



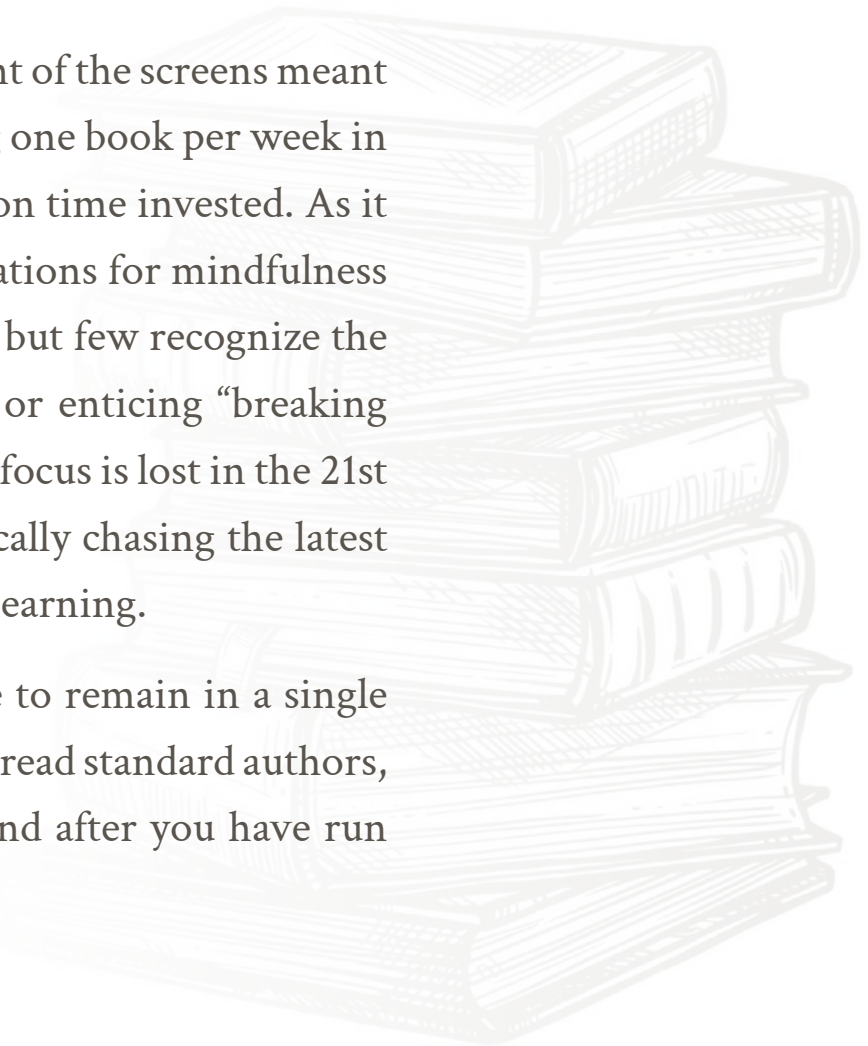
BROYHILL BOOK CLUB

SUMMER 2023

ABOUT THE BROYHILL BOOK CLUB

The Broyhill Book Club was born in 2015 with the simple idea that less time in front of the screens meant more time for independent thought and deep work. I set out with a goal of reading one book per week in an attempt to shift my lifestyle away from online diversions and optimize return on time invested. As it turns out, substituting television for an Amazon Kindle has extraordinary implications for mindfulness and clarity of thought. All good investors appreciate the need to read extensively, but few recognize the benefit of reading broadly. The temptation to click on every email notification or enticing “breaking news” story too often leads us down a never-ending Google rabbit hole. The art of focus is lost in the 21st century. Instead, we spend the majority of our time in front of the screens erratically chasing the latest headlines rather than adopting a more attentive and comprehensive approach to learning.

The Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca described a well-ordered mind as one able to remain in a single place and linger among a limited number of master thinkers. “So you should always read standard authors, and when you crave a change, fall back upon those whom you’ve read before...and after you have run over many thoughts, select one to be thoroughly digested that day.”



ALL KNOWLEDGE IS CUMULATIVE. SUCCESSFUL INVESTORS COMPOUND THEIR WISDOM THROUGH BROAD READING OVER A LIFETIME.

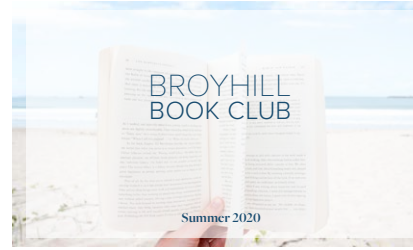
The following pages outline our reading journey over the past year. As always, we enjoy the journey as much as sharing what we've learned with friends. Clients of Broyhill are welcome to choose one book for their own library — it's our way of saying "thank you" for giving us the motivation to come into the office every morning smarter than the previous day. In addition to this year's journey in the pages that follow, you can view previous editions of the Broyhill Book Club by clicking the images below.



2022



2021



2020

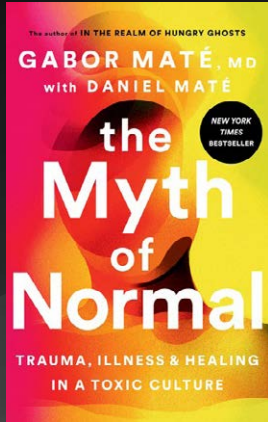


2018



2017

BOOK OF THE YEAR



I BELIEVE THAT THE BEST BOOKS ARE THOSE THAT CHALLENGE US TO THINK DEEPLY ABOUT OUR OWN EXPERIENCES AND THE WORLD AROUND US.

This year, an old friend recommended one such book that resonated with me on a deeply personal level.

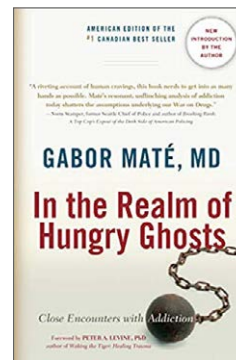
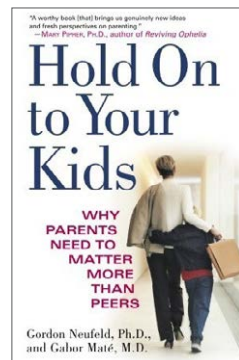
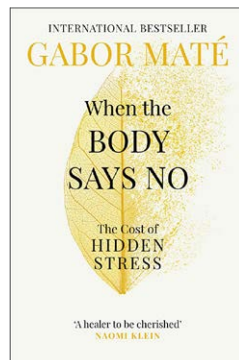
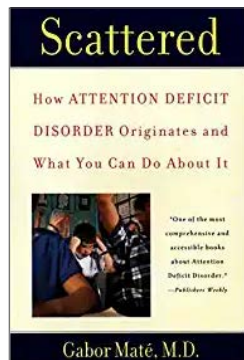
In *The Myth of Normal*, Gabor Maté discusses how our culture's obsession with individualism and achievement can lead to stress, addiction, and illness. Contrary to consensus opinion, our view of "normal" is anything but; the stresses of modern-day living weigh on our bodies and minds at our health's expense, burdening our immune system and undermining our emotional balance. In short, our view of "normal" may be damaging our mental health.

In the wake of the pandemic, many have struggled with feelings of anxiety and depression. Given the unprecedented challenges we have faced, this is perfectly understandable. The pandemic disrupted our lives in ways we never imagined and took a toll on our mental health. As someone who has personally struggled with chronic stress and occasional bouts of depression, I have always been curious about how these tendencies developed. As I read this book, I found myself reflecting on my own childhood experiences and the learned coping mechanisms that provided short-term relief. Maté's insights have helped me better understand myself and given me a greater appreciation for how adversity and trauma can affect our development.

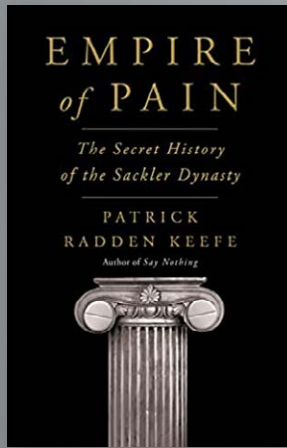
BOOK OF THE YEAR

Maté challenges the idea that mental illness is purely a biological phenomenon. Instead, social and cultural factors significantly shape our mental and physical health (a view also expressed throughout [The Wim Hof Method](#), featured in last year's book club). The bottom line: our environment alters our genes, while childhood experiences shape our behavior patterns. The *Myth of Normal* challenges the idea of a normal or happy childhood and suggests that most of us experience some degree of adversity that affects brain development and genetic activity.

I highly recommend *The Myth of Normal* to anyone who wants to understand the relationship between childhood experiences, addiction, and mental health. I went on to review everything Maté has published – [Scattered Minds](#), [When the Body Says No](#), [Hold On To Your Kids](#), and [In The Realm of Hungry Ghosts](#) – after reading his latest work but found *The Myth of Normal*, co-written with his son Daniel, more engaging than any other. It is a thought-provoking and powerful book that will challenge you to think deeply about yourself and the world around you.



RUNNERS UP



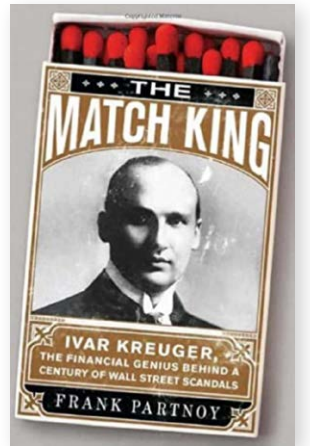
EMPIRE OF PAIN

For those looking for something a little lighter, or at least a little less introspective, we'd recommend two equally outrageous stories—one more recent than the other—that are so incredible that you are sure to question their accuracy.

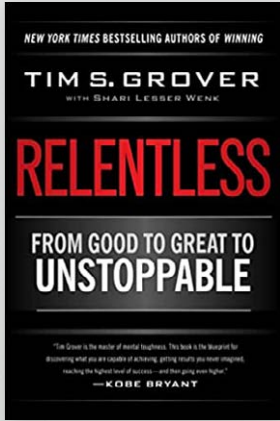
As a long-term investor in the pharmaceutical distribution industry, and as someone who has seen the devastating impact of the opioid epidemic firsthand, I have closely followed this spiraling crisis for years. And yet, despite what I already knew about these issues, I found myself both infuriated and depressed watching Hulu's *Dopesick*, a thought-provoking television series that takes a deep dive into the crushing impact of the opioid crisis in America. After finishing the series, I immediately ordered a copy of [Empire of Pain](#) to learn more about the infamous Sackler family and their pharmaceutical empire. This captivating and scandalous story explores the web of corporate greed, medical malpractice, and systemic failures that contributed to the widespread addiction and loss of countless lives (see related commentary on addiction on the prior page).

THE MATCH KING

Okay. In hindsight, *Empire of Pain* might not qualify as “something a little lighter.” So how about a thrilling tale of ambition, greed, and deceit that takes us back to the roaring 20s? Most investors today are familiar with the term Ponzi Scheme, compliments of Charles Ponzi's fraudulent activities that were exposed around the year 1920. But Ponzi had nothing on Ivan Kreuger, the matchstick magnate who lit up the business world like a comet, in the jaw-dropping plot told by Frank Partnoy in [The Match King](#). Kreuger captivated the masses with his wizardry and grandiose promises, all while brewing a speculative frenzy beneath the surface, matched only by today's intoxicating allure of get-rich schemes. It serves as a timely reminder that even in the modern era, the temptations and risks of speculative ventures remain. See also Wall Street Bets, Crypto, SPACS, and the list goes on, and on, and . . .



PEAK PERFORMANCE



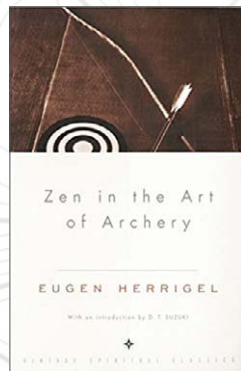
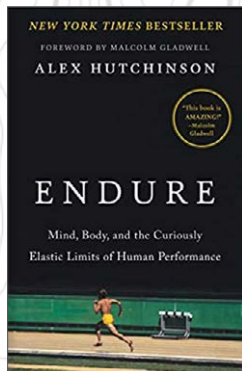
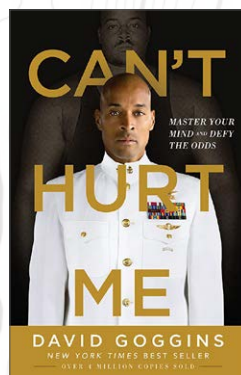
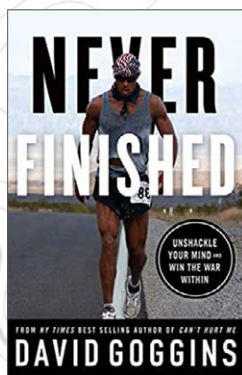
RELENTLESS

Thomas Edison spelled out the three great essentials to achieving anything worthwhile. In his words, they are: “First, hard work; second, stick-to-itiveness; third, common sense.” Winston Churchill offered similar words of advice. “Continuous effort—not strength or intelligence—is the key to unlocking our potential.” Sitting with that advice, the relationship between strength and intelligence was not lost on me. Over the years, I’ve read many books on the psychological aspects of peak performance in both physical and mental capacities. As my Muay Thai training advanced this year (at least up until a dislocated shoulder), I turned to some of the greats in the field to better understand what it takes to put in the hard work and push myself

to the next level, looking for ways to improve.

[*Relentless*](#) is an action-packed guide to accomplishing just that – becoming unstoppable. Written by Tim Grover, a true master of the mental game and a legendary trainer who has helped some of the world’s top athletes achieve greatness and push past their limits—including both Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant—it is a masterclass in mental toughness and elite performance. Grover’s philosophy is simple: if you want to succeed, you need to be relentless. You need to be willing to do whatever it takes to win, and you need to be willing to push yourself to the limit.

PEAK PERFORMANCE



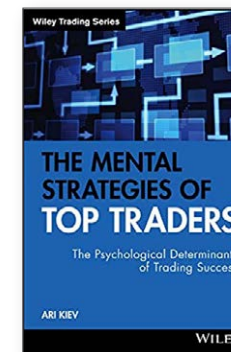
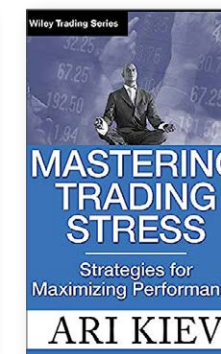
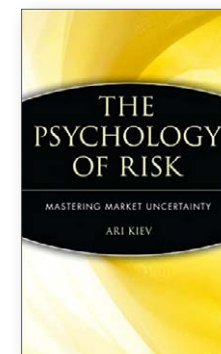
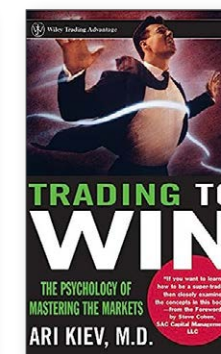
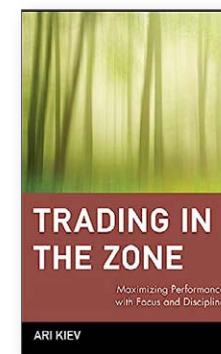
Grover's work nudged me to explore the subject further, so I revisited some of my past favorites and made some new additions to the Broyhill Library of *Peak Performance*. A couple of books from our prior lists are worth particular mention here. [Mastery](#) is a short, insightful read by George Leonard, originally conceived as an article for Esquire magazine in 1978. The book's core idea is that mastery is a journey, not a destination; it's about committing to a practice, embracing the process, and cultivating a mindset of continuous learning and improvement. [Mind Gym](#) draws on the research of two prominent sports psychologists to share techniques for improving performance; each laid out in short, engaging chapters. After first reading this one, I shared [this note](#) with our boys.

This year, two more were added to the mix. I thoroughly enjoyed [Never Finished](#) by David Goggins almost as much as his first book, [Can't Hurt Me](#). If you ever find yourself in a rut, Goggins' writing promises to lift you up. His journey as an ultra-endurance athlete is like no other, competing in the Badwater Ultramarathon (135 miles), the Western States 100 (100 miles over 18,000 feet of elevation), and the Moab 240 (238 miles), to name a few. Despite numerous setbacks—stress fractures, severe dehydration, a collapsed lung, and a herniated disk—he went on to set records and achieve unimaginable levels of endurance. For more on endurance, I'd also recommend [Endure](#), a memoir written by Cameron Hanes, detailing his journey of pushing the limits of physical and mental endurance through hard work, dedication, and perseverance. And for those intrigued by bow hunting, it was a good reminder to revisit another classic, [Zen in the Art of Archery](#).

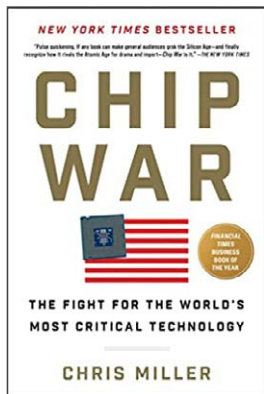
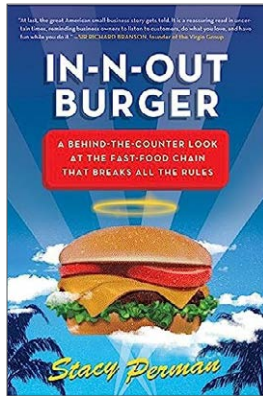
PEAK PERFORMANCE

This is probably where some of you may wonder how basketball, endurance racing, and bow hunting tie back to investing, which brings us full circle back to Churchill and [The Myth of Normal](#). Taking care of our mental health is just as important as taking care of our physical health. When we are in balance, we are better able to perform at our best, both physically and mentally. Our mental and physical health are inextricably linked. So, by taking care of our physical health and understanding the impact one has on the other, we can improve our mental health and unlock our true potential.

Last year, we highlighted [Market Mind Games](#) by Denise Shull (aka Wendy Whodes) as evidence that a deeper understanding of our psychology can help deter investment mistakes. After reading Maté's work, I have since gone back to the real world, Billions' coach, with a new appreciation of how our childhood experiences even shape our investment philosophy. How that translates into value investing is a story for another day. For now, we'll leave you with a few additional books by one of Wall Street's most highly regarded performance coaches, Ari Kiev (hat tip to Kyle for the recommendation). Many of these are out of print, but it's still possible to find good, used copies at a reasonable price. My favorites were [Trading in the Zone](#), [Trading to Win](#), [The Psychology of Risk](#), [Mastering Trading Stress](#), and [The Mental Strategies of Top Traders](#). For those not particularly excited about paying up for used merchandise, I shared this [Conviction Checklist](#) with our team, synthesizing what I learned across my Kiev Schmorgisborg.



BUSINESS BIOGRAPHIES



Ever wonder how the average Chick-fil-A store pulls in over \$4.5 million in annual sales operating only six days per week? To put that in perspective, consider that most McDonald's stores, operating almost 24-7, fall short of \$3 million in annual sales. Steve Robinson, the iconic brand's chief marketing officer from 1981-2015, shares the inside story of how Chick-fil-A turned prevailing theories of fast-food marketing upside down and built one of the most successful and beloved brands in America. If nothing else, you'll finally learn where those "Eat Mor Chikin" cows came from. Pair with [In-N-Out Burger](#) "for a "Behind-the-Counter Look at the Fast-Food Chain That Breaks All the Rules." Like its "Fowl Friends," In-N-Out Burger boasts a tight-knit family culture built upon a legacy of core values and treating its employees like the rockstars they are. Plus, you'll get the scoop on In-N-Out's secret menu, including its Animal-style fries and the notorious "Double-Double."

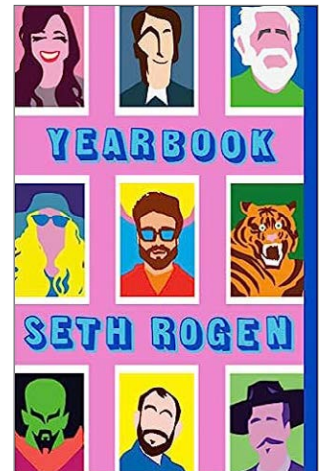
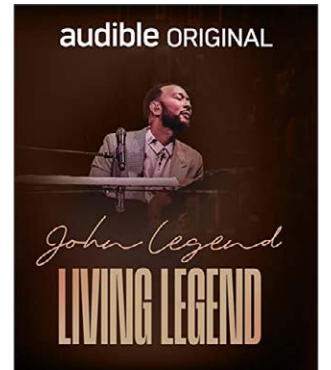
If you find yourself too hungry reading these gems, switch gears and check out [Chip War](#), a timely read given the rising geopolitical threesome between China, the US, and Taiwan. Or for something slightly less stressful, [The Spotify Play](#) offers a colorful history of how Swedish wiz kids redefined the music industry and became a tech powerhouse in the process. Although our nose for value led us in the right direction late last year, as we ramped up work on the semiconductor industry, we didn't get there fast enough to enjoy the recent rally. But we are hopeful we get another bite of the apple. Thankfully, reading up on Sweden's scruffy, awkward tech guys did pique our interest in the rapidly changing music industry, and that work did lead us to establish a new investment in the sector which we continue to scale. We'll look forward to sharing more on this in our mid-year letter to investors.

AUDIBLE



While I do most of my reading the old-fashioned way, I do listen to the occasional book on Audible, usually on long trips. The authors that accompanied me on last year's road trips included a couple of actors, comedians, and one living legend. Fun Fact I: In 1998, a junior at the University of Pennsylvania accompanied a friend to a recording session for Lauryn Hill's debut album, *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*. This friend, who happened to be a backup singer on the album, bragged about the student's musical prowess, and Hill was sufficiently impressed to let him play piano on what I think is the best song on the album – "Everything Is Everything." The student, of course, was John Legend. Fun Fact II: My dad used to cut and style Lauren Hill's hair at his NJ salon while she was with The Fugees.

Check out [Living Legend](#) for some great background music throughout the artists' inspiring stories. But for a laugh-out-loud listen, don't miss Seth Rogan's [Yearbook](#), full of stories so hilarious, it's hard to imagine they are true. A few of my favorites: when he was 12 years old, Rogan got his first paid gig writing jokes for a mohel to help lighten up Jewish circumcision ceremonies; numerous run-ins with Kanye West, projectile vomiting on mushrooms in Amsterdam, and of course, the drama created by his movie *The Interview* about two guys who go to North Korea to assassinate Kim Jong-un.

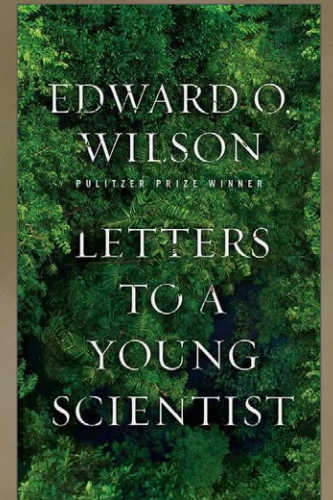


LESSONS FOR LUCCA

The late E.O. Wilson was considered one of the world's leading biologists. Wilson's passion for the natural world developed at an early age, exploring the forests and swamps near his home in Birmingham and developing a love for insects; he is widely recognized for his extensive research on ants, conducting field studies, and investigating their behavior around the world.

I first read Wilson's *Letters to a Young Scientist* when my son, Lucca, was barely walking. It immediately struck a chord as I watched him crouching down, as close to the ground as humanly possible, lifting up every rock in the yard while examining the smallest details of every ant, beetle, and roly polly he discovered. There was hardly a day that passed when he didn't run into the house screaming, "Look how cute he is!!" proudly displaying the grossest bug you've ever seen in the palm of his hand.

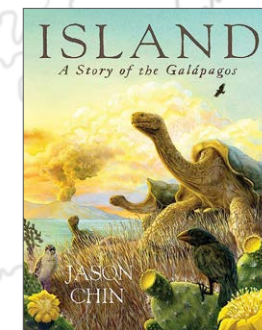
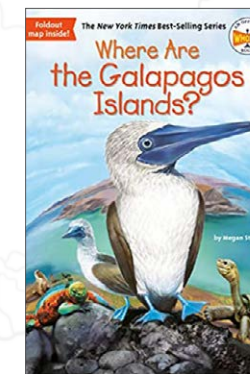
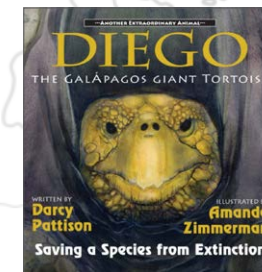
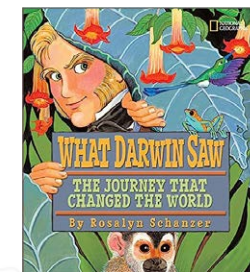
It's safe to say that Lucca was (is) a quirky kid. As the years passed, the one thing I've consistently wanted for him is to maintain that childlike curiosity, that need to explore and to understand through the constant questions, but more importantly, by literally getting his hands dirty every day.



LESSONS FOR LUCCA

In *Letters to a Young Scientist*, Wilson wrote that “The best way to ignite a love for science in a child is to expose them to the wonders of the natural world and encourage their curiosity.” So since I first noticed him turning over rocks in the yard, I’ve been looking forward to sharing with him one of the most incredible and diverse displays of nature in the world, if only he would hang onto that youthful fascination. Well, he’s ten years old now, and we recently found him by himself looking for salamanders in a creek at a birthday party where every other kid was stationed in a video game truck in the driveway. So I think we are safe. And I hope he enjoys our trip to the Galápagos Islands this summer half as much as I enjoy spending time watching him in his element.

I’m hopeful that our cruise with National Geographic and Lindblad Expeditions (thankfully, we passed on the stock when it was first pitched to us many years ago) will further inspire Lucca as we witness the magic of these islands firsthand in the company of world-renowned scientists, naturalists, educators, and researchers. Of course, we’ve done some reading to prepare in advance. [What Darwin Saw](#) and [Where Are the Galapagos Islands?](#) opened his eyes to the geological history and unique ecosystem of the archipelago. He was drawn to the stories of the island’s endemic species, such as “[Diego the Galápagos Giant Tortoise](#),” and the conservation efforts which saved his species from extinction. And in [Island: A Story of the Galápagos](#), he was inspired by the efforts of scientists and activists to protect the fragile ecosystem of the islands. More to report when we return in August. Until then, feel free to reach out with any tips if you have experience in the Galapagos!



THE NEIL STEPHENSON CANON

I'm not the only one at Broyhill who piles up books by their nightstand, their desk, their car, or wherever else might be convenient. Reading deeply is embedded in our culture. It is a critical and endemic aspect of our investment philosophy. Some may call our approach slow. We call it diligence. To recognize truly worthwhile investments, you need to think differently and think deeply. You might even say this approach is in our DNA—an apt analogy when you consider our Director of Research, Andrea Sefler, holds a PhD in Organic Chemistry. These are some of the readings that pushed her thinking over the past year.

This year I've decided to focus exclusively on the writings of Neil Stephenson. Most often shelved in the science fiction section, his books are better described as “speculative fiction,” with the core of the plots firmly grounded in current technology realities or adjacent possibilities. The stories serve as a thought experiment, allowing him and the reader to explore and consider potential economic, social, and environmental impacts and outcomes of technological development. For the investor, we can glean some insight into the potential consequences and secondary effects of mainstreaming some of the most cutting-edge science of today, all while enjoying some awesome stories!



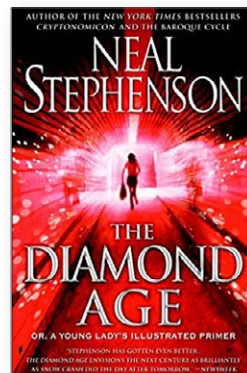
THE NEIL STEPHENSON CANON

Before I outline a sentence or two about each of the books, I want to say a few things about how to read the books. Order is not important. Yes, some of his characters and their kin do carry over from one novel to the next, but it is more a means to prompt the reader to think about a historical narrative arc as continuous. Each book stands fully on its own, so feel free to select the ones that cover topics of interest. But the most important thing about Neil Stephenson's books is not to feel an obligation to finish them. He is a prolific writer, the books are often quite long, and he is not a closer. The stories are brilliant, but they often end in deliberately drawn-out chaos to illustrate some particularly bad choices or policies regarding the technology being explored. If you've gotten the point, don't feel like you need to sit out the last acts, particularly if doing so will spoil your appreciation for the book overall. Life's short. Move on to the next one on the list! And so, here are the books and themes:



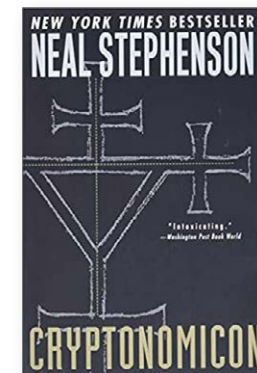
SNOW CRASH

This is the book that coined the term “metaverse” and explores various social and economic constructs that could arise from widespread use, including extreme forms of capitalism and collectivism.



THE DIAMOND AGE

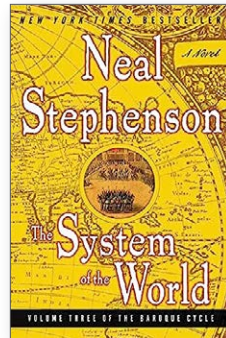
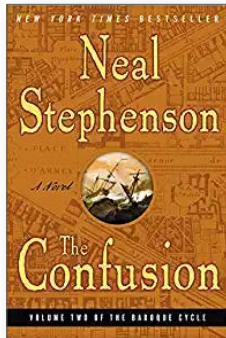
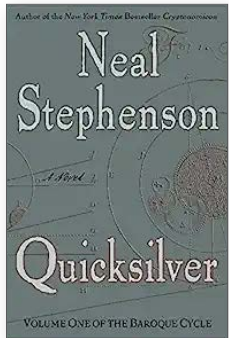
Explores concepts and usages of nanotechnology with a fascinating collection of fairy tales that teach computer science theory interwoven into the book.



CRYPTONOMICON

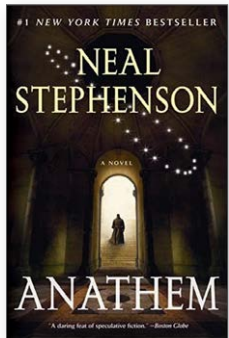
Cryptography and currency theory; this was a 1999 imagining of Bitcoin.

THE NEIL STEPHENSON CANON



THE BAROQUE CYCLE

This is a collection of three novels tracking the most important 17th and 18th-century science, math, and economic developments, including the creation of monetary systems. These contain a blend of full fictional characters and imagined personalities of real historical figures to craft narratives exploring the causes/effects of these advances.



ANATHEM

Explores the interaction of quantum mechanics with metaphysics and ancient Greek philosophy.



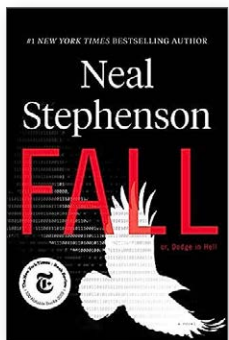
REAMDE

Covers cyberterrorism and online gaming and could be considered a lead-in to the world encountered in Snow Crash.



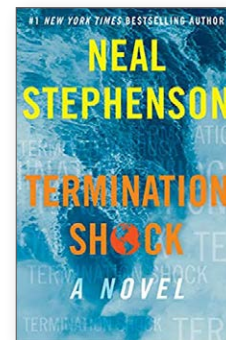
SEVENEVES

Considers the outcome of a catastrophic asteroid impact and the technical, social, and political needs of extraterrestrial human societies.



FALL

Full neural network mapping as a means to immortality and what the development of an autonomous simulated world populated by such entities might entail. Injects interesting biblical parables into the story of the digital society.

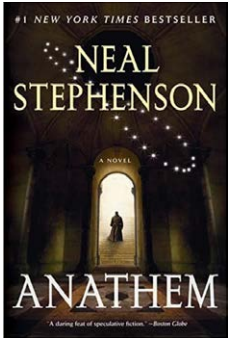


TERMINATION SHOCK

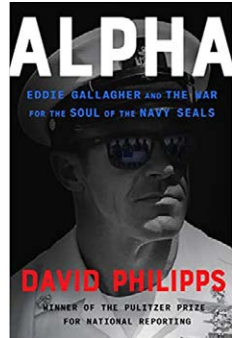
His most recent work. Covers climate changes and active geo-engineering-based solutions.

THE
UNANNOTATED
LIST

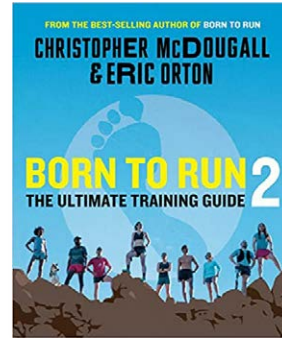




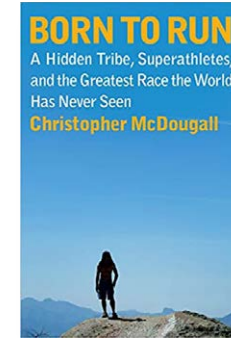
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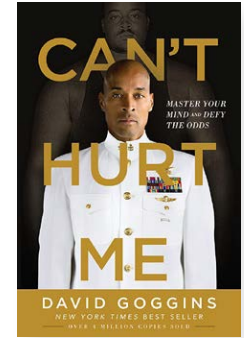
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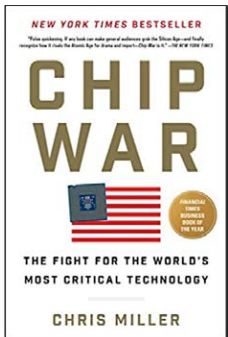
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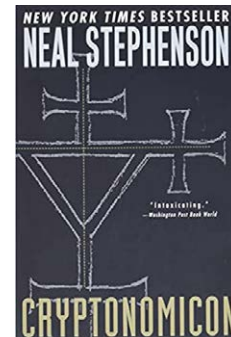
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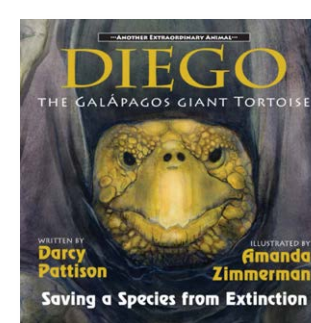
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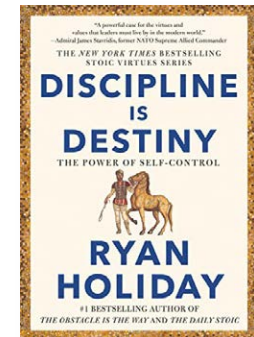
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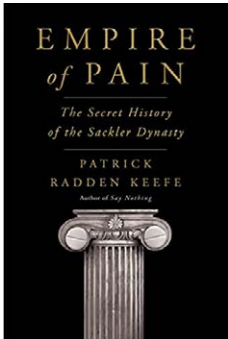
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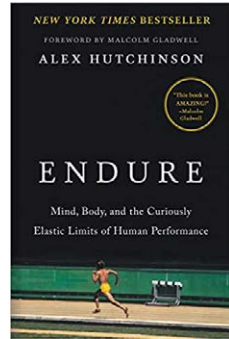


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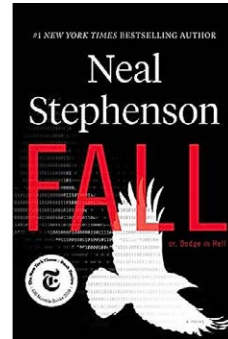
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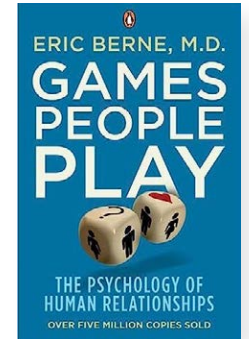
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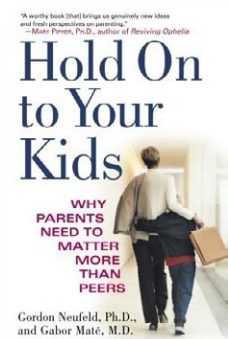
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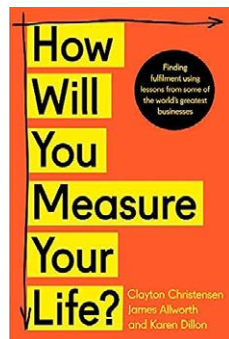


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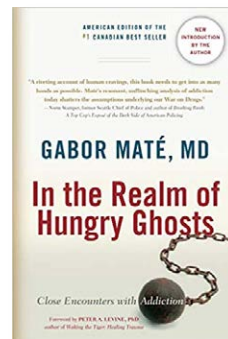


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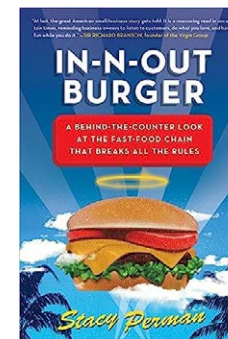
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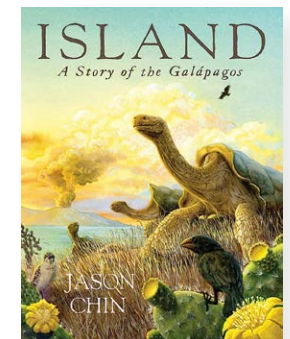
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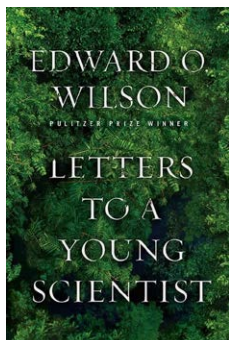
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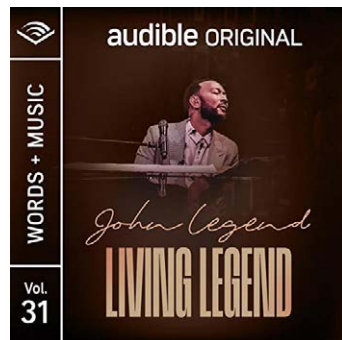
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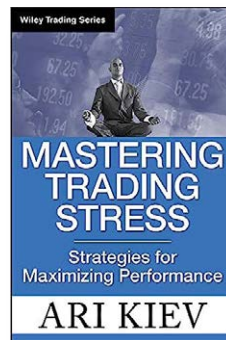
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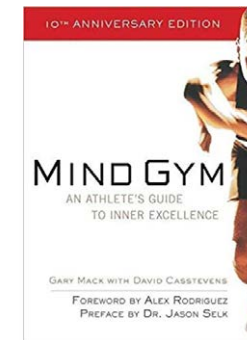
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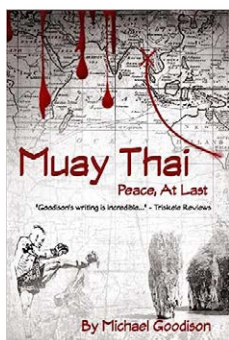
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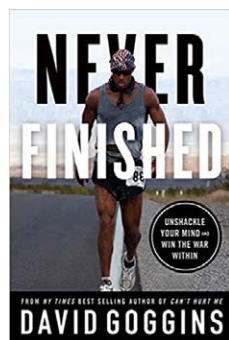
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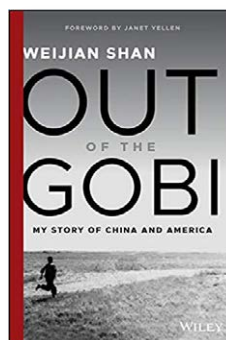
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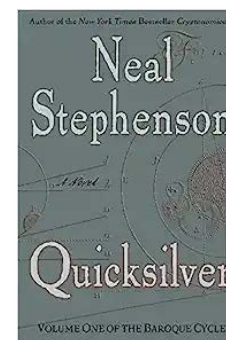
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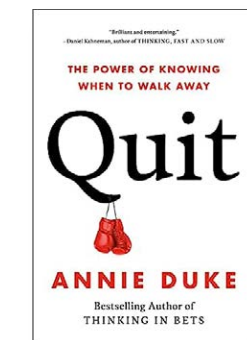
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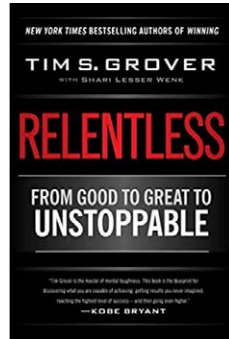
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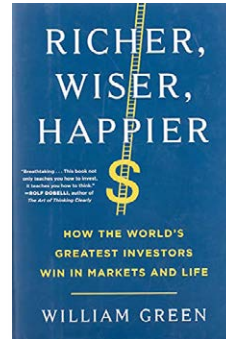
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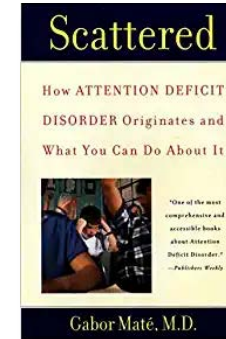
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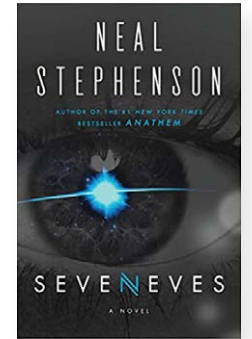
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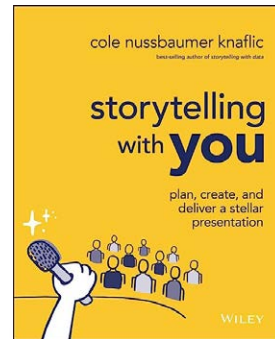
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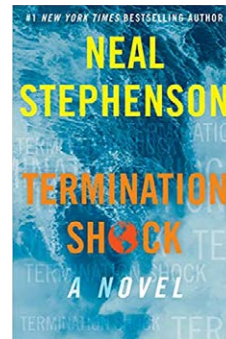
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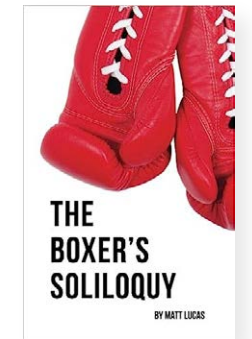
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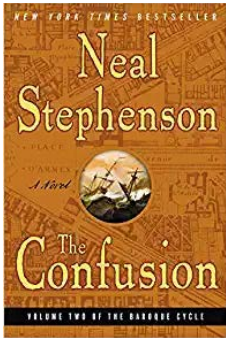
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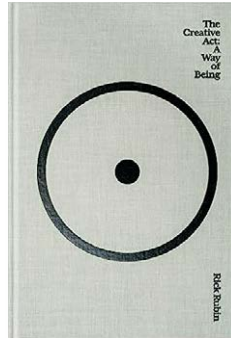
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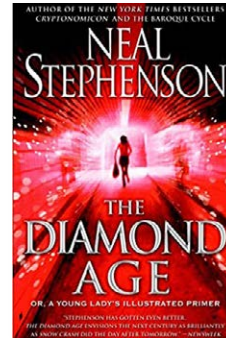
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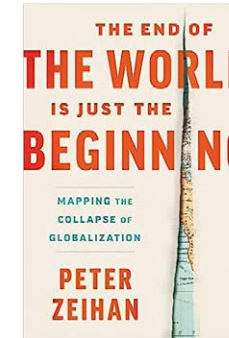
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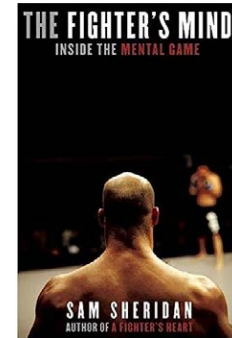
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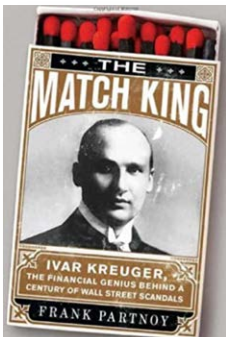
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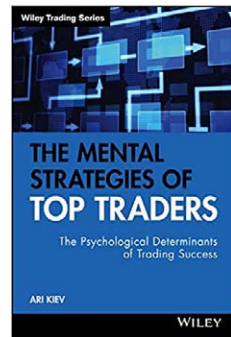
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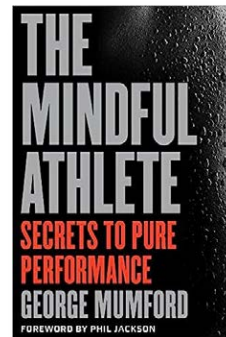
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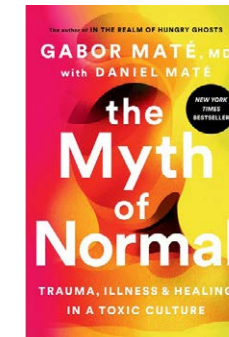
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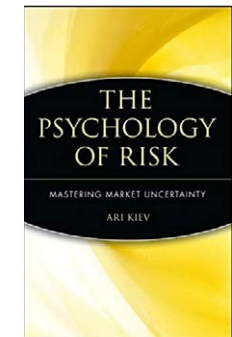
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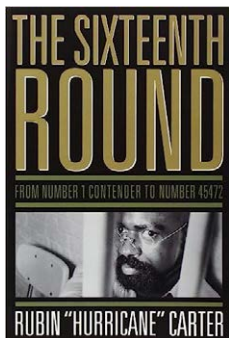
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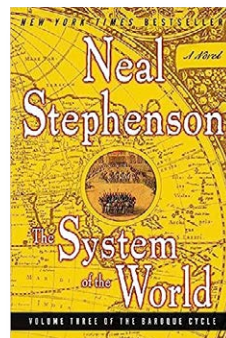
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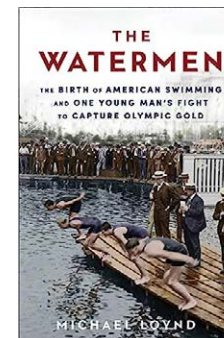
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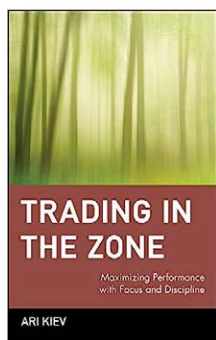
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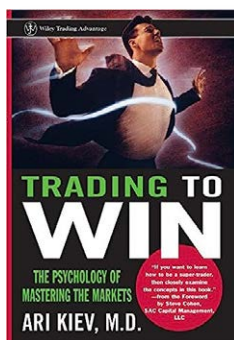
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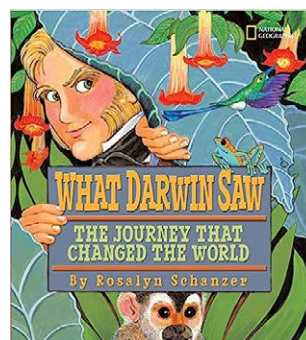
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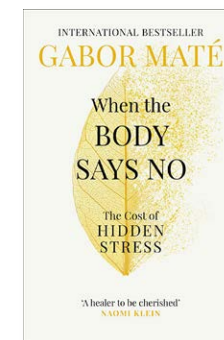
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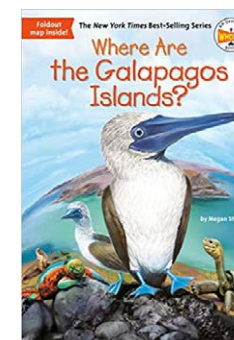
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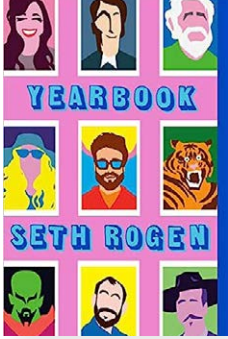
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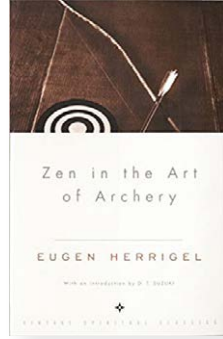


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