

Not Your School's Reading List: 10 Books to Understand Our World

At *Intellectual Takeout*, we strive to offer not only commentary on current events but also tangible advice for engaging with our increasingly chaotic world. That's why we're proud to present this new, biweekly series of literature recommendations.

These works have helped us and many others deepen their understanding of both the state of the world today and how it got there. We hope they prove engaging and informative for you as well.

This week's recommendations cover current and recent world events.

1. Michelle Malkin. [*Open Borders Inc.*](#) 2019.

"You already know that we have an immigration crisis in America. In this gripping exposé from bestselling author Michelle Malkin, you'll discover that the immigration crisis is no accident. Powerful special interest groups are pulling strings behind the scenes to keep America's borders open so that a flood of cheap labor can enrich our nation's elite and new generations of Democratic voters can steal our political future."

2. Alex Berenson. [*Pandemia*](#). 2021.

"The most important fact about the coronavirus pandemic that turned the world upside down in 2020 is that our response to

it has been an epic overreaction driven by a disastrous confluence of public and private interests. *Pandemia* explains how an illness that many people will even never know they had become the occasion for economically ruinous lockdowns and the suppression of personal freedom.”

3. Douglas Murray. [The Strange Death of Europe](#). 2017.

“Declining birth rates, mass immigration, and cultivated self-distrust and self-hatred have come together to make Europeans unable to argue for themselves and incapable of resisting their own comprehensive alteration as a society and an eventual end. This sharp and incisive book ends up with two visions for a new Europe. Perhaps Spengler was right: ‘civilizations like humans are born, briefly flourish, decay, and die.’”

4. Helen Andrews. [Boomers](#). 2021.

“The men and women who promised freedom and delivered disaster.’ With two recessions and a botched pandemic under their belt, the Boomers are their children’s favorite punching bag. But is the hatred justified? Is the destruction left in their wake their fault or simply the luck of the generational draw? In *Boomers*, essayist Helen Andrews addresses the Boomer legacy with scrupulous fairness and biting wit.”

5. Abigail Shrier. [Irreversible Damage](#). 2020.

“Why, in the last decade, has the diagnosis ‘gender dysphoria,’ transformed from a vanishingly rare affliction ... to an epidemic among teenage girls? Author Abigail Shrier presents shocking statistics and stories from real families to

show that America and the West have become fertile ground for a 'transgender craze' that has nothing to do with real gender dysphoria and everything to do with our cultural frailty."

6. Jeremy Scahill. [Dirty Wars](#). 2013.

"As US leaders draw the country deeper into conflicts across the globe, setting the world stage for enormous destabilization and blowback, Americans are not only at greater risk—we are changing as a nation. Scahill ... puts a human face on the casualties of unaccountable violence that is now official policy: victims of night raids, secret prisons, cruise missile attacks and drone strikes."

7. Craig Whitlock. [The Afghanistan Papers](#). 2021.

"After the United States and its allies removed the Taliban from power, the mission veered off course. But no president wanted to admit failure, especially in a war that began as a just cause. Instead, the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations sent more and more troops to Afghanistan and repeatedly said they were making progress, even though they knew there was no realistic prospect for an outright victory."

8. Glenn Greenwald. [No Place to Hide](#). 2014.

"Greenwald fits all the pieces together ... revealing fresh information on the NSA's unprecedented abuse of power with documents from the Snowden archive. Fearless and incisive, *No Place to Hide* has already sparked outrage around the globe and been hailed by voices across the political spectrum as an essential contribution to our understanding of the U.S.

surveillance state.”

9. Michael Shellenberger. [San Fransicko](#). 2021.

“Michael Shellenberger has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for thirty years. During that time, he advocated for the decriminalization of drugs ... and alternatives to jail and prison. But as homeless encampments spread, and overdose deaths skyrocketed, Shellenberger decided to take a closer look at the problem. What he discovered shocked him. The problems had grown worse not despite but because of progressive policies.”

10. Alexander Zhuchkovsky. [85 Days in Slavyansk](#). 2022.

“In 2014, the Maydan Revolution in Ukraine installed a new pro-Western government in Kiev. Fearful of the new government, the pro-Russian Donbass region in eastern Ukraine rose up in rebellion. ‘85 Days in Slavyansk’ is the only book written by an organizer of the 2014 rebellion that has been translated into English. It features extensive interviews with participants on both the Russian and Ukrainian sides of the war.”

The summaries of the works on this list include adapted versions of the prefaces or other texts of certain editions. Intellectual Takeout does not necessarily endorse any particular publisher. All credit for these descriptions goes to the original sources.

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