

2025 Promotion and Tenure Honoree Book Selections

Cristina Bailey, Associate Professor, Accounting

Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman

Selection statement: During my first year in the PhD program, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* was assigned as part of my coursework. The book proved foundational in shaping my research trajectory. It sparked my interest in cognitive biases and the ways humans make decisions, ultimately inspiring me to explore these themes more deeply in my own academic work.

Tito Busani, Associate Professor, ECE

A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara

Selection statement: *A Little Life* is emotionally fearless, character-driven, beautifully written, and unafraid to explore the darkest and most tender aspects of being human. *A Little Life* does not explore a single identity, it promotes, without saying, a sense of belonging. Indeed, in *A Little Life*, *querencia* emerges as a central emotional theme, describing the places and people where a character feels safest, most seen, and most at home

James F. Cavanagh, Professor, Psychology

Rhythms of the Brain by György Buzsáki

Selection statement: After my 3rd year of grad school, I faced a dilemma. I was doing well with my experiments using human electrophysiology (EEG), but I had originally entered the field of cognitive neuroscience with the goal of working with functional MRI. Training opportunities with MRI were sparse, and I felt like this goal was slipping away. I decided to spend the summer doing a deep dive into electrophysiology, determined to either move on from the field or fully commit to it. Reading Buzsáki's book that summer re-energized me and convinced me to dedicate my career to electrophysiology. It also sparked the theoretical idea that led to the paper launching my career and a multi-decade line of research on how theta power and phase synchrony serve as a mechanism for cognitive control.

Melvatha R. Chee, Associate Professor, Linguistics

Arrow to the Sun by Gerald McDermott

Selection statement: This beautiful, colorful book caught my eye at a Scholastic Book Fair when I was a child at boarding school. After reading this book, I thought that the story was similar to my Diné culture, but it was a Pueblo story. *Arrow to the Sun* is fascinating. It sparked my curiosity about people and a realization that we are not the same although some of us might be placed in a similar category. This curiosity naturally led me to study my own Indigenous language, Diné Bizaad. My work, teaching Navajo Linguistics and researching the acquisition of Navajo, is to help maintain Diné Bizaad in this world. I study how children acquire Navajo language with the hope that future generations will continue to speak their Indigenous language, practice their culture, and maintain a strong Indigenous identity. I still enjoy this beautiful book.

Minghui Chen, Associate Professor, Nuclear Engineering

Mao's Road to Power by Nancy Hearst & Joseph Fewsmith

Selection statement: Mao Zedong's life will leave a profound mark in a thousand years of history.

Fletcher G.W. Christensen, Associate Professor, Mathematics & Statistics

Anthem by Neal Stephenson

Selection statement: Speculative fiction rarely gets reviewed in major academic journals like Nature—but when a book comes along with deep expositions on mathematics and philosophy, with extended discourse on the relationship between academia and the outside world, and with a plot grounded in the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics, it is perhaps not surprising that this would be an exception.

Neal Stephenson's blend of monasticism and scholarship is the most romantic take I've read on the academic life, full of small characters and big ideas. Some of those ideas are infectious, and stick with you long after the last page of the book. This isn't a story for everyone: if you have an aversion to pulp or speculative fiction, *Anthem* (like most of Stephenson's oeuvre) probably isn't your jam. But if you like being prodded on questions of epistemology, causality, and the role of science in society, this might be the book for you.

Francis-Yan Cyr-Racine, Associate Professor, Physics & Astronomy

Nuclear War: A Scenario by Annie Jacobsen

Selection statement: A terrifying and well-researched novel about the incredible speed at which the world could unravel if nuclear deterrence fails. A frightening read.

Jaelyn deMaria, Associate Professor, Communication & Journalism

Nuevo Mexico Profundo by Miguel Gandert

Selection statement: This book inspired me to earn a Ph.D.

Huaiyu Duan, Professor, Physics & Astronomy

The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth by M. Scott Peck

Selection statement: This book is a treasure trove of life wisdom. I wish I had read it sooner. It teaches me to confront and resolve my life's problems instead of fleeing from them and inadvertently becoming part of the problem.

Welly Fletcher, Associate Professor, Art: History, Studio, Education

The Return of the Lion Man: History - Myth - Magic by Ulmer Museum

Selection statement: For the past many years, my artwork has been addressing our particularly (and spectacularly) human lack of intelligence by turning toward animal and material bodies that know better. As a species obsessed with thinking and vision, here in 2025 we've lost contact with our body-based intelligence, and with that, our interconnectedness with earth and our co-species. I would argue, also some of the best – and most hopeful – parts of ourselves.

For this reason, I'm drawn to prehistoric artworks (40,000-15,000 years ago), all obsessed with depictions of co-species: lions, bison, mammoth, deer, horses, even fish. I think this division of our mind from our body began back then and has continued to disintegrate. I posit that maybe we began to put these drawings and sculptures outside of ourselves (language/art/religion/science), at that time in an effort to reconnect with that powerful intellect within ourselves. Is it possible to do so? Can we draw closer if we learn to listen better? Can humanity evolve, again? And within this, can the material impact of sculpture carve an opportunity for an embodied, intersectional, even poetic experience of otherness?

Kimberly A. Gaudermann, Professor, History

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Selection statement: When I read Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* as a child, it opened my eyes to class inequality and social injustice and the importance of community in overcoming hardships. These lessons have framed my life as a scholar, a teacher, and member of multiple communities. This book was fundamental to my journey as a first-generation college student and now Professor of Latin American History.

Peter Gilbert, Professor, Music

Count by Valerie Martinez

Selection statement: Valerie's work is a unique blend of reality and mysticism, of intimacy and expanse, that paints a remarkable picture of the human story.

Verónica C. Gonzales, Professor, School of Law

iPrinting the Revolution!: The Rise and Impact of Chicano Graphics, 1965 to Now by Claudia E. Zapata, Terezita Romo, E. Carmen Ramos, and Tatiana Reinoza

Selection statement: *iPrinting the Revolution!* preserves a critical visual archive of the Chicano movement, demonstrating how graphic art has advanced cultural visibility and collective resistance. The works illuminate intertwined histories of labor, land, gender, and racialization across the Southwest, including New Mexico's own complex social and legal histories. As a Latina law professor, I work with case law that often abstracts identity and lived experience. This visual record offers a compelling counterpoint, making the realities of political struggle more tangible and resonant than text alone can. Visual media has the capacity to convey the complexities of race, class, power, and injustice with particular force.

I selected this collection because it has encouraged me to make marginalized narratives more visible in my teaching and scholarship. It reminds me of the enduring ability of art to reveal overlooked socio-legal dimensions which remain essential to the pursuit of fairness.

Margo Hurlocker, Associate Professor, Psychology

The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch

Selection statement: I first read this book during my transition from undergraduate to graduate school, and it has served as an important resource throughout my personal and professional development (both intentionally and unintentionally). For example, I am grateful for the quote, "experience is what you get when you didn't get what you wanted" because it helped me to persist in my journey to become a psychologist and to embrace rather than fear/avoid the inevitable obstacles, self-doubt, and ambiguity along the way.

Scott Kamen, Associate Professor, Social Sciences Division, Valencia Campus

Favole al telefono by Gianni Rodari

Selection statement: I selected this book because it has been a key part of my journey of learning Italian. I also selected it because it pushes children and adults to rethink how they see the world. A volte, è il momento di uno sciopero!

Carmela Delia Lanza, Professor, Division of Liberal Arts & Education, UNM Gallup

Aterrando: Poems by Carmela Delia Lanza

Selection statement: This book of poetry has been an accomplishment for me, as a poet and also as the daughter of Italian immigrants. I am honored to have had the opportunity and time to write poems that give a voice to all of my southern Italian ancestors and their experiences. It is a tribute to their courage, strength, and perseverance.

Carlos LopezLeiva, Professor, Language, Literacy & Sociocultural Studies

Le Maya Q'atzij/Our Maya Word: Poetics of Resistance in Guatemala by Emil Keme

Matthew D. Mingus, Professor, UNM Gallup

Does Anything Eat Bankers? by Andy Zaltzman

Selection statement: Some of the few constants in my professional life, from my graduate training through my most recent promotion, have been the humor, wit, and wild pun-runs of British comedian Andy Zaltzman. In these troubled times, I hope folks can find temporary respite within the pages of this absurd and hilarious reaction to the 2008 financial crisis.

Nahir I. Otaño Gracia, Associate Professor, English

Arabian Nights by Muhsin Mahdi (Ed.), Husain Haddawy (Trans.), & Daniel Heller-Roazen (Ed.)

Selection statement: Both the frame tale and the stories within the stories of *The Arabian Nights* have been with me since I was a little girl. My father and grandfather would both tell me stories from the *Arabian Nights*. It contains action, adventure, tragedy, redemption, love, and so much more. I now teach it to my students and I get to bring this joy to new generations of readers.

Nadine R. Padilla, Associate Professor, School of Law

Treaty Justice: The Northwest Tribes, the Boldt Decision, and the Recognition of Fishing Rights by Charles Wilkinson

Catherine R. Rhodes, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Research Methods in Linguistic Anthropology by Sabina Perrino & Sonya E. Pritzker (Eds.)

Selection statement: This book is the first of its kind in linguistic anthropology--a book-length volume on research methods. This edited volume features contributions from linguistic anthropologists at the center of the field who operationalize methodological approaches to conducting research in linguistic anthropology in accessible ways. The book contains case studies, extension readings, and activities in which scholars of all types (students, faculty, community-based researchers, etc.) can engage in reflecting upon and figuring out their own research projects. Methodological training is not always at the center of training in any field, but it is essential to conducting sound research. This book is an important resource for researchers who seek to learn more about research methods in linguistic anthropology.

Michael Rocca, Professor, Political Science

Lincoln: A Photobiography by Russell Freedman

Selection statement: I selected *Lincoln: A Photobiography* because it sparked my earliest interest in U.S. history. When I was in elementary school, my godmother, Sue Whalen, who was an English teacher, gave me this book. Russell Freedman's account of Lincoln's life through photos drew me in. It made history feel vivid and interesting in a way I hadn't experienced before.

That early curiosity stayed with me. By the time I reached college, it had grown into a deeper interest in American politics and eventually led me to pursue it as a field of study. This book was the starting point. It opened the door to a subject that would shape my academic career and my professional life.

For me, it's a reminder of the lasting impact a single book can have.

Samuel Truett, Professor, History

Deadly Divide: How Insects, Pathogens, and People Defied the US-Mexico Border by Mary E. Mendoza

Selection statement: This pathbreaking book shows how non-human actors such as bugs, cows, and pathogens worked alongside people in crossing and shaping the US-Mexico border. It stands at the front lines of four different fields that have shaped my trajectory as a scholar and program builder at UNM: borderlands history, environmental history, Chicana and Latinx history, and Native American history. It is one of the most beautifully-written books to appear in all four fields and models how scholars can write for a wide audience and entangle academic with personal histories while maintaining the analytical rigor that make scholarly conversations matter. If you do nothing else today, read this book.

Adrienne Warner, Associate Professor, University Libraries & Learning Sciences

Atlas of the Heart by Brene Brown

Selection statement: I just picked up *Atlas of the Heart* again and it fell open to chapter 9, "Places we go when we search for connection: belonging, fitting in, connection, disconnection, insecurity, invisibility and loneliness." I came back to this chapter (and the rest of the book) so many times because it helped me understand what I was feeling and gave me the power to name my experience as I made my way through this part of academia. It made humanity seem human again. ...I also really needed some belonging researchers for that one article we were writing, and it gave me a place to start.

Shuya Wei, Associate Professor, Chemical & Biological Engineering

Electrochemical Methods: Fundamentals and Applications, 3rd Edition by Allen J. Bard, Larry R. Faulkner, Henry S. White

Selection statement: This book has been central to my growth as an electrochemist. As a graduate student, this book helped me make sense of difficult concepts and taught me how to think clearly about electrochemical systems. Over the years, it has remained my most trusted reference, guiding both my research in energy storage and my approach to mentoring students. Working through this book also reminded me of the persistence and curiosity needed in academic life. It has accompanied me through different stages of my career, and it continues to inspire the way I tackle scientific problems today.

Reilly White, Professor, Finance & Innovation, Anderson School of Management

Wolf Hall by Hilary Mantel

Selection statement: I selected Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* because its portrait of Thomas Cromwell turned out to be unexpectedly useful training for academic politics. Mantel captures a world where influence is subtle, alliances shift without warning, and success often depends on reading a room more carefully than anyone else. Cromwell's mix of strategic patience, quiet competence, and ability to survive the whims of powerful people felt uncomfortably familiar as I moved deeper into the Machiavellian world of university leadership.

The book reminded me that institutions are built not only on rules and structures but on personalities, negotiations, and (the occasional) Tudor-style intrigue. It inspired me by showing how someone who understands systems and human nature can create lasting impact within a complicated environment, even when the path forward is anything but straightforward.

Geralyn Schroeder Yu, Associate Professor, Art

Art and creativity in Reggio Emilia: exploring the role and potential of ateliers in early childhood education by Veia Vecchi

Selection statement: Veia Vecchi's perspective reveals how the atelierista embodies a bridge between artistic practice and educational theory, fostering dialogue among teachers, children, and materials. This collaboration challenges traditional hierarchies between art and pedagogy, positioning creativity as a shared process of research and reflection within the school community. Her book has inspired my journey as an art educator for decades and will surely stand as a lasting source of inspiration for future educators and researchers in the field of art education.