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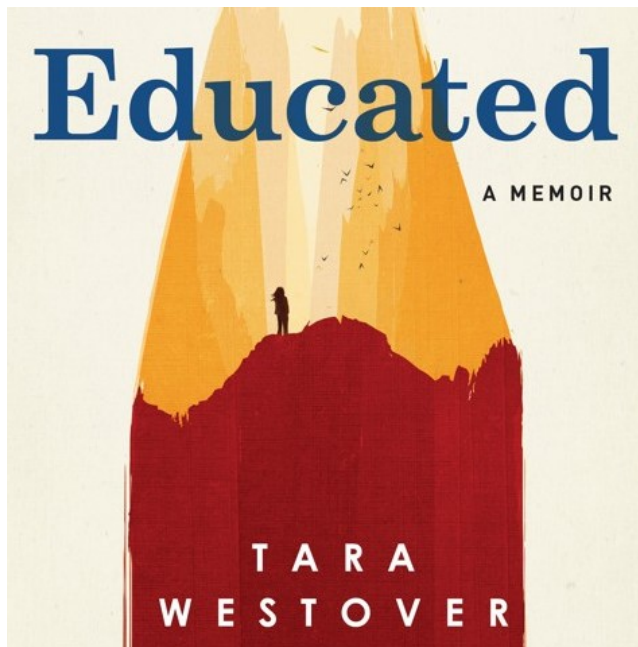
*Libraries*

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# The Library News

WHAT  
ARE YOU  
READING?



## **Educated by Tara Westover**

Preferring fiction, I put off reading this memoir, published in 2018 by Random House. However, this story was too inspiring to ignore. It kept calling to me. When an almost completely uneducated child grows up, teaches herself, and goes to college, it is an outstanding achievement. I started reading, and I could not put the book down.

Tara's family practices a more fundamentalist faith than most members of the Church of Latter Day Saints to which they belong. The church members are judged harshly as too liberal and ungodly although the family continues to go. The Westovers fear the government, medical practices, and public school. Their lives are male-dominated, old-fashioned, and proscriptive. They store an abundance of weapons, fuel, and food for the end times. As a result, the children grow up in fear without much education other than learning to read. They have few books, and the children are expected to work in the scrapyard with their father from a young age - with no safety equipment. The father is a huge risk-taker with the lives of his family. His actions sometimes cause the children and his wife unthinkable wounds, and yet they receive no medical aid other than the herbs and ointments that their mother prescribes. It's amazing that they all survived.

The youngest of seven children, Tara struggles to be a good person and a good daughter in this situation, and yet she longs to have a life and an education beyond their beautiful mountain enclave. A few of her brothers managed the feat of going to college, and she dreams of passing the ACT exam and going herself. So she starts

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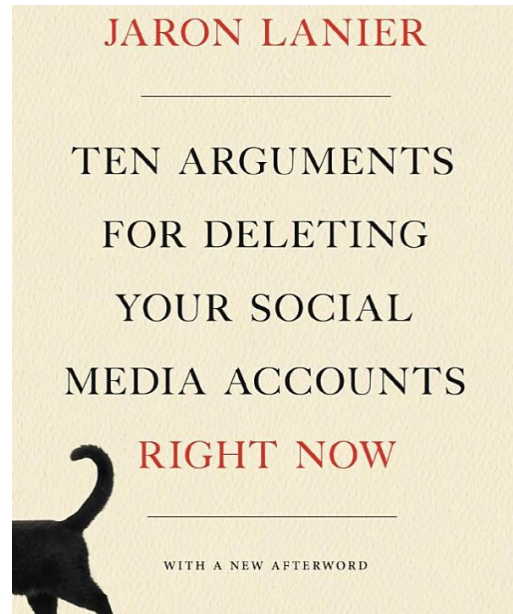
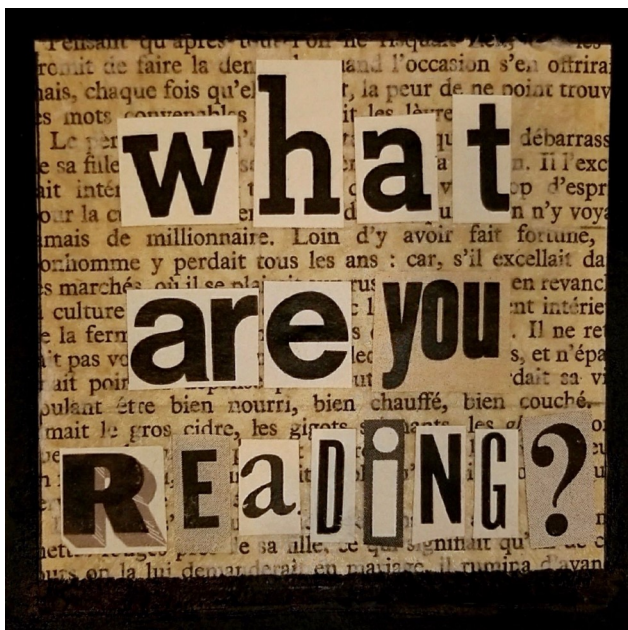
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studying. Her father is, of course, against it. A woman should be a good wife, who learns herbal medicine and midwifery and little else. The self-reliance he teaches contributes to Tara's success, however, because she has the drive and persistence to prepare and go to college in spite of the many obstacles.

The most painful part of the book for me was the physical and psychological abuse that Tara and others suffer at the hand of one of her brothers. You could also say there was abuse from the hands of the parents due to their failure to keep the children safe and meet their educational and medical needs. When as an adult she confronts her parents about her brother's abuse, they don't believe her. They say she is the problem. That she is possessed by Satan. Tara had hoped to inspire her father, the family patriarch, to do something about it. As preacher, teacher, and dictator to the family, she had hoped her father would stop or influence her brother. Her brother's wife and children might be saved further abuse. Instead, the parents defend the brother. It causes a rift in the family.

*Educated* is a coming-of-age story that will inspire you. I was repeatedly encouraged by the life story of this strong young woman. Growing up may be hard for us all in one way or another, but if Tara Westover can overcome an isolated, survivalist upbringing and yet thrive in the real world, you can, too. Enjoy!

— Carol Keck, Technical Services Librarian



## Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now by Jaron Lanier

Social Media is a constant in everyday life. Is there any field of knowledge, any shared interest that humans participate in, that does not have an attached social media presence? The majority of the audience reading this review has at least one social media account; if you are under 40, 2 to 5 accounts is more likely. In 2019, we are a long ways from early Social Media platforms like MySpace, largely a commercial-free zone for the early part of its existence. These days Social Media is *all* about the commercialization of our lives - our data - in order to document browsing habits, get us excited about an issue, sell us something, and sometimes to deliver that data to government surveillance agencies without our knowledge.

You may be surprised to learn author Jaron Lanier has a long background in online technology and computer science, including the development of the first commercial Virtual Reality system. Lanier also has a longstanding concern about the ethical applications of digital technologies. In a Dec. 2000 essay in *Wired* magazine, Lanier warned that the rapid growth of the Internet and similar connected online technologies might result in many users becoming "an online lynch mob". Does this resemble anything you have seen lately on Twitter or



Facebook? Articles on the known dangers of social media are easy to find. Lanier ties his argument together in an acronym **BUMMER**, which stands for “Behaviors of Users Modified, and Made into an Empire for Rent.” His perspective as a technology industry insider and his concern for ethics in the application of technology are what make this book stand out. Lanier admits that some of us may not be able to quit Social Media (my first thought was Real Estate Agents). I believe that Lanier would view the book a success if it convinces you that you still have the choice to quit, and that there are very good reasons to do so.

**BUMMER** consists of six principles that overshadow the ten arguments in the book (which you will have to read to get the whole story). Some of the dangers discussed include:

- ⇒ The lack of empathy developed by so many online users over time;
- ⇒ The erosion of truth; the fact that Social Media gives everyone their own soapbox with a potential audience of billions, who will be happy to share *their* version of an opinion or event with *their* friends ...;

- ⇒ Increased use of Social Media is making users unhappy, a false reality that users can’t hope to live up to;
- ⇒ Algorithms constantly reacting to your browsing habits, learning about you and your triggers, your likes and dislikes, in order to present an evolving mix of ads and other content that will keep you engaged and online for ever-increasing stretches of time.

Lanier’s prose as he discusses these issues constantly returns to our value as individuals, that this is a quality worth preserving, and how that is increasingly rare in the online world. The point is made several times throughout the book that Social Media companies are ultimately more concerned about monetizing human data and artificial intelligence research than creating a beneficial user experience. Lanier also offers readers some strategies for working around the surveillance functions of some social media platforms, and reminds us in the conclusion that we need not confuse quitting social media with quitting the Internet.

— Michael Rose, Reference Librarian

## What is the Conversation Club?

### What is the Conversation Club?

The Conversation Club is a weekly club that is hosted every Wednesday with English as Second Language students (ESOL) and foreign language curriculum student in the News & Record Room at the Greensboro Campus Library. Within the club, students are able to exchange their native language and can practice with a new language of learning. Many of the students in the club practice between English and Spanish, but a variety of languages are practiced outside Spanish. Ultimately, the goal for the program is that all students are able to actively learn and engage conversationally with confidence into learning a new language through others.



### How do I sign up?

If you are interested in joining the Conversation Club, please email me at [gsprice@gtcc.edu](mailto:gsprice@gtcc.edu) to seek additional information of dates and time for meetings.

— Grace Price, Library Circulation Technician





# Library Services in Action!



Library Services was pleased to be able to collaborate with the GTCC Wendover Dean's office and the Wendover Adult Education office to offer a community resource fair on Thursday 11/21/19. This event was held at the Greensboro campus in the rotunda area of the Greensboro Campus Center. It was held as part of the Greensboro Campus Adult Ed discussion series on acclimating to life in the United States. This series targets primarily ESOL students but because of its more generic nature, this event was open to all adult education students.

The purpose of this event was to provide Adult Education students with an opportunity to become familiar with resources through GTCC and outside GTCC that might be of assistance with their educational endeavors, especially in those areas of life outside the immediate academic environment.

GTCC offices and outside agencies participating included:

## **Community Agencies Attending**

- ▷ Guilford County Immigrant Services
- ▷ Faith Action House International
- ▷ Center for New North Carolinians
- ▷ Church World Service
- ▷ Reading Connections Greensboro
- ▷ Partnership for Children of Guilford County
- ▷ Language Resources
- ▷ Women's Center
- ▷ Guilford County Health Services
- ▷ Goodwill Industries

▷ NC Works

▷ Guilford County Department of Social Services

## **GTCC Offices Attending**

- ▷ Student Success Center
- ▷ Counseling and DisAbility Services
- ▷ Student Support Services
- ▷ Continuing Education
- ▷ Occupational Training
- ▷ TitanLink
- ▷ Registration
- ▷ Aviation (program student recruitment)
- ▷ Welding, Machining, Mechatronics (program student recruitment)
- ▷ HVAC (program student recruitment)
- ▷ Center for Academic Engagement

Final attendance at the event totaled 157 students. Survey responses from both vendors (GTCC offices and community agencies) and students has been quite positive. Here are some representative quotes.

## Students

*"We had the opportunity to see and to think about a lot of courses offered to all. Appreciate it."*

*"It was very important to get information about if you were interested to find work or just keep studying."*

## Vendors

*"Thank you so much for hosting this innovative resource fair! We greatly enjoyed attending and meeting your students."*

*"Thank you so much for inviting us to attend the community resource fair. We greatly enjoyed speaking with students and learning about the other programs GTCC offers. Your community resource fair was the best-attended event we have been part of in quite some time! We will be happy to participate again next year."*



*"Thank you so very much again for the invitation! We would love to participate next year and support your endeavors wherever you see appropriate in the future. Please keep us on your contact list. We thoroughly enjoyed participating—you have some wonderful and enthusiastic students there at GTCC. They asked some wonderful questions and we were glad to be there as a resource."*

Attendance at other sessions in the series has been strong as well, and student feedback from those events has also been quite positive.

Library Services would like to thank all of our community and GTCC partners who participated, and would also like to thank the Wendover Campus Dean's office and the Wendover Adult Education program for their support in making this event a success.

For more information about this program and other programs offered by Library Services please contact Keith Burkhead at [bkburkhead@gtcc.edu](mailto:bkburkhead@gtcc.edu), extension 50317.

— Keith Burkhead, Reference Librarian

## Graphic Novels Ain't Just Superheroes Anymore

Most of the time when you hear the words Graphic Novel (GN), superhero comic books probably come to mind. You would not be wrong to think that. There are so many out there like Marvel's Avengers, X-Men, Spiderman, DC's Superman, Batman, and Justice League just to name a few. These GN's are packed full of action, drama, and suspense and even romance. Reading a GN can be better than going to see a superhero movie. As you flip through the pages you can fully immerse yourself in the story and allow your imagination to run wild while looking at the detailed artwork in each panel. But guess what ladies and gentlemen... *Graphic novels ain't just superheroes anymore!*

As a youth from elementary to about half of my high school years I disliked having to read the class assigned books like Catcher In the Rye and To Kill A Mockingbird. At the time they were just boring to me. I began reading comics and GNs in my early teenage years. As I would read my comics, the pages would come alive right before my eyes. I would try and imagine what was going to happen next. Reading GNs helped to cultivate my imagination, increased my desire to read and broadened my horizons by reading other genres of books.

You may be thinking with that little thought bubble above your head, "GNs are childish and easy to read." That has become a stereotypical thought. Not all GNs are marketed for children and have superheroes. GNs have tackled just about every genre you can think of. The two books I

mentioned earlier, Catcher In the Rye and To Kill A Mockingbird, are now both in GN form. GNs have tackled historical topics like civil rights and the holocaust in the GNs March and Maus respectively.



In this fast paced technologically advanced age that we are now living in, where just about everything we need and want is at our fingertips in a split second with the push of a button, we don't really have to think too hard or use our imagination. Our handheld devices, Siri, Alexa, Bixby and Google can prevent us from truly having to think. I truly believe reading GNs can increase our imagination, create a desire and love for reading all materials and get those synapses in our brains firing again and having our brains lit up colorfully like the beautiful artwork in those Graphic Novels. So, whenever you are in the area why don't you stop by the Jamestown, Greensboro or High Point GTCC Campus Library and check out a few of our Graphic Novels. Tell them Jonathon sent you. If you come to the HP location I will personally show you some of my faves.

— Jonathon Nanton, Library Circulation Technician

