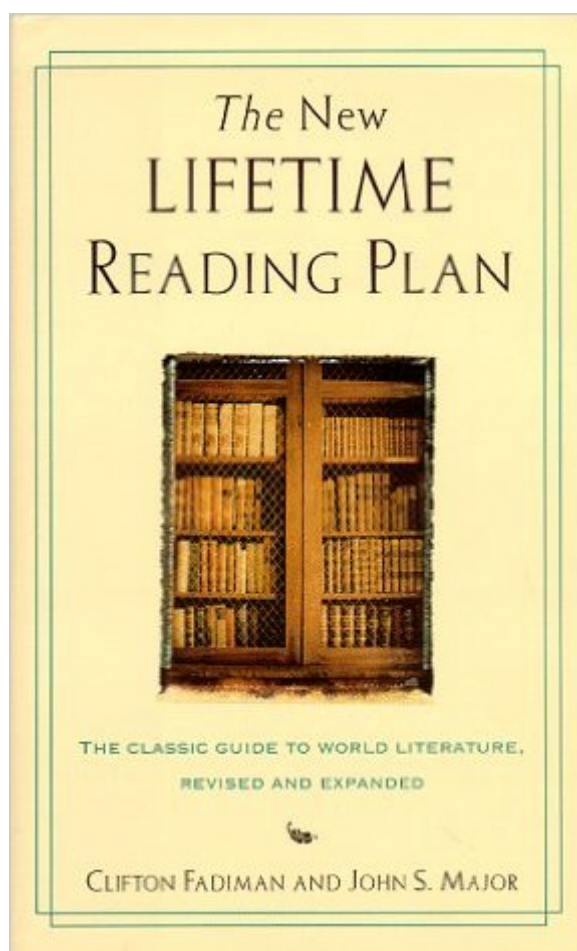


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The New Lifetime Reading Plan



Synopsis

Now in print for the first time in almost 40 years, The New Lifetime Reading Plan provides readers with brief, informative and entertaining introductions to more than 130 classics of world literature. From Homer to Hawthorne, Plato to Pascal, and Shakespeare to Solzhenitsyn, the great writers of Western civilization can be found in its pages. In addition, this new edition offers a much broader representation of women authors, such as Charlotte Brontë, Emily Dickinson and Edith Wharton, as well as non-Western writers such as Confucius, Sun-Tzu, Chinua Achebe, Mishima Yukio and many others. This fourth edition also features a simpler format that arranges the works chronologically in five sections (The Ancient World; 300-1600; 1600-1800; and The 20th Century), making them easier to look up than ever before. It deserves a place in the libraries of all lovers of literature.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is essential. It is opinionated and selective. It promises nothing but the considered opinion of two people that have been significantly involved with reading and thinking about literature throughout much of their lives. Many of the comments made by different reviewers at this site are addressed in the book itself. It explains why the Bible is not included. It explains why significant scientific works are excluded. Even within the strict realm of literature, they also explain that people might argue with their choices. In fact, this is part of the point. This is not the last word on literature. It is a starting place that provides a number of excellent points of departure. It invites you to look at and think about the authors, the books it recommends and ask some basic questions: Is the author

described interesting enough to read? If so, which book? Once finished with a book, do I agree with the comments made? Why or why not? The authors provide a good summary - some have honestly brought tears to my eyes I thought they were that good - and some pointers for background information, literary criticism, anthologies, suggested translations and other information. You may find that Thucydides is "charmless" as Clifton claims. I didn't. You may find that Finnegans Wake is worth your time. Clifton recommends avoiding it - which I find I agree after several attempts to read it. Most importantly to me, it is with the suggestions of this book that I was able to tackle works like Joyce's Ulysses and Mann's Magic Mountain that would have been impossible to do without the very helpful suggestions it contains. This book should be owned by anyone with even a passing interest in literature.

I haven't reviewed a book in a long time because customer reviews so often annoy me. Now I'm writing this one because another one has. Another reviewer here criticizes The New Lifetime Reading Plan and its predecessors for not including the Bible. That would be a good criticism indeed if not for this sentence from the preface to the book, " We assume that nearly every reader of this book will own a Bible and be at least somewhat accustomed to reading it; and there is nothing we might try to say about it that would not seem presumptuous." And for those who find the listing and others like it 'dogmatic', it is a list of the books that people who have read widely and deeply over many years have found lasting value in. The earlier works in the list were an influence on the later works. The later works have been appreciated by the contemporary authors influenced by the earlier ones. The list is a suggestion. These are the books I and people like me have enjoyed. Try them if they sound interesting to you. If they don't, then read something else. If you want to write a book suggesting your own favorites, knock yourself out. And as for political correctness, while that is indeed a problem in modern scholarship, it is not a problem in this book. Hippies may very well have played at Buddhism, but it is a religion older than Christianity that is still practiced by many sincere followers in Eastern countries. Hinduism is also older than Christianity and still practiced by many people. The works of those religions and cultures have not had much influence on the literature of the West because they were not well known until relatively recently.

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