

## ***“Librarian’s Shelf” by Heather St. Clair***

Experiencing the world through non-fiction

There are many ways to look at the world; from something as specific as a single baseball game, to a broad period of medieval enlightenment; from the large scale of the universe to relatively small scale of a state; and from the beginnings of our planet to the planet we know today. While the new books at the Columbus Public Library may not all seem to be similar to one another, they all exhibit one way of looking at the world, though widely varied, be it a small moment in time or the vastness of the universe.

In “Strange New Worlds,” author Ray Jayawardhana takes us on a journey through the universe searching for planets outside of our solar system. Learn about the birth of planets and solar systems; discover “Hot Jupiters” and astronomical bodies that aren’t really stars or planets, but something in between. Also read about how these planets are found and the quest for the “Goldilocks” planet, or the planets “just right” to support human life.

Dan Barry writes about the longest baseball game ever in “Bottom of the 33rd.” Discover the minor league game between the Pawtucket Red Sox and Rochester Red Wings that began Saturday, April 18, 1981 and ran eight hours into the small hours of the next day, Easter Sunday. You not only get the details of the game but of the players, umpires, managers and those who witnessed the game.

In 2008, Mark Stein described the events and factors leading to current boundaries of each state in the U.S. in the book “How the States Got Their Shapes.” He is back this year with “How the States Got Their Shape Too,” where he writes about the people who influenced the edges of the states. For example, he writes about how Stephan A. Douglas, Standing Bear, and General George Crook affected the shape of Nebraska. As a bonus, the book also includes the “Almost States” Cuba and Puerto Rico.

You may think that the bulk of science as we know it today was heavily influenced by western thought, but you might be surprised to learn that Arabic science has had a profound effect on modern Western science. In “The House of Wisdom,” by Professor Jim Al-Khalili, discover the Arabic Enlightenment and the innovation of medieval Arabic scholars. Work in algebra, astronomy, physics and more provided a foundation for later European scientists such as Isaac Newton and Nicolaus Copernicus.

The history of our planet... now that is a very long and broad history. Yet Tim Flannery has managed to squeeze the 4.5 billion years of our planet into 281 pages in “Here on Earth: A Natural History of the Planet.” From the origins of the planet, to life, the origin and migration of man, to the industrial revolution, scientific discovery, war and overpopulation and much more are discussed in this planetary and global history.

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