



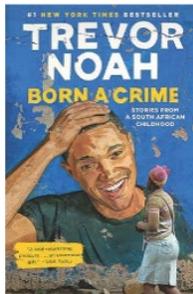
WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING BRIO LIVING SERVICES A SAFE, WELCOMING PLACE FOR ALL TO LIVE AND WORK.

December is “Read a New Book” Month!

The DEI Committee wants to share books that have made an impact on each of us. These books have broadened our understanding of others’ lived experiences and left us inspired. We encourage all team members to grab a book this month to continue to expand our appreciation of the way others live, love, learn, and grow!

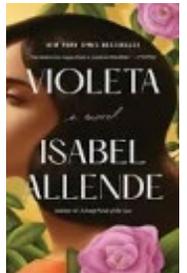
Recommended by Michelle Henderson

If you want to laugh, cry, and learn a lot about what it was like to live in South Africa, this is a great one! The significance of the title is that *Trevor Noah* was born out of a bi-racial relationship (his mother is black, and his dad is white). In South Africa, it was illegal to have a bi-racial relationship. So, Trevor was literally a crime by simply existing. What is even more staggering for me is that this was a crime in 1984, when I was 14 years old. I had no idea at that time that in South Africa there was segregation and so many other aspects of life that I simply was shielded from in my own country. Tidbit: The audiobook is read by Trevor himself!



Recommended by Amy Genthe

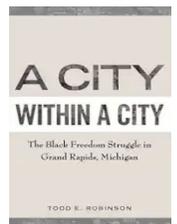
This book by *Isabel Allende* sheds light on a time and place I knew very little about. It’s fiction, but historically based. The book is told from the point of view of a woman, Violeta, born in South America in the 1920’s during World War I and follows her throughout her life. It explores themes of sexism, evolving rights and values, revolution, marriage, and historical events from a different perspective. The author is highly decorated with award winning books to her name.



We read to know we are not alone. - C. S. Lewis

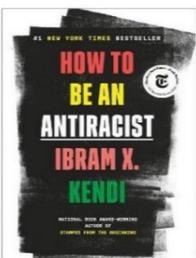
Recommended by Rachel Webster

A City within a City: The Black Freedom Struggle in Grand Rapids, Michigan by *Todd E. Robinson* is a history local to Grand Rapids, but was very eye-opening for me when I started my career here. It’s one thing to think about the impact of racism in our country and another to understand how it has influenced the development of our own community. If you are a non-fiction lover or a local history buff, this one is for you.



Recommended by Robyn Abbey-Hardesty

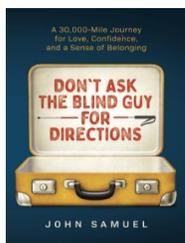
I read this book in 2020 and listened to a podcast where the author *Ibram X. Kendi* was interviewed on why he wrote this book. The book focuses on conversations about racism and, even more eye opening, the system of racism and how this system is so powerful it has created false hierarchies of human value. The book gives ideas on how to be an antiracist versus just saying I am against racism. It offers a very different concept on how to identify and see more clearly! I loved this book. My mind grew and expanded from this book and initiated the growth for me!



Let us read and let us dance – two amusements that will never do any harm to the world - Voltaire

Recommended by Mimi Suntheimer

I saw the title of this book, and it drew my interest. It gave me real perspective of those that struggle, with a disability and greater insight to what accommodations really mean. This memoir leads you through *John Samuel's* struggle losing his sight at a young age, and his experience through school, college, work, and with daily struggles that we all take for granted, like walking down the street, driving to the store, riding a bike, navigating a crowded room, or meeting someone in a small coffee shop. A great read on accepting yourself and others, and how creating an inclusive culture for both professionals with disabilities and individuals can bring great value to any organization.



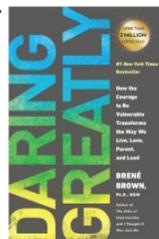
Recommended by Angela Edward

The Great Escape by *Saket Soni* is amazing. It's based on a true story of forced labor. The stories expose lies told to immigrants from India using their desire for the American dream as a way to exploit and coerce. Cool fact, I had the honor to meet Saket Soni back in April. We were both invited to NYU to speak on a panel as representatives from diasporic communities impacted by controversial labor history.



Recommended by Sara Beal

"Vulnerability is the core of all emotions and feelings. To feel is to be vulnerable." We often misunderstand this as weakness, but it is a source of strength. At times we all experience shame, fear, and vulnerability which prevent us from fully engaging in life and forming deep connections with others. *Brené Brown*, talks a lot about how coming to terms with vulnerability can lead to a more meaningful and wholehearted life. She has a lot of books that help you take a deeper look into yourself and how to become a better individual overall. She is by far one of my favorite authors to help boost my morale and self-esteem.



Recommended by Tammy Lane

The *Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by *Kim Michele Richardson* is a book of fictionalized true events and subjects. Set in the 1930's Kentucky mountains, it tackles poverty, ignorance, racism, women's autonomy, and so much more. Skillfully written with authenticity, keen insight, and extraordinary descriptions, this is a gripping saga about poverty, prejudice, and the resilience of the human soul. I enjoyed learning about the true historical events and people in this region because of my heritage. I had never heard of the mobile library program or the "blue" people of Kentucky. Cussy Mary Carter (main character) is a strong, independent, kind woman who struggles to be her own person, in a world where she is "different". She shares her love of books and spreads kindness throughout the treacherous Appalachian Mountains, despite her color and all it represents. I guess we can add blue to our color of prejudice! A must read!



Whenever you read a good book, somewhere in the world a door opens to allow in more sights. - Vera Nazarian

