

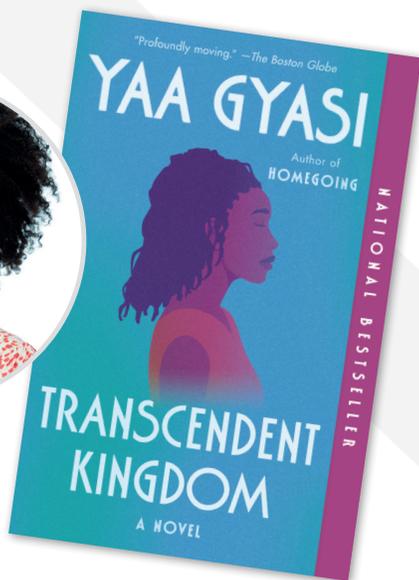
## FIRST PAGES 2021

**Each summer, all incoming students, from all corners of the Northeastern global network, read a selected literary work to prepare for their first academic experience in college.**

It is a shared experience that will serve as common ground as they form the relationships that will sustain them throughout their time at Northeastern. First Pages authors have included acclaimed writers Tracy Kidder, Ann Patchett, Dave Eggers, Atul Gwande, and Bryan Stevenson.

During Welcome Week, all students come together to hear the author personally present their work. The experience continues as students engage with the themes and pressing issues highlighted within the First Pages selection in their courses, as well as additional “Next Pages” events designed to lead them to new channels of discovery, service, advocacy, and social action they can pursue throughout their time at Northeastern.

### FIRST PAGES 2021 EVENTS



- **Keynote Author Talk**  
● **Wednesday, September 8th, 8pm EST.**

**Matthews Arena and Online**

Award winning author, Yaa Gyasi, will discuss the experiences that led her to write *Transcendent Kingdom*. Moderated by Professor N. Fadeke Castor, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, with a special welcome from Provost David Madigan. Students may submit questions to the author.

- **Student Conversations with the Author**  
**September 13, 6:30pm EST.**

Yaa Gyasi is excited to converse with entering Northeastern students about their impressions and curiosities regarding *Transcendent Kingdom*.

- **Faculty Conversations with the Author**  
**August 25, 11am EST.**

Northeastern instructors who are adopting *Transcendent Kingdom* in their classes have a special opportunity to speak with Yaa Gyasi about how they might teach the issues raised in her award-winning book.

# NEXT PAGES 2021 EVENTS

 In-person Event  
 Online Event

 **Health and Wellness Resource Fair**  
**September 9, 11am – 1pm, Library Quad**

University Health and Counseling Services (UHCS) and Office of Education and Prevention at Northeastern (OPEN)

*Transcendent Kingdom* highlights the need for open communication and acceptance of mental health issues. Stop by the Library Quad for interactive activities on wellness topics like mental health, physical health, alcohol education, sexual health and consent/relationships. There will be giveaways and information on Northeastern resources!

 **Next Pages Writers' Workshop**  
**September 14, 28 | October 12 | 6:15pm-7:30pm EST.**

Professor Kat Gonso, CSSH

The spark for Gyasi's novel was a visit to a Stanford University lab where a friend worked; it was not intended as a research trip. It began as a short story and morphed into a novel with several autobiographical elements. In this three-part Writers' Workshop, we'll discuss how to pull stories from the everyday: your life, the news, and random encounters. Each writer will have the opportunity to receive feedback on a work-in-progress.

 **We Wear the Masks: Cultural Context of Mental Health as Depicted in *Transcendent Kingdom***  
**September 14, 28 | October 12, 26 | November 2, 16, 30 | 6:00pm-8:00pm EST.**

Professor Vanessa Johnson, Bouvé

In this *Inside the Honors Studio* series, **open to all**, you will use *Transcendent Kingdom* and the poem *We Wear the Masks* by Paul Laurence Dunbar as you work to understand mental illness in the context of culture and racism. **Applications are due September 10 for this 6-session experience.**

 **Faith and Science: Mindfulness 101 Training**  
 **September 16, 12pm EST.**

Executive Director Alexander Kern & Sagar Rajpal, Center for Spirituality, Dialogue and Service

*Transcendent Kingdom* reveals how both faith and neuroscience can result in our better understanding of human health and wellness. In this 1-hr experiential training, you will explore the concept and origins of mindfulness and learn how it can support wellness and offer greater clarity and balance for problem-solving, decision-making, and improved relationships.

 **The Hijacked Brain: Delving Deeper into Depression and Addiction**  
**September 20, 2pm EST.**

Professor Heather Brenhouse, College of Science

In *Transcendent Kingdom*, Gifty's family was affected by depression and drug addiction—two diseases that reflect disorders in motivation and reward processing. Dr. Brenhouse will delve into the mechanisms that Gifty investigated in her doctoral research, exploring some of the brain and body (yes, body) circuits that control our experience of, and responses to, rewarding stimuli in our environment. You'll explore how the stress of immigration and racism can ignite psychiatric illnesses.

 **Creative Freewriting and Journaling**  
**September 20 | October 4, 18 | November 1, 15, & 29 | 6pm EST.**

Dr. Alexander Kern & Sagar Rajpal, Center for Spirituality, Dialogue, and Service

Gyasi is an acclaimed writer. The act of writing is much more than an accomplishment of technical proficiency; it is a practice that can sustain our wellbeing and teach us about ourselves. You are warmly invited to this workshop on the spiritual practice of creative writing, where you will learn how to use creative writing as a means of promoting wellness, growth, and creative expression. No experience necessary. Supplies provided.

 **The Power and Passion of The Percussive Arts**  
**September 22nd, 12pm EST.**

Dan Foote

In the spirit of Ghana, join instructor Dan "Thunder" Foote at a community drum circle celebrating the healing powers of music. Electrocuted at the age of 19 after his first year of college at a conservatory of music, Dan (like the Phoenix) rose from the ashes to rebuild his life and thrives as a working musician in the greater Boston area. Instruments and materials provided.

 **The Power of Place: Boston's Hidden Histories**  
**September 25, 11:00am-3:00pm EST.**

Professor Angel Nieves and Jessica Linker, CSSH

Both of Gifty's parents confronted the challenges of transitioning to a new and unfamiliar home. It's easy to feel disconnected from the history of a place, especially when you might only be living on a college campus for a few years. In this event, you'll go on a scavenger hunt designed to expose you to Boston's hidden histories of African American, Asian American, and LGBTQIA communities that surround Northeastern.

● **Exploring Wellness Through Art**  
**September 28, 1pm - 3pm EST.**

**Kelly Moran, University Health and Counseling Services**

Gifty's experiences as a student were complex, leading her to question who she was as a person, an emerging professional, and a daughter. This workshop—an introduction to using art mediums to support self-development and care—will enable you to explore some of the transitions and emotions you've recently experienced, from COVID-19 to beginning college, while developing coping skills for the future. Meet a UHCS clinician and begin your discovery.

● **New Pages: A Discussion on Exploring Identities in College**  
**October 7, 6pm - 7pm EST.**

**Cinqué Dunham-Carson, John D. O'Bryant Institute**

Gifty's first years as an undergraduate student were important (and tumultuous) moments of discovery in her life. The college experience is a great arena to discover, discard, and re-imagine various aspects of one's many identities. Join us for a student-led discussion on the opportunities and challenges of identity as an undergraduate learner, inspired by themes of *Transcendent Kingdom*.

● **I'm Here for You: How to Have Tough Conversations**  
**October 13, 7pm EST.**

**Brigitte Cronin, Sophie Horton, Olivia Hutchins, Grace Rootness, and Emma Tusuzian**

Gifty found it difficult to talk with her mother about her depression. Join student organizations Lean On Me, Active Minds, and Husky to Husky for an interactive workshop on how to handle tough conversations and communicate effectively with those around you. This workshop will cover conversation skills, mental health resources on and off campus, and how to find professional help.

● **Call to Action: Starting a Nonprofit Organization as a Student**  
**October 14, 7pm EST.**

**Joshua Leaston, College of Science Alum**

Joshua Leaston, a Northeastern graduate, current Stanford MD student, and cofounder of the Boston-based nonprofit organization Envision Difference, will explain how you can start your own nonprofit to tackle many societal issues such as mental health, substance use, and other topics that were touched upon in *Transcendent Kingdom*. Come with ideas and questions about how you can integrate community service into your Northeastern experience.

● **Panel Discussion with Northeastern Spiritual Advisors**  
**October 20, 6pm EST.**

**Dr. Alexander Kern & Sagar Rajpal, Center for Spirituality, Dialogue, and Service**

*Transcendent Kingdom* discusses how the practice of religion and science mutually pursue the uncovering of truth and meaning in our lives. Explore the intersections of faith, science, and reason with Spiritual Advisors of different world religions and traditions.

● **Passage to Success Through Undergraduate Research**  
**October 28, 6:30pm EST.**

**Professor Craig Ferris, College of Science, and students**

As depicted in *Transcendent Kingdom*, advances in neuroscience enable us to observe and map the inner workings of the brain. Professor Craig Ferris, Director of the Center for Translational Neuroimaging, and student researchers, will guide us through their lab, illustrating how their work with magnetic resonance empowers our understanding the neurobiology of the brain in health and disease, including opioid addiction, while forging pathways of success for students.

● **A Day in The Life of a Behavioral Neuroscience PhD Student**  
**November 2, 6pm EST.**

**Lauren Granata, College of Science**

Gifty's life experiences lead her to STEM research and, ultimately, to a career in neuroscience. How does her story compare with that of an actual PhD student? In this session, Lauren Granata will discuss her life as a doctoral student in behavioral neuroscience, sharing how her past and present inform her work about how early life environments shape the brain to guide social behaviors.

● **Wicked Conversations: On Identity, Intersectionality, and Ideology**  
**November 3, 2pm EST.**

**Professors Peter Maber and Riyukta Raghunath, New College of the Humanities, London**

Wicked problems are social or cultural problems that are difficult to explain and inherently impossible to solve. Dr's Maber and Raghunath will host an online multidisciplinary panel discussion focusing on "wicked" problems arising from *Transcendent Kingdom*. Touching on topics such as identity and ideology, this session takes an intellectual approach by engaging in meaningful dialogue that embraces empathy and mutual respect.

**Resource Guide**

To deepen the learning experience, Snell librarians create an extensive resource guide for students and instructors along with on-site exhibits. [subjectguides.lib.neu.edu/firstpages/resources](https://subjectguides.lib.neu.edu/firstpages/resources)

Check the First Pages website for registration and access details. 

