political movement has emerged in recent years to challenge the bipartisan consensus on punishment and looks to the future through a redistributive, queer, and feminist lens. Murch frames the contemporary movement in relation to earlier struggles for Black Liberation, while excavating the origins of mass incarceration and the political economy that drives it.

Pierre-Louis, Gaelle. *Hacking Elite College Admissions: 50 Surprising Insights on the College Application Process*. New Degree Press, 2020.

Did you know that most elite colleges typically accept only about 2,000 students for their incoming class?—Among competitive schools, the number of students who submit applications more than doubled, but the acceptance rates sank from 18.4% to less than 10% in the past decade.—Thousands of students around the world face rejection from their dream schools every year. Despite these odds, you can succeed in the college application process. While the college application process can be overwhelming, this comprehensive guide includes expert advice from admissions officers to help guide you as you apply with accurate up-to-date information. Harvard-trained educator, Gaelle Pierre-Louis uses her knowledge as a former college admissions officer to demystify the process and provides helpful tips and advice for high school students as they embark on this journey. She also explains: * How to build a balanced college list * The role of testing and grades in the college application process * How to motivate your advocates, i.e., guidance counselors, teachers, mentors, to write excellent letters of recommendation on your behalf * The criteria admissions committees use to evaluate applications * The importance of applying for scholarships by the deadline in order to make college affordable for you and your family Gaelle Pierre-Louis, M. Ed., is a former college admissions officer and education reform activist.

Uwiringiyimana, Sandra & Abigail Pesta. *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2018.

This profoundly moving memoir is the remarkable and inspiring true story of Sandra Uwiringiyimana, a girl from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who tells the tale of how she survived a massacre, immigrated to America, and overcame her trauma through art and activism. Sandra was just ten years old when she found herself with a gun pointed at her head. She had watched as rebels gunned down her mother and six-year-old sister in a refugee camp. Remarkably, the rebel didn't pull the trigger, and Sandra escaped. Thus began a new life for her and her surviving family members. With no home and no money, they struggled to stay alive. Eventually, through a United Nations refugee program, they moved to America, only to face yet another ethnic disconnect. Sandra may have crossed an ocean, but there was now a much wider divide she had to overcome. And it started with middle school in New York. In this memoir, Sandra tells the story of her survival, of finding her place in a new country, of her hope for the future, and how she found a way to give voice to her people.

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Del Rosario, Juleah. *500 Words of Less*. New York, Simon Pulse, 2018.

A high school senior attempts to salvage her reputation among her Ivy League-obsessed classmates by writing their college admissions essays and in the process learns big truths about herself in this mesmerizing debut novel-in-verse, perfect for fans of Gayle Forman and Sonya Sones. Nic Chen refuses to spend her senior year branded as the girl who cheated on her charismatic and lovable boyfriend. To redefine her reputation among her Ivy League-obsessed classmates, Nic begins writing their college admissions essays. But the more essays Nic writes for other people, the less sure she becomes of herself, the kind of person she is, and whether her moral compass even points north anymore. Provocative, brilliant, and achingly honest, *500 Words or Less* explores the heartbreak and hope that marks the search for your truest self.

Dobmeier, Tracy. *Girls with Bright Futures: A Novel*. Naperville, IL, Sourcebooks Landmark, 2021.

Alicia is a tech giant, wealthy beyond compare. Kelly is a stay-at-home mother and Stanford legacy. Maren makes three: single, broke, and out of place among the rich and elite. All their daughters are natural choices for Stanford: except the school can only recommend one student. As the competition heats up, an attempt is made on one of the girl's lives and the community spirals into panic. Now the mothers have to decide if one of them is capable of murder, or even worse, one of their own children. The Admissions meets *Big Little Lies* in *DO NOT ADMIT*, a book club black comedy of three prep school families locked in competition for a single spot at Stanford when an attempted murder reveals the dark underbelly of their privileged community.

Lee, Kristen R. *Required Reading for the Disenfranchised Freshman*. Penguin Random House, 2022.

Savannah Howard thought everyone followed the same checklist to get into Wooddale University:

- Take the hardest classes
- Get perfect grades
- Give up a social life to score a full ride to a top school

But now that she's on campus, it's clear there's a different rule book. Take student body president, campus royalty, and racist jerk Lucas Cunningham. It's no secret money bought his acceptance letter. And he's not the only one. Savannah tries to keep to head down, but when the statue of the university's first Black president is vandalized, how can she look away? Someone has to put a stop to the injustice. But will telling the truth about Wooddale's racist past cost Savannah her own future? First-time novelist Kristen R. Lee delivers a page-turning, thought-provoking story that exposes racism and hypocrisy on college campuses, and champions those who refuse to let it continue.

BOOKS FOR YOUNGER LEARNERS AND CHILDREN

Aldreda Alva & Mills, Deborah. *La Frontera, El viaje con papá / My Journey with Papa*. Barefoot Books, 2019.

Based on a true story! Join a young boy and his father on an arduous journey from Mexico to the United States in the 1980s to find a new life. They'll need all the courage they can muster to safely cross the border — *la frontera* — and to make a home for themselves in a new land. Inspired by the childhood immigration experience of co-author Alfredo Alva, this story of perseverance is told in both Spanish and English to empower language-learning. Includes 4 pages of endnotes that unpack facts about Alfredo's story and other stories like his / borders and borders around the world to help parents and educators talk with children about immigration, resilience, empathy and belonging.

DK Publishing. *Careers: The Ultimate Guide to Planning Your Future*. New York, DK Publishing, 2022.

From robotics engineering and computer games development to environmental law and eco-friendly construction, this job guide features hundreds of careers, including trending opportunities. Do you have a passion but can't work out how to make a career out of it? Do you want to change your career but don't know where to start? Are you worried about career development? Or are you overwhelmed by so much advice you are lost in a sea of information? You're not the only one - and Careers is here to steer you in the right direction. This indispensable guide is ideal for teenagers and newly qualified graduates. Career counselors will also find this a trustworthy companion for helping students with their future career planning. So, whether you want to become a nurse or home decorator, a chef or cyber-security analyst (or you simply have no idea!), this book is your ultimate source. Concise and combining a user-friendly approach with a bold, graphic design, Careers is like having your very own career coach.

Rossi, Sofia E., Carlo Canepa & Luca Poli. *Jobs of the Future: Imaginative Careers for Forward-Thinking Kids*. Kansas City, Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2022.

From chemistry and climatology to robotics and the arts, Jobs of the Future imagines professions that may one day be essential to preserving and improving life on Earth. Become a "plastics fisherman" and save the oceans from pollution! Or be a "cloud hunter" and help to slow global warming! Whatever their passion, children will discover a world of possibility in this colorful and inspiring guide to a wide range of futuristic careers.