



# Hagaman Memorial Library

227 Main St., East Haven, CT 06512 203-468-3890 [hagamanlibrary.org](http://hagamanlibrary.org)

## Lengthening the Journey One Chapter at a Time

By: *Emili Lanno*

Based on research from the Yale School of Public Health, people over the age 50 can experience (or have) a longer life span with the help of consistent book reading.

This study called, “A chapter a day: Association of book reading with longevity,” published in the journal Social Science & Medicine (Sept. 2016,) was conducted by Avni Bavishi, who worked on this project when she was getting a master’s at Yale School of Public Health and is now a medical student in Chicago, Becca Levy from the Yale School of Public Health and Martin Slade, MPH.

With a conversation over email, Bavishi and Levy answered questions together about the study and how the idea and process came about.



“Reading books promotes deeper reading and helps readers draw more connections to the outside world,” said Bavishi and Levy.

The objective of the study was two-fold and the authors had previously seen other studies with mixed results about the longevity benefits of reading, but they did not specify what types of reading or a mechanism for why reading may extend life, said Bavishi and Levy.

“We hoped to explore both of these topics by determining whether reading books had a different effect on survival from reading magazines/newspapers and why this difference may exist.”

The study followed a group of 3,635 people consisting of adults over 50 drawn by the Health and Retirement Study, a nationally representative study funded by the National Institute on Aging. Since the 1980s, the investigators

at the University of Michigan have been collecting data, including data about reading since 2001, said Bavishi and Levy. The authors drew on this study to gather reading information for individuals through 2012, with an average of 9.5 years of follow-up.

After adjusting for all covariates including health, vision, marriage status, job status, depression, age, sex, race, comorbid diseases and education level, “book readers had a 20 percent reduction in mortality compared to those who did not read books at all. This survival advantage was mediated by the cognitive benefit of reading books,” compared to reading periodicals.

The study found that those who read books for an average of 30 minutes per day, or a chapter a day, showed a longevity advantage compared to those that did not read.

“Reading books promotes deeper reading and helps readers draw more connections to the outside world,” said Bavishi and Levy. “These features help older patients maintain their cognitive status as they age. The cognitive benefits appear to act as the mechanism for the longevity benefit.”

Bavishi and Levy agree the results of the study can help to promote reading with the connection of health by its side.

*“People often think of reading as a long-term commitment but it doesn’t necessarily have to be the case,” said Bavishi and Levy. “There are lots of quick and easy ways to start reading. Once people start going into their library to pick up a book, the small amounts read each day could have multiple benefits, [emphasis added].*

**Take your pick from a variety of programs held for all Kids, Teens and Adults at the library. Click on the “Calendar” tab on our website or request a copy of the library’s “Happenings” newsletter when you are at the library.**

**Summer Reading Program for Kids: Grande Finale Magic Show with Ed Pop! Wednesday, August 9 at 2 p.m.**  
Don't miss this fast-paced comic magic show sure to delight all ages. No reservations needed- just drop in! Come early - it's sure to be a full house! Also, for future magicians, ages eight and up, Ed Pop will be conducting a Magic Workshop at 3:30 p.m. Call 203-468-3890 for one of only 12 spots for the workshop.

**Tracking New England’s Most Imperiled Species: A Presentation by Natural History Writer Todd McLeish Wednesday, July 26 at 6:30 p.m.**

Todd McLeish will do a presentation based on his book, “Golden Wings and Hairy Toes: Encounters with New England’s Most Imperiled Wildlife.” It will profile 14 of New England’s most rare and endangered flora and fauna—mammals, birds, insects, plants and fish while discussing his experience with the biologists who are researching, monitoring and protection these species. Copies of his books will be available for \$20 each and a signing will follow the presentation.

Trustee and Staff Picks: From One Reader to Another

“Concussion” DVD based on the GQ article "Game Brain" by Jeanne Marie Laskas  
“Originally produced as a Motion Picture in 2015 and “based on a true story,” this is a dramatic thriller based on the incredible true David vs. Goliath story of American immigrant Dr. Bennet Omalu, the brilliant forensic neuropathologist who made the first discovery of CTE, a football-related brain trauma, in a pro player and fought for the truth to be known. Omalu’s emotional quest puts him at dangerous odds with one of the most powerful and beloved institutions in the world. The story much about Mike Webster the center from the Pittsburg Steelers shows how the correct diagnosis can lead to sweeping changes that allowed from the current concussion protocol now being followed by the NFL and awareness across all levels of football.” -Ron Whitney, *Library Board of Trustees President*

“A Deadly Affection” (Mystery/Historical Fiction) by Cuyler Overholt  
“The setting is New York City in the beginning of the 20th century. Dr. Genevieve Summerford, a recently graduated doctor practicing psychiatry, solves a set a murders exonerating her client accused of the murders. She also comes to terms with herself during this ordeal. A well-written and imaginative story, with plenty of twists and turns in the story as it progresses. The Library owns this book.” -Bruce George, *Library Director*

“Fodor's Florida” (2017)  
“With travel and destination trips underway this summer, Florida remains the most popular venue for those seeking to get away from it all. If you are going there, then be sure to bring this book with you. It has a complete list of restaurants, museums, hotels, and things to see, along with sample itineraries and money-saving tips so you get the most for your dollar. Don't forget to visit Disneyworld too!”- Christopher Hemingway, *Library Staff*

“The Rise and Fall of D.O.D.O” by Neal Stephenson  
“This is available as a book or audiobook with a full cast. This isn't his deepest and most powerful work, but since his last was about the destruction of the Moon, that's probably fine. It's a good time travel story with a few twists.”- Matt Earls, *Library Staff*

"Drag Becomes Him"  
“This is a 2015 documentary following the life and performance art of Seattle's premiere Jewish narcoleptic drag queen and winner of season 5 of RuPaul's Drag Race, Jinkx Monsoon.”-Dedee Baker, *Library Staff*

“A Long Way to Tipperary” by Robert Enders  
“It is set in the distant future and features warlords conspiring to conquer the Milky Way galaxy, families being rounded up for religious beliefs, and a resistance rising up to fight the occupiers of Earth. I read the first draft a couple of years ago and, in my biased opinion, thought it as good as any other science fiction I have read. My wife just bought it on Amazon and I am looking forward to reading the finished product.” -Michael Enders, *Board of Trustees Treasurer*

Meet the Editor

My name is Emili Lanno, I am a Southern Connecticut State University graduate with a B.A. in Journalism and I have been a patron at Hagaman Memorial Library since the day that I was able to pick up a book. As the editor of our bimonthly newsletter, I hope to inform our readers on any happenings, events and features about the library that can make it a place the community chooses to dedicate its time. Happy Reading! Email: elanno@hagmanlibrary.org