

7-1-2019

Featured Bookshelf: 2019 American History

Megan M. Haught

Univeristy of Central Florida, megan.haught@ucf.edu

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/featured-bookshelf>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Featured Bookshelf by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

STARS Citation

Haught, Megan M., "Featured Bookshelf: 2019 American History" (2019). *Featured Bookshelf*. 51.
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/featured-bookshelf/51>



American History Featured Bookshelf



American history is a broad and varied topic. It ranges from the native inhabitants who formed communities here thousands of years ago to the creation of a new nation of states to the dreamers who immigrate to these shores today. It is an enormous amount of information to cover, but it is important that we all learn about our past. As Edmund Burke said in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it."

The founders of the United States, beyond their faults and foibles, began this nation with a grand and noble sentiment of “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity....”

“We the people” is *us*. Join us this month as we explore our past to help ensure “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” applies to us all.

Keep reading to see the full list, descriptions, and catalog links for the featured titles on American History suggested by UCF Library employees. These 24 books plus many more are also on display on the 2nd (main) floor of the John C. Hitt Library next to the bank of two elevators.

~

11/22/63 by Stephen King

On November 22, 1953, three shots rang out in Dallas, President Kennedy died, and the world changed. What if you could change it back? In this brilliantly conceived tour de force, Stephen King—who has absorbed the social, political, and popular culture of his generation more imaginatively and thoroughly than any other writer—takes readers on an incredible journey into the past and the possibility of altering it.

Suggested by Kathleen Silva, Libraries Student Ambassador

A History of the American People by Paul Johnson

This challenging narrative and interpretation of American history by the author of many distinguished historical works is sometimes controversial and always provocative. Johnson’s views of individuals, events, themes, and issues are original, critical, and admiring, for he is, above all, a strong believer in the history and the destiny of the American people.

Suggested by Allison Hilton, Libraries Student Ambassador

A Map to the Next World: poetry and tales by Joy Harjo

The poet author of *The Woman Who Fell from the Sky*, and new poet laureate of the U.S., draws on her own Native American heritage in a collection of lyrical poetry that explores the cruelties and tragedies of history and the redeeming miracles of human kindness.

Suggested by Jada Reyes, Libraries Student Ambassador

Alex and Eliza by Melissa De la Cruz

In the pages of *Alex and Eliza*, #1 New York Times bestselling author Melissa de la Cruz brings to life the romance of young Alexander Hamilton and Elizabeth Schuyler. Suggested by Kathleen Silva, Libraries Student Ambassador

American Canopy: trees, forests, and the making of a nation by Eric Rutkow (UCF Faculty Author)

As Eric Rutkow's brilliant, epic account shows, trees were essential to the early years of the republic and indivisible from the country's rise as both an empire and a civilization. Among *American Canopy's* many fascinating stories: the Liberty Trees, where colonists gathered to plot rebellion against the British; Henry David Thoreau's famous retreat into the woods; the creation of New York City's Central Park; the great fire of 1871 that killed a thousand people in the lumber town of Peshtigo, Wisconsin; the fevered attempts to save the American chestnut and the American elm from extinction; and the controversy over spotted owls and the old-growth forests they inhabited. Rutkow also explains how trees were of deep interest to such figures as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Teddy Roosevelt, and FDR, who oversaw the planting of more than three billion trees nationally in his time as president.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Subject Librarian

Americans Remember Their Civil War by Barbara A. Gannon (UCF Faculty Author)

This book provides readers with an overview of how Americans have commemorated and remembered the Civil War.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Subject Librarian

Beneath a Ruthless Sun: a true story of violence, race, and justice lost and found by Gilbert King

Beneath a Ruthless Sun tells a powerful, page-turning story rooted in the fears that rippled through the South as integration began to take hold, sparking a surge of virulent racism that savaged the vulnerable, debased the powerful, and roils our own times still.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Subject Librarian

Elizabeth Warren: her fight, her work, her life by Antonia Felix

In this breakthrough biography, bestselling author Antonia Felix carries readers from Warren's hardscrabble roots in Norman, Oklahoma, to her career as one of the nation's most distinguished legal scholars and experts on the economics of working Americans. Felix reveals how Warren brought her expertise to Washington to become an icon of progressive politics in a deeply divided nation, and weaves together never-before-told stories from those who have journeyed with Warren from Oklahoma to the halls of power.

Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services

[Hamilton: the revolution: being the complete libretto of the Broadway musical, with a true account of its creation, and concise remarks on hip-hop, the power of stories, and the new America](#) by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Jeremy McCarter

This book gives readers an unprecedented view of both revolutions, from the only two writers able to provide it. Miranda, along with Jeremy McCarter, a cultural critic and theater artist who was involved in the project from its earliest stages and traces its development from an improbable performance at the White House to its landmark opening night on Broadway six years later. In addition, Miranda has written more than 200 funny, revealing footnotes for his award-winning libretto, the full text of which is published here.

Suggested by Katie Burroughs, Administration

[Historians on Hamilton: how a blockbuster musical is restaging America's past](#) edited by Renee C. Romano and Claire Bond Potter

Historians on Hamilton brings together a collection of top scholars to explain the Hamilton phenomenon and explore what it might mean for our understanding of America's history. The contributors examine what the musical got right, what it got wrong, and why it matters. Does Hamilton's hip-hop take on the Founding Fathers misrepresent our nation's past, or does it offer a bold positive vision for our nation's future? Can a musical so unabashedly contemporary and deliberately anachronistic still communicate historical truths about American culture and politics? And is Hamilton as revolutionary as its creators and many commentators claim?

Suggested by Katie Burroughs, Administration

[John Marshall: the man who made the Supreme Court](#) by Richard Brookhiser

In 1801, a genial and brilliant Revolutionary War veteran and politician became the fourth chief justice of the United States. He would hold the post for 34 years (still a record), expounding the Constitution he loved. Before he joined the Supreme Court, it was the weakling of the federal government, lacking in dignity and clout. After he died, it could never be ignored again. Through three decades of dramatic cases involving businessmen, scoundrels, Native Americans, and slaves, Marshall defended the federal government against unruly states, established the Supreme Court's right to rebuke Congress or the president, and unleashed the power of American commerce. For better and for worse, he made the Supreme Court a pillar of American life.

Suggested by Larry Cooperman, Research & Information Services

[Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong](#) by James W. Loewen

Americans have lost touch with their history, and in [Lies My Teacher Told Me](#) Professor James Loewen shows why. After surveying eighteen leading high school American

history texts, he has concluded that not one does a decent job of making history interesting or memorable. Marred by an embarrassing combination of blind patriotism, mindless optimism, sheer misinformation, and outright lies, these books omit almost all the ambiguity, passion, conflict, and drama from our past.

Suggested by Emily Parente, Libraries Student Ambassador

[My Own Words](#) by Ruth Bader Ginsburg with Mary Hartnett and Wendy W. Williams

In this collection Justice Ginsburg discusses gender equality, the workings of the Supreme Court, being Jewish, law and lawyers in opera, and the value of looking beyond US shores when interpreting the US Constitution. Throughout her life Justice Ginsburg has been (and continues to be) a prolific writer and public speaker. This book's sampling is selected by Justice Ginsburg and her authorized biographers Mary Hartnett and Wendy W. Williams, who introduce each chapter and provide biographical context and quotes gleaned from hundreds of interviews they have conducted.

Suggested by Sandy Avila, Research & Information Services

[News for all the people: the epic story of race and the American media](#) by Juan Gonzalez and Joseph Torres

From colonial newspapers to the Internet age, America's racial divisions have played a central role in the creation of the country's media system, just as the media has contributed to—and every so often, combated—racial oppression. This acclaimed book reveals how racial segregation distorted the information Americans have received, even as it depicts the struggle of Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American journalists who fought to create a vibrant yet little-known alternative, democratic press.

Suggested by Jada Reyes, Libraries Student Ambassador

[Shade: a tale of two presidents](#) by Pete Souza

Shade is a portrait in Presidential contrasts, telling the tale of the Obama and Trump administrations through a series of visual juxtapositions. Here, more than one hundred of Souza's unforgettable images of President Obama deliver new power and meaning when framed by the tweets, news headlines, and quotes that defined the first 500 days of the Trump White House.

Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services

[Team of Rivals: the political genius of Abraham Lincoln](#) by Doris Kearns Goodwin

Acclaimed historian Doris Kearns Goodwin illuminates Lincoln's political genius in this highly original work, as the one-term congressman and prairie lawyer rises from obscurity to prevail over three gifted rivals of national reputation to become president.

Suggested by Joan Reynolds, Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery Services

[The Book that Changed America: how Darwin's theory of evolution ignited a nation](#) by Randall Fuller

Creating a rich tableau of nineteenth-century American intellectual culture, as well as providing a fascinating biography of perhaps the single most important idea of that time, *The Book That Changed America* is also an account of issues and concerns still with us today, including racism and the enduring conflict between science and religion.

Suggested by Christina Wray, Teaching & Engagement

[The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama](#) by Gwen Ifill

Veteran journalist Gwen Ifill surveys the American political landscape, shedding new light on the impact of Barack Obama's stunning presidential victory and introducing the emerging young African American politicians forging a bold new path to political power.

Suggested by Sandy Avila, Research & Information Services

[The Devil in the White City: murder, magic, and madness at the fair that changed America](#) by Erik Larson

Erik Larson—author of #1 bestseller *In the Garden of Beasts*—intertwines the true tale of the 1893 World's Fair and the cunning serial killer who used the fair to lure his victims to their death. Combining meticulous research with nail-biting storytelling, Erik Larson has crafted a narrative with all the wonder of newly discovered history and the thrills of the best fiction.

Suggested by Rachel Edford, Teaching & Engagement

[The Dictionary Wars: the American fight over the English language](#) by Peter Martin

Peter Martin recounts the patriotic fervor in the early American republic to produce a definitive national dictionary that would rival Samuel Johnson's 1755 Dictionary of the English Language. But what began as a cultural war of independence from Britain devolved into a battle among lexicographers, authors, scholars, and publishers, all vying for dictionary supremacy and shattering forever the dream of a unified American language.

Suggested by Christina Wray, Teaching & Engagement

[The Field of Blood: violence in Congress and the road to civil war](#) by Joanne B. Freeman

Joanne B. Freeman recovers the long-lost story of physical violence on the floor of the U.S. Congress. Drawing on an extraordinary range of sources, she shows that the Capitol was rife with conflict in the decades before the Civil War. Legislative sessions were often punctuated by mortal threats, canings, flipped desks, and all-out slugfests. When debate broke down, congressmen drew pistols and waved Bowie knives. One representative even killed another in a duel. Many were beaten and bullied in an attempt to intimidate them into compliance, particularly on the issue of slavery.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Subject Librarian

The Law by Frederic Bastiat

The Law was originally published as a pamphlet in 1850 by Frederic Bastiat (1801-1850). Bastiat wrote most of his work in the few years before and after the French Revolution of 1848. The Law is considered a classic and his ideas are still relevant today. The essay was published in French in 1850.

Suggested by Allison Hilton, Libraries Student Ambassador

The Truths We Hold: an American journey by Kamala Harris

By reckoning with the big challenges we face together, drawing on the hard-won wisdom and insight from her own career and the work of those who have most inspired her, Kamala Harris offers a master class in problem solving, in crisis management, and leadership in challenging times. Through the arc of her own life, on into the great work of our day, she communicates a vision of shared struggle, shared purpose, and shared values. In a book rich in many home truths, not least is that a relatively small number of people work very hard to convince a great many of us that we have less in common than we actually do, but it falls to us to look past them and get on with the good work of living our common truth. When we do, our shared effort will continue to sustain us and this great nation, now and in the years to come.

Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps.

Suggested by Emily Parente, Libraries Student Ambassador

Tumblr post: <https://ucflibrary.tumblr.com/post/185977081992/american-history-is-a-broad-and-varied-topic-it>

Blog post: <https://library.ucf.edu/news/featured-bookshelf-american-history-2019/>