**Don't Give up, Don't Give In: Lessons from an Extraordinary Life**
By: Zamperini, Louis
CT275.Z35A3 2014

Though the life of 1936 Olympic athlete and WWII POW Zamperini was indeed extraordinary, the "life lessons" collected in this posthumously published work (Zamperini died in 2014) prove disappointingly commonplace. The insights he shared with coauthor Rensin tend toward the broadly general, such as, at the start of a chapter on survival, "Life on earth is dangerous: you should be prepared for anything." A section entitled "Anyone Can Turn Their Life Around," meanwhile, strikes a surprisingly Pollyannish note. Zamperini, with his extensive experience of peril, shares his counsel for dealing with dangerous situations, such as the eccentric earthquake-readiness tip to always keep a hard hat and pair of heavy shoes by one's bedside. He seems less charming than reckless when he cheerfully describes playing "pranks," including one that could have led to a fatal air accident…

**The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies**
By: Brynjolfsson, Erik and Andrew McAfee
HC79.I55B796 2014

Contending that technology is forcing the economy, people, and employers to reinvent themselves, Brynjolfsson and McAfee (coauthors, Race Against the Machine) merge economics with technology, review technology's development (e.g., Google's autonomous cars), discuss the economic effects of technology on society, and offer survival strategies such as overhauling education, training, and social and economic policies for the future economy and pairing human integrity with computers' processing power. Jeff Cummings's nicely paced reading holds listeners' attention.

**22 Ideas to Fix the World: Conversations with the World's Foremost Thinkers**
By: Dutkiewicz, Piotr and Richard Sakwa (Editors)
HN18.3.A13 2013

Review from: *PW Annex Reviews*  November 01, 2011
Political scientists Dutkiewicz and Sakwa present conversations with 23 leading social scientists about stressors facing the international financial system. The sections are often short on specifics and rely on highly abstract arguments. The specialists come from a variety of regions and backgrounds, but the majority espouse some form of heterodox or socialist economics… More than any of the ideas presented, one factor makes this book stand out: none of the "world's foremost thinkers" are women.

**The Myth of Martyrdom: What Really Drives Suicide Bombers, Rampage Shooters, and Other Self-Destructive Killers**
By: Lankford, Adam
HV6431.L34626 2013

Review from: *Choice*  December 01, 2013
Lankford has written a provocative and timely book. Refuting much of the existing scholarly and popular assessment about suicide terrorists, the author contends that suicide bombers and rampage killers are not heroic or brave but in fact similar to others who contemplate suicide and suffer from psychological distress and feelings of hopelessness, isolation, and frustration. He presents his argument in eight chapters, beginning with an introduction that orients readers to the importance of the topic. In subsequent chapters, he summarizes previous explanations of suicide terrorism, presents evidence of 130 cases of suicide bombers and their suicidal traits, and provides a “psychological autopsy” of the leader of the 9/11 attacks…

**Laws of Creation: Property Rights in the World of Ideas**
By: Cass, Ronald A. and Keith N. Hylton
K1401.C375 2013

Review from: *Choice*  September 01, 2013
Be it the illegal downloading of music on the Internet or the sale of fake designer products on street corners, intellectual property is under attack these days. For many, intellectual property is a barrier to commerce and the sharing of ideas, a zerosum game between the creator and the rest of the world. Cass and Hylton, authors of this cogent and readable book, disagree, arguing that the protection of intellectual property enhances social welfare and creativity. The book offers a good overview that defines what intellectual property is, explains why ideas are protected, and then provides successive chapter discussions of its four major components: patent, trade secrets, copyright, and trademark law…
The Smallest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way
By: Ripley, Amanda
LB43 .R625 2013

Review from: Choice May 01, 2014
Few books are this impressive and depressing, and few authors have assessed and evaluated US education as thoroughly as Ripley. After several trips to Europe and a number of schools in the US, the author reports on the many ways that US schools fall below (often far below) international standards of public education. Following three American public school students studying in Europe and their teachers, the author points out the many ways that their general performance is clearly, categorically deficient (although primarily in mathematics). How these American students adjusted to local standards clearly calls into question the educational backgrounds they arrived with. The hows and whys of their deficiencies are discussed throughout the book. They clearly concern the author and should concern every US reader of the book...

The New Digital Scholar: Exploring and Enriching the Research and Writing Practices of NextGen Students
By: McClure, Randall and James P. Purdy (Editors)
LB2369 .N39 2013

Review from: Library Journal June 15, 2013
With this collection, editors McClure and Purdy cast student researchers in a positive light, based in part on their output: "NextGen students write more than perhaps any generation in history." They propose that writing teachers and librarians must meet students where they research, rethink what research is, and design assignments that capitalize on students' strengths. The evidence supporting this approach-contributed by writing instructors, librarians, and technical professionals-is great. Sandra -Jamieson and Rebecca Moore Howard found that NextGen undergraduate students have trouble paraphrasing and summarizing knowledge and rarely read beyond the first few pages of sources. They offer solutions at both the syllabus and the program level...

America 1933: The Great Depression, Lorena Hickok, Eleanor Roosevelt, and the Shaping of the New Deal
By: Golay, Michael
PN4874 .H477 G65 2013

Review from: Booklist April 15, 2013
Though much has been written and speculated about the nature of the personal relationship between renowned reporter Lorena Hickok and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Hickok's 18-month journey across the country during the worst period of the Depression, and her subsequent influence on Eleanor and FDR's response to the economic and social crisis, is by far the more fascinating and historically significant story. Unearthing masses of primary resources, including the daily letters that passed between Lorena and Eleanor, Golay provides an intimate glimpse into the afflicted heartland as Hickok crisscrossed the nation at the behest of FDR advisor Harry Hopkins. Her razor-sharp eyewitness accounts of the poverty and the desperation that afflicted ordinary Americans on a daily basis in 1933 constituted a humanized touchstone for architects of the New Deal still ironing out the specifics of the unprecedented economic-recovery programs...

The Cult of Pythagoras: Math and Myths
By: Martinez, Alberto A.
QA21 .M335 2013

Review from: Choice May 01, 2013
Pythagoras, born around 570 BCE, is mentioned in numerous stories throughout history, and a composite constructed out of such reports would give the world a new superhero. Here, Martinez (Univ. of Texas, Austin; Science Secrets, CH, Nov’11, 49-1425) asks the right questions about Pythagoras. For example, how can readers trust any of the stories, especially those written many centuries after his death? What function do these stories play in one's understanding of the history of mathematics? A subject like mathematics places much store on truth—but this orientation does not seem to apply to its history. Martinez examines many accounts that exaggerate the feats of the mathematicians involved, such as Gauss's precocious youth and Galois's romantic death. He also considers the ubiquitous nature of the golden ratio and the wild claims made for it...

Understanding Microbes: An Introduction to a Small World
By: Dale, Jeremy W.
QR41.2 .D35 2013

Review from: Choice August 01, 2013
This book introduces readers to the fascinating world of microorganisms. Dale (Univ. of Surrey, UK) provides an excellent overview of the nature and interplay of microbes as essential components of our ecosystem that shape all of human existence on the planet. The narrative represents a distillation of volumes of scientific information, presented in an easy-to-read format. The author explains difficult topics and defines technical terms so that they are easily understood. Though the depth of presentation is limited to foundational material, the work includes enough relevant information for readers to develop a basic knowledge of each topic...