

BROYHILL BOOK CLUB

2024



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.

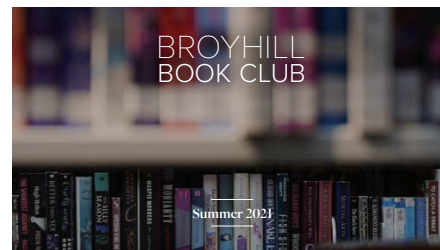
The following pages outline our reading journey over the past year. As always, we enjoy the journey as much as sharing what we've learned with friends. Clients of Broyhill are welcome to choose one book for their own library—it's our way of saying "thank you" for giving us the motivation to come into 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.



2023



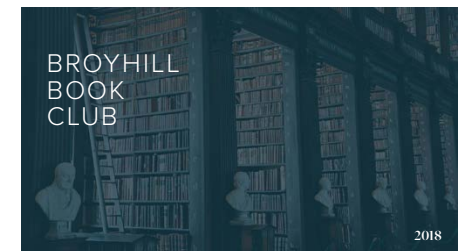
2022



2021

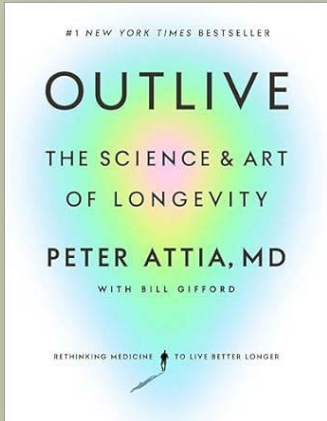


2020



2018-2019

BOOK OF THE YEAR



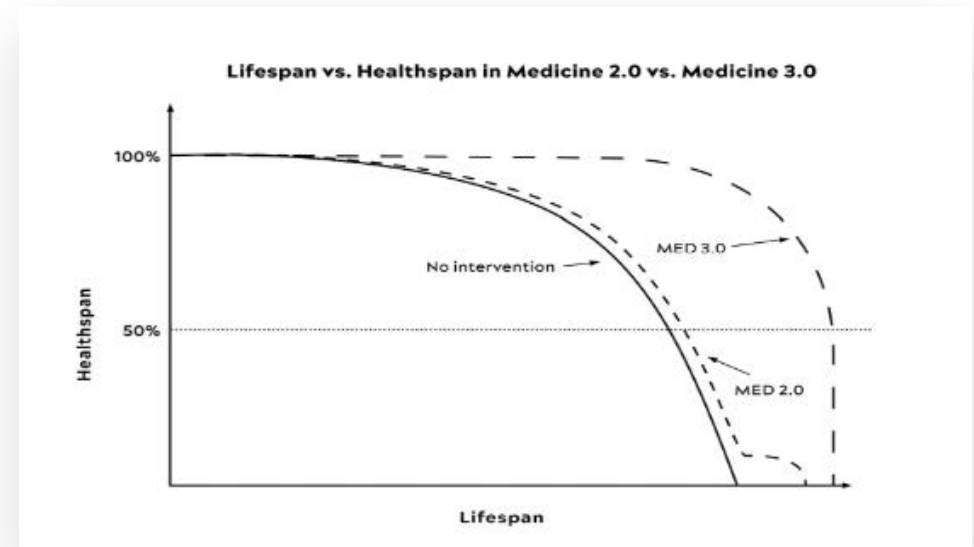
“Risk is not something to be avoided at all costs; rather, it’s something we need to understand, analyze, and work with.” —Dr. Peter Attia

The most successful investors know how to manage risk and when to challenge conventional thinking. So, it’s perhaps no surprise that one of the best books ever written on modern healthcare was authored by a physician who previously worked in finance and risk management at McKinsey before returning to medicine.

Unless you’ve been hiding under a rock for the last couple of years, you’ve probably stumbled across at least one or two references to Dr. Peter Attia, his popular podcast, [The Drive](#), or his masterpiece, [Outlive](#), which has sold over one million copies. Peter Attia, MD, is a Stanford, Johns Hopkins, and NIH-trained physician specializing in human longevity. As noted, he also has a rather unique resume for doctors, with a finance and risk management background, which clearly shaped his approach to healthcare. Attia is also responsible for pushing at least a few Marvel superheroes to their limits, working as Wolverine’s personal physician and driving Thor’s mind and body to the max in [Limitless](#).

Attia's 400-page manifesto, *Outlive*, challenges conventional medical thinking on aging and offers a new approach to preventing chronic disease. For all its successes, traditional medicine has failed to make much progress in fighting the "four horsemen" of aging that kill most of us: heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's, and diabetes. Instead, the current system focuses on treatments too late to help, prolonging lives, while ignoring the quality of those lives. Rather than emphasizing longevity or delaying death, Attia argues for a more preventative model referred to as "Medicine 3.0," which aims to lengthen lifespans while simultaneously improving healthspans. In his words, "The goal of Medicine 3.0 is not to patch people up and get them out the door, removing their tumors and hoping for the best, but rather to prevent tumors from appearing and spreading in the first place."

The book does an exceptional job weaving all these threads together, with digestible advice for better exercise, nutrition, and sleep to prevent or at least stall chronic disease. It's a well-grounded strategic and tactical approach to extending lifespan while also improving healthspan. Bottom line: aging and longevity are far more malleable than you may think.

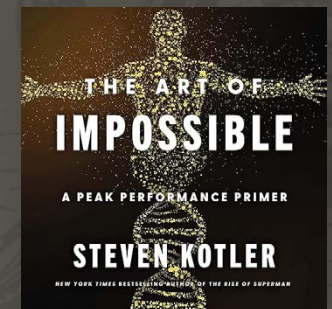
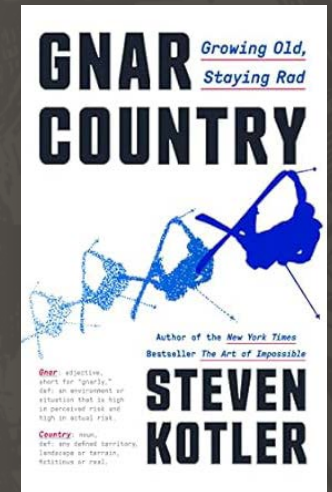


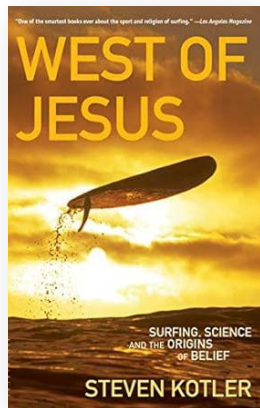
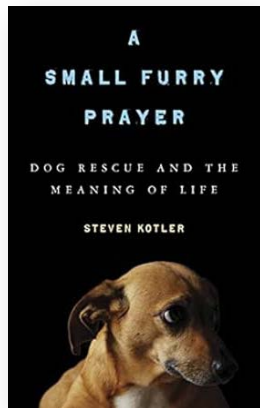
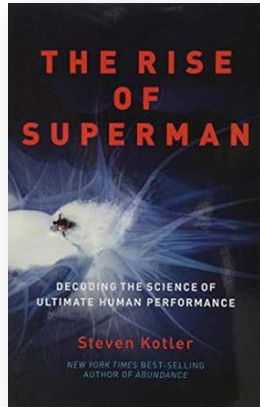
AUTHOR OF THE YEAR

The only thing more difficult than the emotional toil of pursuing true excellence is the emotional toil of not pursuing true excellence. —Steven Kotler

In last year's [book club](#), we included a section on Peak Performance, which kicked off with Tim Grover's *Relentless* and concluded with an Ari Kiev Smorgasbord. This year, I found myself pleasantly descending down another performance rabbit hole. After a deep dive into all things Dr. Peter Attia, *The Comfort Crisis* by Michael Easter seemed like a natural next step, as Attia had mentioned or endorsed Easter's book on several podcasts and other occasions.

The Comfort Crisis explores the idea—popularized by Wim Hof and outlined in *The Wim Hof Method*—that our overly comfortable, overbuilt environment has had unintended consequences and made us less resilient. Easter's journey to understand our evolutionary need to be challenged takes him to the remote Alaskan backcountry on a demanding thirty-three-day hunting expedition, showing that people are at their best—physically stronger, mentally tougher, and spiritually sounder—after experiencing the same daily discomforts as our ancestors. In a nod to Attia, discomfort can also protect us from physical and psychological problems like obesity, heart disease, cancers, diabetes, depression, and anxiety.





Easter references and recommends *The Rise of Superman* by Steven Kotler in this unconventionally entertaining book, originally highlighted in the [2020 Broyhill Book Club](#). *The Rise of Superman* explores how elite performers harness flow to accomplish “impossible” feats through first-hand reporting with dozens of extreme athletes. This year’s Kotler journey picked up where *Superman* left off in [Gnar Country](#), a collection of essays about goals, grit, and progression in the second half of our lives. It’s part adventure story, part living experiment, and part late-in-life peak performance primer, where all these principles are tested on his own body by teaching himself to park ski at age 53. As it turns out, old dogs can learn new tricks.

But before getting too deep into the backcountry, I followed Kotler’s advice, starting with [The Art of Impossible](#), for a refresher on the science of flow. *The Art of Impossible* is a how-to manual for peak performance, building upon cutting-edge neuroscience and over twenty years of research. This is also where curiosity, passion, purpose, autonomy, and mastery enter the story as the five most powerful intrinsic drivers and flow triggers. When we’re curious, passionate, and purposeful, cognitive load lightens, and dopamine and norepinephrine flow into our system, altering our neurobiology automatically and increasing our chance of getting into flow. Flow follows focus. When we are pushing our limits, the brain notices and rewards us with dopamine, further enhancing focus and increasing our chances of getting into flow.

Kotler would know. He is the author of fourteen books, including eleven bestsellers and three Pulitzer nominations. He is also one of the world's leading experts on human performance and the cofounder of [The Flow Research Collective](#), the world leader in neuroscience-based peak performance research and training. Kotler once flew a Russian MIG-17 fighter jet into G-LOC (gravity-induced loss of consciousness) to test a theory about the neuroscience of near-death experiences. He makes a drawing every day, partially because lifelong learning is key to staving off cognitive decline but also because of the incomparable joy of getting a tiny bit better at something a tiny bit at a time. He also ran a strange experiment in peak performance aging, teaching himself how to park ski at age fifty-three. That experiment is titled Gnar Country.

There are so many consistent threads throughout all these works. But my favorite, hands down, a weighted vest can turn a simple hike into a multipronged solution, working strength, stamina, balance, agility, and flexibility—all the use-it-or-lose-it skills we need to train as we age. Consider that leg strength is the single most important factor for longevity in the elderly and plays an equally important role in protecting the brain. Hiking is also a potent de-stressor, which is important as stress produces inflammation- the root of what we call “aging.” Insomnia, depression, anxiety, Alzheimer's, and cognitive decline are all linked to stress. Beyond these longevity challenges, stress weakens motivation, hampers learning, decreases creativity, and blocks flow. Conversely, time in nature lowers stress and improves mood, while wide vistas and novel environments enhance creativity and learning, triggering flow. Bottom Line: rucks in nature are a single solution to many challenges associated with health, longevity, and peak performance. Cue up the Blue Ridge Mountains and [GORUCK](#).

The most important thing that *The Art of Impossible* does for peak performance is systematize the entire body of scientific knowledge.

There are many books written about a tiny piece of the puzzle. Books on habits, focus, flow, grit, goals, learning, creativity, etcetera.

These pieces are important, but they're actually parts of a much larger puzzle.

Fixing any one element is important, but the real turbo boost comes from seeing the big picture and how the elements in it are designed to work together.

And work in a certain order:
Do this first, do this second...

If you don't know the entire system and the right order to the process, it's so much harder to accomplish anything worth accomplishing.

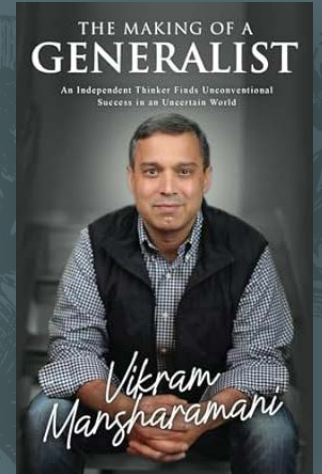
In other words: *The Art of Impossible* takes all the guesswork out of significant performance improvement.



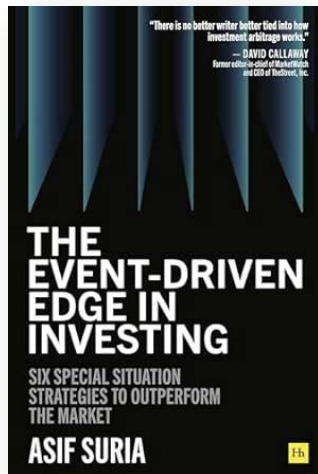
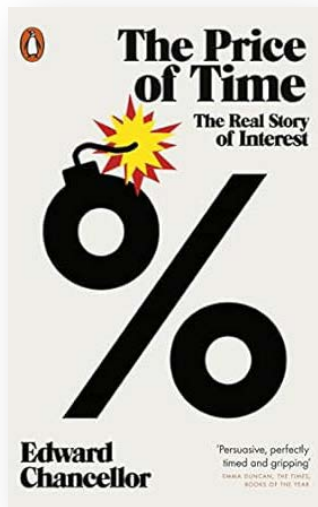
FRIEND ZONE

This is the second year we have had the pleasure of highlighting books written by friends. I hope it becomes a regular occurrence in our annual book club.

Here is the piece I penned for *The Making of a Generalist* by Vikram Mansharamani, whom I first connected with over a decade ago during our shared obsession with the bubble inflating in China (we were only about ten years too early). His first book, *Boombustology*, is still one of my favorites and probably worth another look in the current environment.

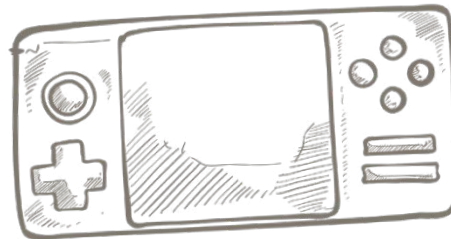


Vikram Mansharamani is a professional generalist and a fox among hedgehogs. From his humble beginnings as an immigrant in New Jersey, his story, 'The Making of a Generalist,' is a must-read for anyone who wants to become a more adaptable, creative, and independent thinker. This book is more than a memoir. It's a masterclass in balancing the precision of specialization with the breadth of generalist insight; a fantastic demonstration of blending left-brain and right-brain thinking. Mansharamani's experiences are a testament to the power of a migrant mindset and a relentless drive for excellence. His journey from a hands-free shower inventor to a US Senate candidate encapsulates the essence of multi-disciplinary thinking, or what the late Charlie Munger called "Worldly Wisdom." 'The Making of a Generalist' is a vibrant tribute to the unconventional path. His unique blend of humor and insight offers a fresh perspective on something we know all too well - the value of being a 'square peg in a world of round holes.'



As it turned out, that China obsession led to another friendship with an author and financial historian I had admired for years. Ed Chancellor’s most recent book, [*The Price of Time*](#), is another instant classic. We referenced Ed’s work in a recent piece titled [*AI – Absolute Insanity*](#). For additional historical context, we highly recommend studying Ed’s most influential work, [*Devil Take the Hindmost*](#), one of the best books written on the history of financial speculation and a particularly timely read today. This is a must-read for anyone wishing to understand the psychological and economic forces behind stock market bubbles and crashes.

Last but not least is [*The Event-Driven Edge in Investing*](#) by Asif Suria. Asif has quickly become a good friend of the firm as we’ve compared notes regularly on the surge of recent deal activity, including the most successful investment in Broyhill’s history—Microsoft’s acquisition of Activision, which we summarized in a piece titled [*Anti-Trust Gone Wild*](#). For investors interested in event-driven strategies, his website, [*Inside Arbitrage*](#), offers a treasure trove of data and tools covering everything from insider activity and mergers to spin-offs and buybacks. Pair with Jeff Gramm’s [*Dear Chairman*](#) for a colorful history of shareholder activism, complete with public letters from Benjamin Graham and Warren Buffett’s “Salad Oil Swindle” letter to Ross Perot’s brutally direct letter to then GM Chairman Roger Smith. For those interested in trying their hand at event-driven investing, here is the [*Merger Arb Checklist*](#) we continue to build upon at Broyhill.



SUPER NOSTALGIA

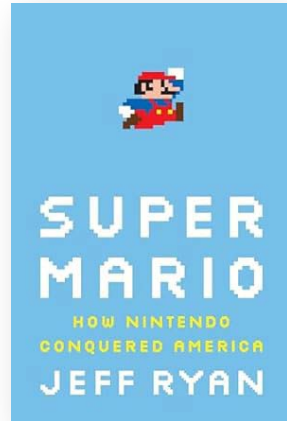
“What if everything you see is more than what you see—the person next to you is a warrior, and the space that appears empty is a secret door to another world? What if something appears that shouldn’t? You either dismiss it, or you accept that there is much more to the world than you think. Perhaps it really is a doorway, and if you choose to go inside, you’ll find many unexpected things.”
—Shigeru Miyamoto, creator of *Super Mario Bros.*, discussing the inspiration and philosophy behind the games.

After many years spent admiring the business, and many more enjoying its video games, we established a new investment in shares of Nintendo last year. We discussed our thesis with Value Investor Insight in an interview available [here](#).

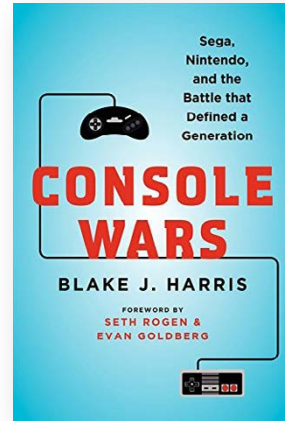
“Business Biographies” are one of my favorite book genres. When available, they are also a great source of historical context while researching potential investments. Combined with years of expert interview transcripts, a catalog of hardcovers can provide a deep understanding of the many nuances and intricacies of any business, its culture, and the various personalities operating behind the scenes that helped shape the company’s ethos (more on this in the following section).

I'm not sure there are many companies or industries that have garnered more attention from authors than Nintendo and the gaming industry. And for good reason. The company, founded in 1889 as a playing card manufacturer, began experimenting with electronic toys and games in the 1970s. Over the decades, Nintendo became a pioneer in the industry, known for taking risks and pursuing unconventional approaches, with an innovative spirit central to the company's longevity. Nintendo's creative culture, lateral thinking, and reputation for nurturing and retaining talent have resulted in countless iconic innovations and beloved franchises, delighting generations of players. The Guinness World Records lists Super Mario Kart as the most influential title in gaming history. And there are five other Mario games on the list!! Not to be outdone, "The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past" was voted the best video game of all time by Entertainment Weekly.

We combed through over a dozen titles written by the creator of Mario before even beginning to broaden our lens to the wider industry.



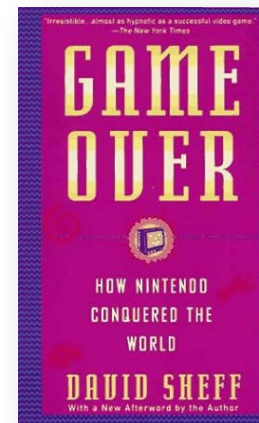
Super Mario
by Jeff Ryan



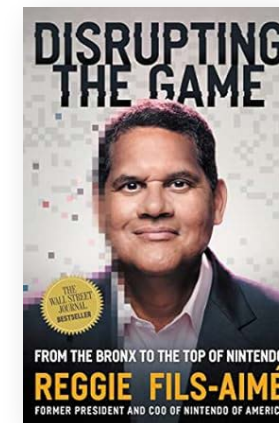
Console Wars
by Blake J. Harris



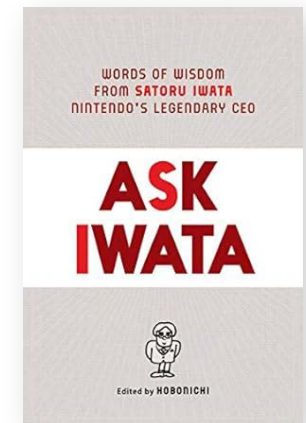
*The Ultimate History
of Video Games*
by Kent and Woren



*Game Over: How
Nintendo Conquered
the World*
by David Sheff



*Disrupting the Game:
From the Bronx to the
Top of Nintendo*
by Reggie Fils-Aimé



*Ask Iwata: Words of
Wisdom from Satoru
Iwata, Nintendo's
Legendary CEO*
by Satoru Iwata

BUSINESS & INVESTING

“I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book.” —Groucho Marx

We have always maintained that while successful investing requires a firm grasp of elementary mathematics, more often than not, we’ve seen higher intelligence chasing greater complexity ultimately translate to lower performance and catastrophic mistakes. Investing certainly requires that we “do math” ... but it’s not rocket science. Most of the “real work” is done here.

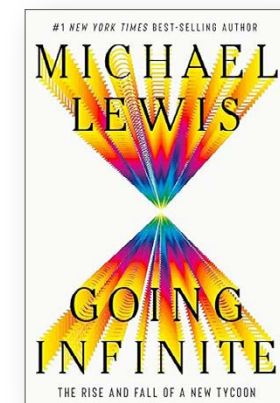
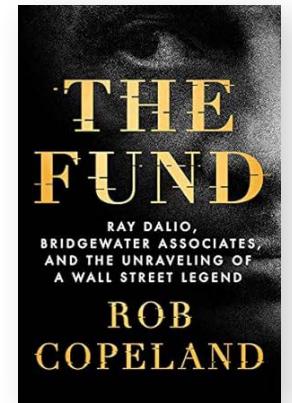
Successful investing requires a broad knowledge base accumulated over time through a wide range of experience and a well-rounded library. As such, we make a concerted effort to read widely and highlight diversity in these missives. That said, sometimes we can’t resist the urge to binge on the variety of multifaceted titles published on business and investing. Looking back over the past year of our reading journey, many of these publications were simply too good to ignore.

VISIONARIES, INNOVATORS, & CHARLATANS

When I first read [Elon Musk](#) by Ashlee Vance nearly a decade ago, I was so impressed that I went out and bought a copy of [Elon Musk: A Mission to Save the World](#) to share with Lucca. Suffice it to say that what we've since learned has put at least a few small kinks in that initial impression. Issacson's more recent biography, [Elon Musk](#), is much more "balanced," to say the least, and worth a read if only for an inside look at Elon's Twitter Adventure, a former Broyhill investment.

Those looking for a "slightly" less balanced and a lot more scandalish biography won't want to miss [The Fund](#) by Rob Copeland. After reading this stranger-than-fiction page-turner, I can promise you one thing. You will never look at Ray Dalio the same. It would seem that there may be at least a few "Principles" missing from Ray's [Life and Work](#).

Last but not least, no collection of charlatan reads would be complete without Michael Lewis' wildly entertaining adventure, [Going Infinite](#), released the same day Bankman-Fried's trial began in federal court. Halfway through writing the book, it took an unexpected turn from profiling a brilliant young billionaire to charting his brilliant implosion. Say what you want. This is Lewis at his best.

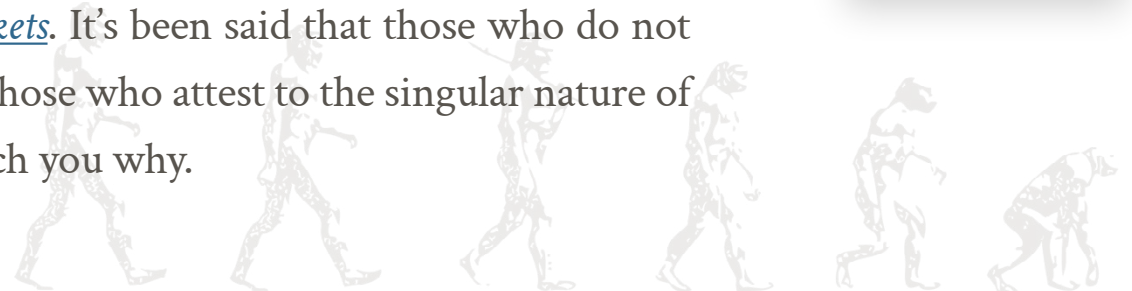
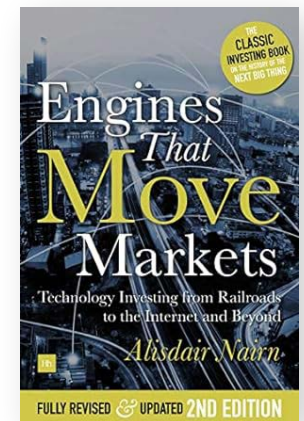
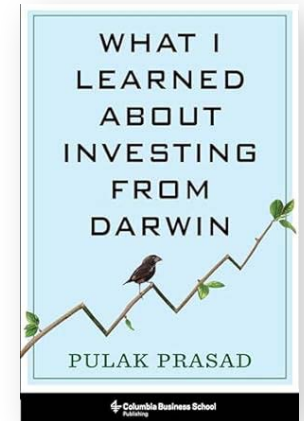


INVESTMENT PERSPECTIVES

After my bucket-list trip to the Galapagos with Lucca last summer, resisting [What I Learned About Investing from Darwin](#) was impossible. This book was a pure pleasure to read and a great example of the type of cross-disciplinary thinking that built Broyhill. You might be surprised by how many of Darwin's evolutionary principles—i.e., adaptability and resilience—apply to investing. Granted, it also hit very close to home as much of the investment philosophy espoused throughout these 300 or so pages is remarkably consistent with our own.

In this complex, unknowable, and uncertain world, we are not trying to make the best investments since we are in the dark about most things. We don't know what the best investment would be. Instead, we are simply trying to invest well. These are very different ways of investing and lead to radically different investment models. Our model—that of investing well—tries to achieve just one objective amid uncertainty: increase the predictive accuracy of our investments. —Pulak Prasad, Founder of Nalanda Capital

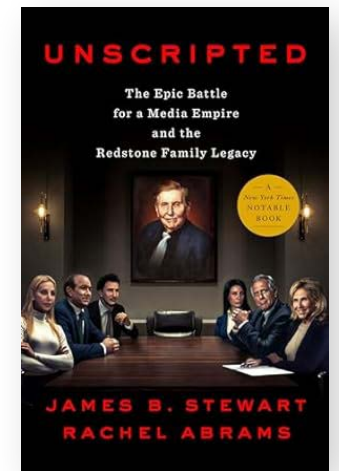
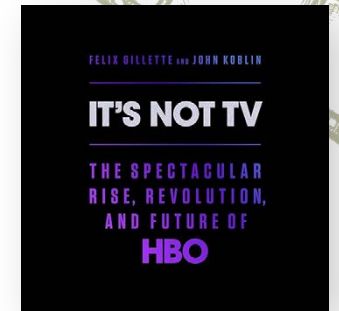
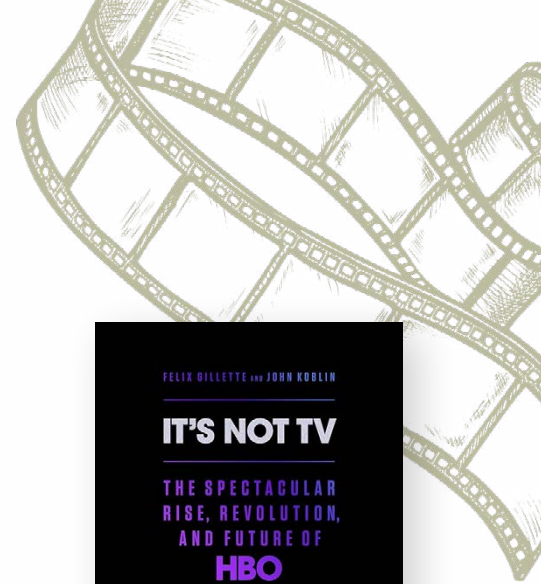
Moving on from the Galapagos, and after reading up on the history of interest rates and the role of credit in facilitating financial manias, as cataloged in the previously mentioned works of Ed Chancellor, we'd recommend spending some time studying [Engines That Move Markets](#). It's been said that those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Along those lines, those who attest to the singular nature of our current [AI. Mania](#) should know better. Alasdair Nairn will teach you why.



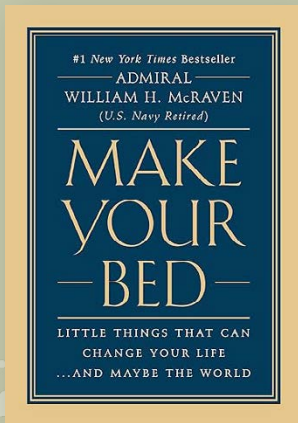
MORE CORPORATE DRAMA

Over the years, Broyhill has made many successful (as well as our share of unsuccessful) investments in the media industry. There are a number of reasons we are attracted to the space beyond its entertainment value (pun intended). Time Warner exemplified many of the industry's attractive characteristics, which is why AT&T and others were interested in acquiring it in 2018. We read quite a bit about the company's history at the time, but one of my favorites was a much more recent read. [*It's Not TV*](#) is a critical exploration of how HBO reshaped television and American popular culture through innovative programming, production values, and the very nature of storytelling itself. Growing up with *The Sopranos*, one can't help being saddened by the destruction of such a beautiful culture inside AT&T's bureaucracy. After AOL's infamous 2000 acquisition of Time Warner, it seems they are still relearning the same lesson about merger "synergies" nearly two decades later. Third time's a charm?

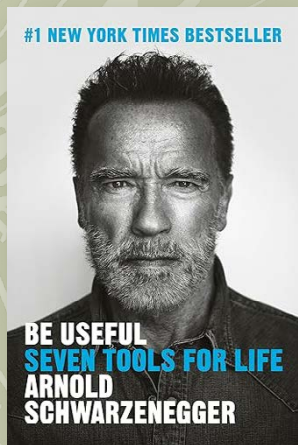
Fast-forwarding the entertainment clock to today, grab a box of popcorn and watch the corporate drama unfolding at Paramount right before our eyes. Better yet, for fans mourning the loss of HBO's *Succession*, [*Unscripted*](#) offers a real-life equivalent in the form of an inside look at the Redstone family, Paramount's controlling shareholder, written by two Pulitzer winners. This one has something for everyone. A 90-something billionaire with a very "healthy" sexual appetite, scheming mistresses, threesomes, at least one "Me Too" CEO, shady private investigators, and a cast of characters straight off MTV or another Redstone cable channel.



LESSONS FOR LUCCA



Team Gratitude made its annual excursion to Tampa in January for the Frogman Swim, a wonderful fundraiser for the Navy SEAL Foundation. I flew down, initially slated as a “roamer,” which basically meant I’d be roaming the bay in a kayak, keeping an eye on swimmers, fighting their way across the bay in cold, choppy conditions. But at about 10PM the night before our 5AM beach landing, I got a text with a new assignment—I’d be kayaking for Admiral Eric Olsen, the first SEAL ever to be appointed to three-star and four-star flag rank. No pressure whatsoever! He was also the first naval officer to be head of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), where he was responsible for the mission readiness and deployment of all Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps special operations forces, leading over 60,000 people and managing a \$10 billion budget. More importantly, he is just an incredibly humble man, happy to help, and very forgiving after being led off course by his kayaker and pulled out of the water after almost four hours fighting ridiculously strong currents in 50-degree water! After nearly four decades of service, Olsen retired from active duty in 2011 and relinquished command to Admiral William H. McRaven, who wrote the New York Times bestseller [Make Your Bed](#). So, Lucca, you better listen to the Admiral!!

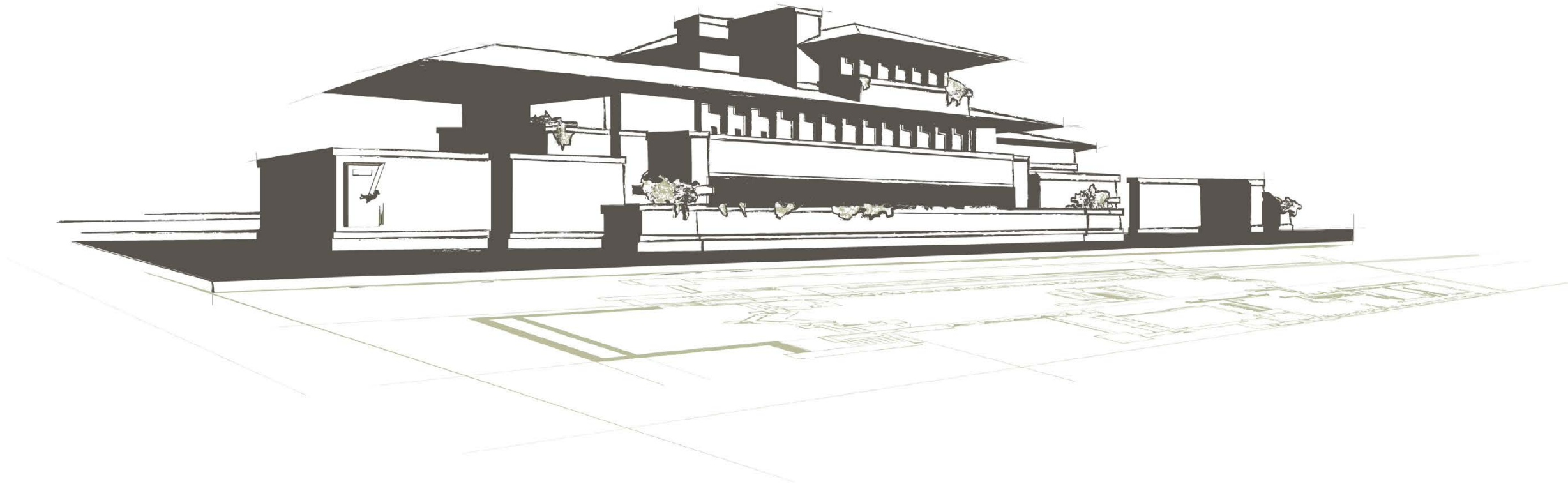


And when you are done Making Your Bed, [Be Useful!](#) Speaking of which, I wrote this [Letter to Lucca](#) after reading Arnold Schwarzenegger’s book of the same title.¹

¹Speaking of “Being Useful,” if anyone reading this falls in the intersection of the Venn Diagram including “Fans of the Broyhill Book Club” and “Talented at Designing Wix Websites,” I would love some help making Lucca’s website more visually appealing, and more consistent with our own. I have dozens of these letters I’ve written over the years that I’d like to post on the site, but I find it just painful to do so in its current format. Feel free to reach out directly if you are interested in volunteering!

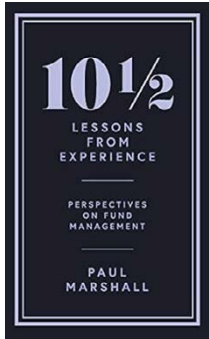
OTHER INTERESTING TIDBITS

If you are wondering about the sketch on our website's homepage, pick up a copy of [*The Robie House of Frank Lloyd Wright.*](#)

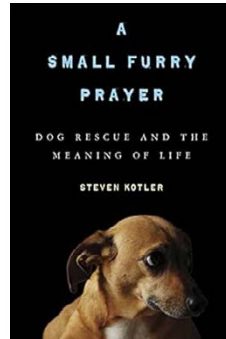


THE UNANNOTATED LIST





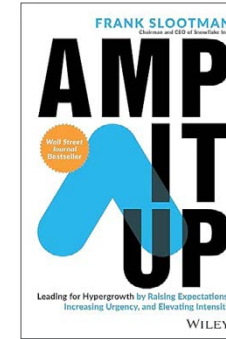
10 1/2 LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE: PERSPECTIVES ON FUND MANAGEMENT
by Paul Marshall



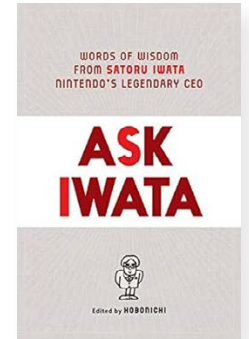
A SMALL FURRY PRAYER: DOG RESCUE AND THE MEANING OF LIFE
by Steven Kotler



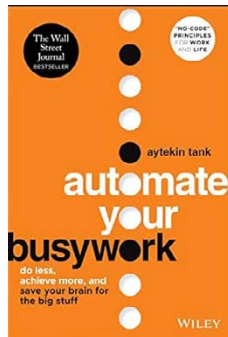
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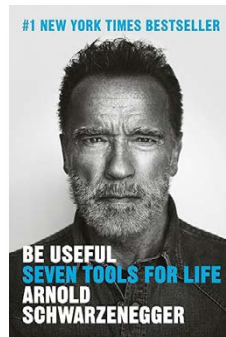
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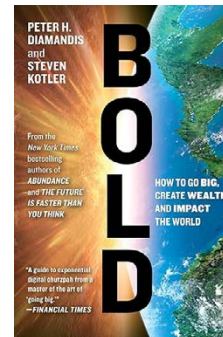
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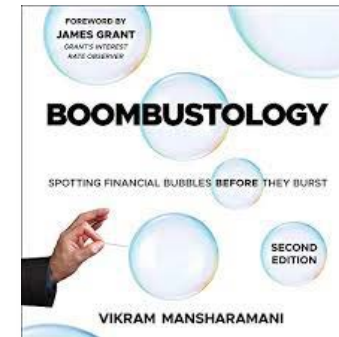
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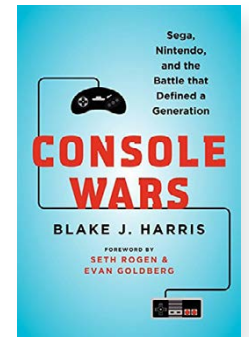
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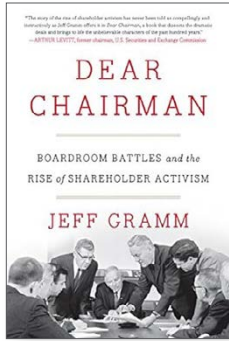
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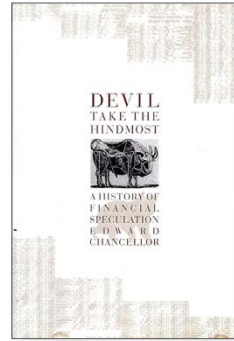
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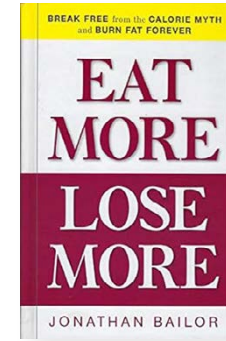
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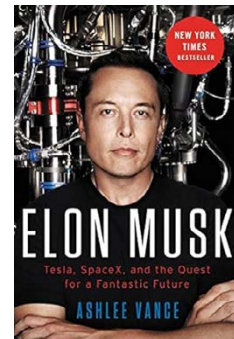
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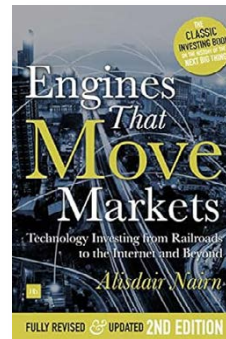
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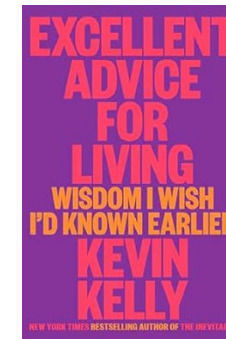
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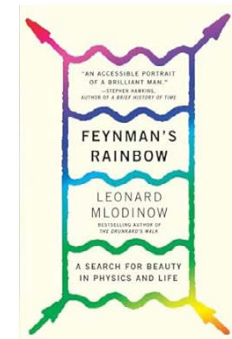
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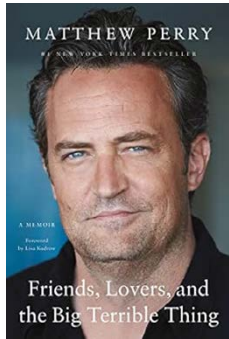
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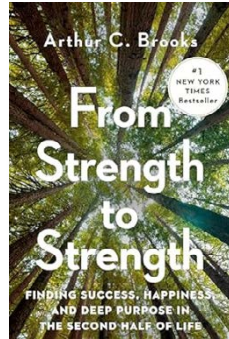
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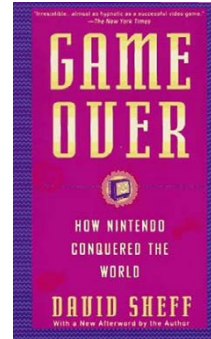
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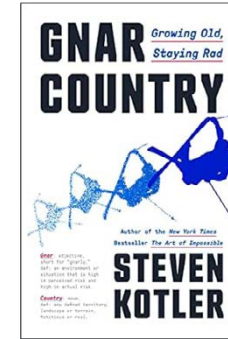
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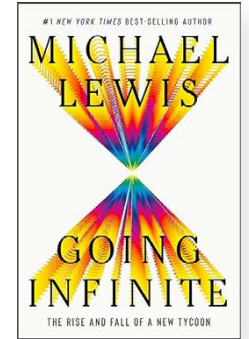
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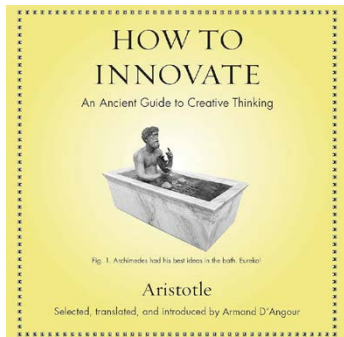
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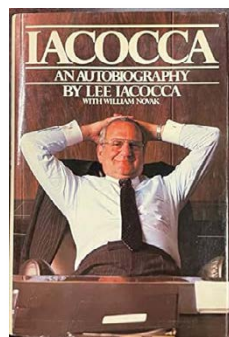
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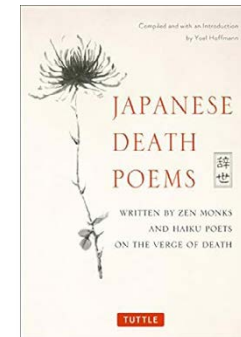
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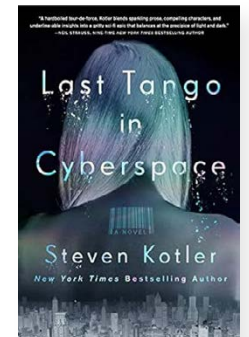
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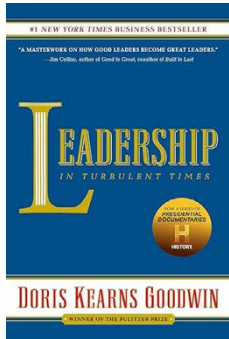
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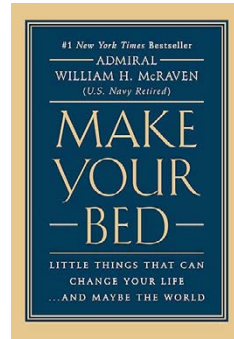
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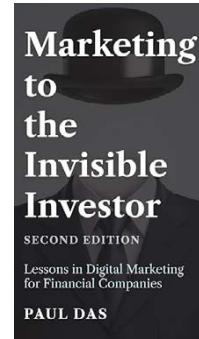
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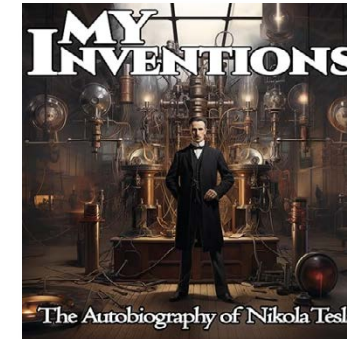
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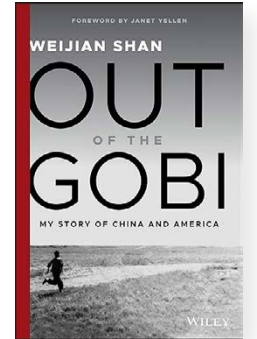
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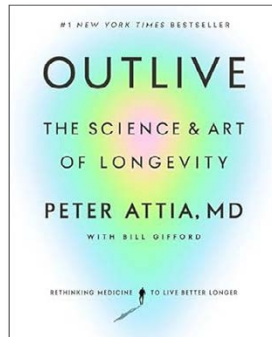
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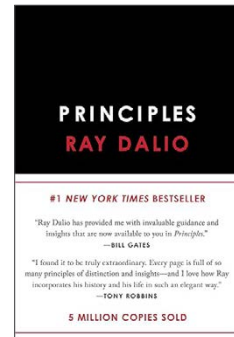
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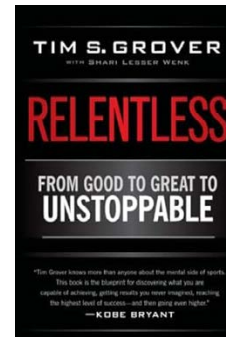
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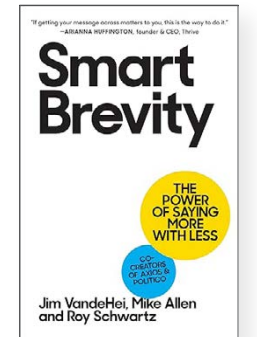
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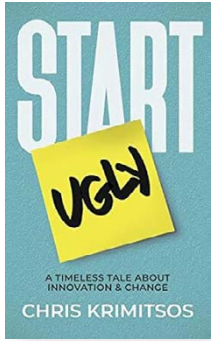
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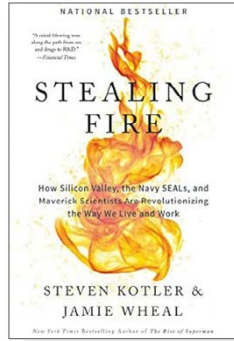
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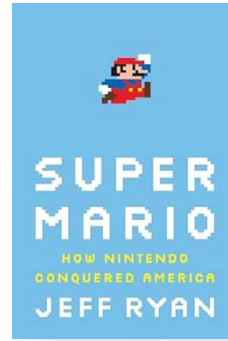
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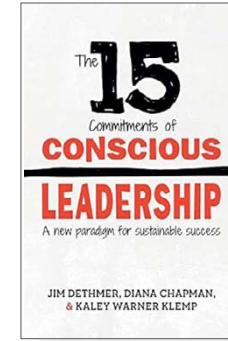
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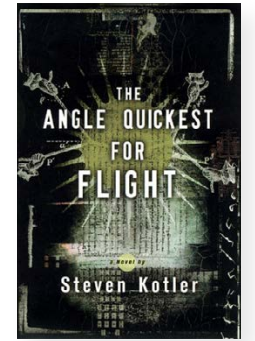
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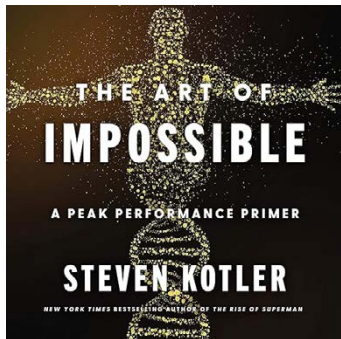
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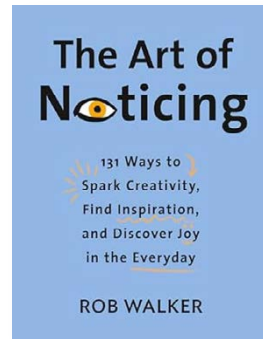
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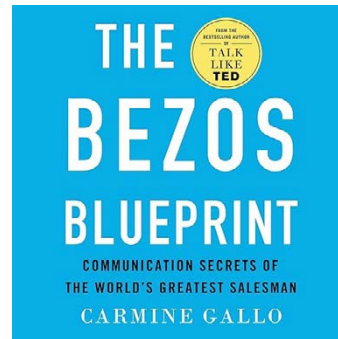
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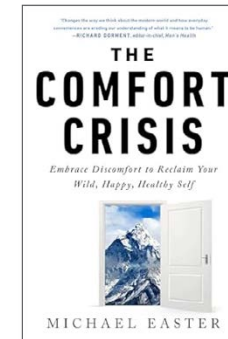
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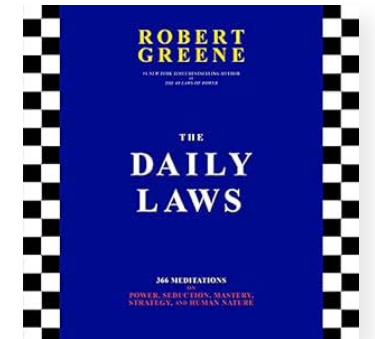
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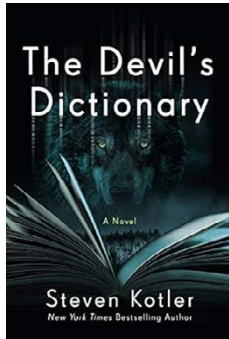
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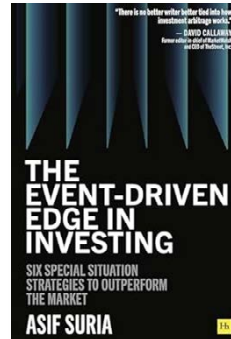
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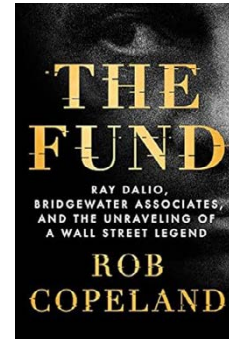
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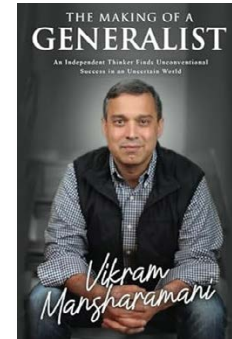
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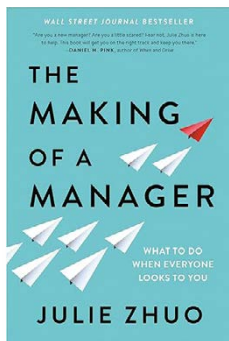
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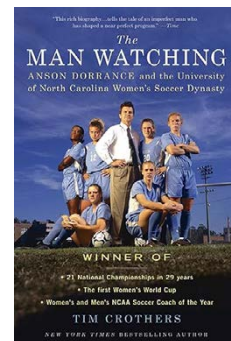
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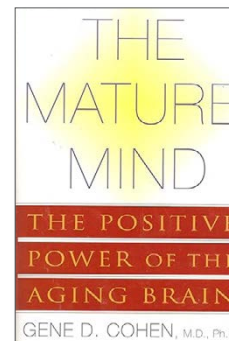
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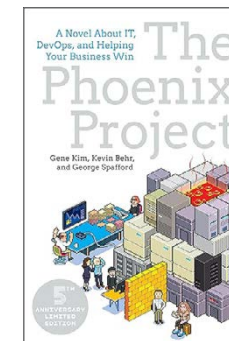
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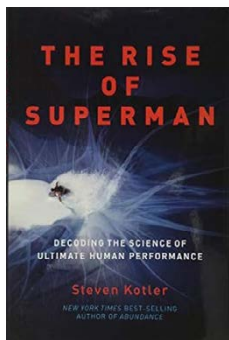
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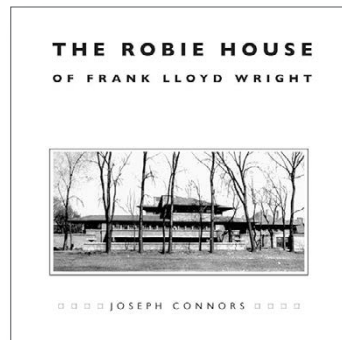
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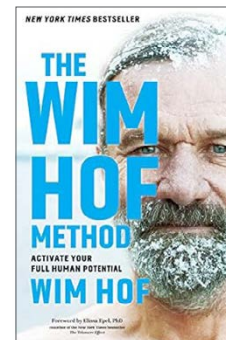
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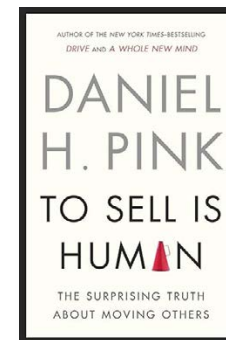
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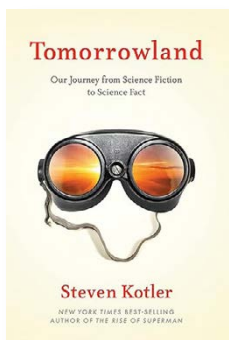
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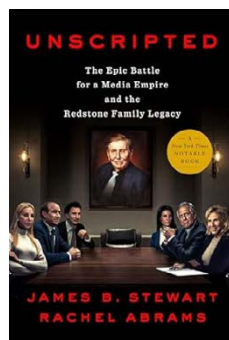
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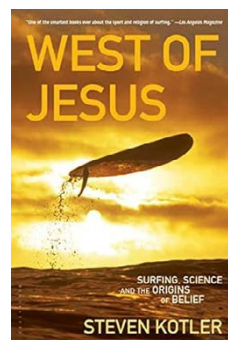
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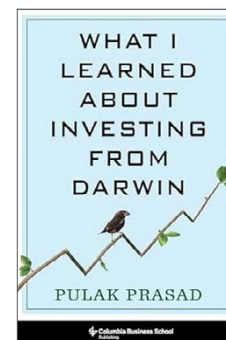
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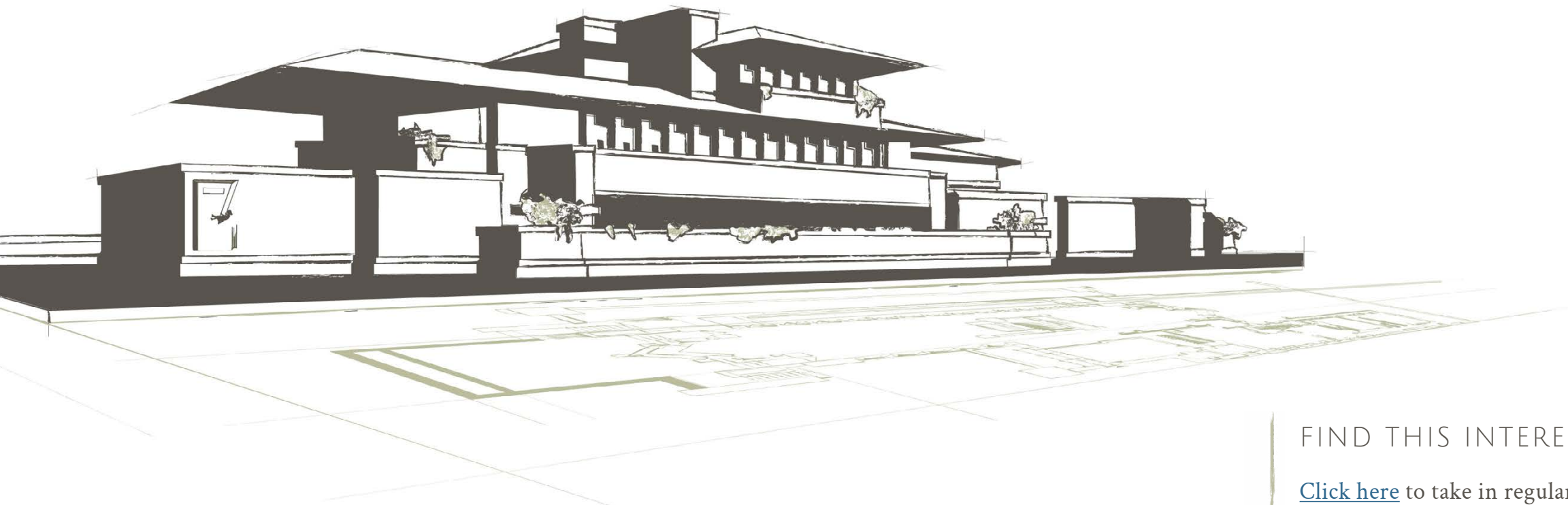
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