As the semester winds down and the holidays approach, Schmidt Library wishes the YCP community peace and health. Hopefully you’ll make some time to read a book for fun over break. If so, let us know what you’re reading!

**Divergent** by Veronica Roth

“This book was so amazing. From the first line I was hooked. I just wanted to know more and as I learned more there were more questions I asked. This book has very believable characters that show the good and bad in humanity, and I really enjoyed how I fell in love with most of the characters. It is an action-packed read that you will love. Four stars. A fantastic book. I recommend it.” ~ Courtney Hengel

**Below Stairs** by Margaret Powell

“Fans of *Downton Abbey* and history buffs alike will thoroughly enjoy this quick read that details the frank and oftentimes amusing recollections of a life in service to the upper class. Reading this book is an excellent supplement that offers great insight into a strong-willed woman who grows up as a servant but remains true to herself.”

~ Emily Raffensberger

**Murder in the Stacks** by David DeKok

“… a crime drama about the unsolved murder of Penn State graduate student Betsy Aardsma at Pattee Library in 1969. The author integrates the culture and attitudes of late 1960’s into his narrative of the crime. As a Penn State freshman in 1969, I have never forgotten this incident. It is a captivating read, particularly for any Penn Stater who can relate to the numerous campus references/events of that tumultuous time on campus.” ~ Tom Craven
How We Got to Now by Steven Johnson

“A compelling, engaging and intellectually satisfying read - this book was difficult to put down. The author, well aware of the cardinal principal of nonfiction writing - good storytelling - weaves tales of scientific accomplishments that are absolutely mesmerizing and incredibly fascinating. Johnson explores the unexpected connections that drive innovation and creativity; for example, how clean water led to the manufacture of computer chips and how a single frozen trout led to the settlement of previously uninhabited regions of the world. These are the stories of breakout ideas that have changed lives and transformed civilizations. A ‘must-read’ book!” ~ Tony Fredericks

Songs of Willow Frost by Jamie Ford

“This is a nice little story about a young boy in search of his mother. Set in Seattle during the early 1930s, the story is a bit sentimental for me but enjoyable nevertheless. The central character is a young Chinese boy who was apparently abandoned. His mother becomes a marginally successful Chinese movie personality. The boy, accompanied by a blind girlfriend, sets out to rejoin his mother when she comes to performing in Seattle. What follows is an enjoyable read though fairly predictable. Still, it is a book that is worth the time.”

~ Paul Doutrich

Classic Selection

Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand

“I'm currently reading Atlas Shrugged and I'm loving it! Thanks for making this newsletter; it seems like such a great idea!

~ Sam Lipson

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The next What We're Reading will be published in February. Please submit your brief reviews to bjacob@ycp.edu by January 30.