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At the heart of the extraordinary ferment of the High Renaissance stood a distinctive, strange and beguiling figure: the magus. An unstable mix of scientist, bibliophile, engineer, fabulist and fraud, the magus ushered in modern physics and chemistry while also working on everything from secret codes to siege engines to magic tricks.

Anthony Grafton’s wonderfully original book discusses the careers of men who somehow managed to be both figures of startling genius and – by some measures – credulous or worse. The historical Faust, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Johannes Trithemius and Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa are all fascinating characters, closely linked to monarchs, artists and soldiers and sitting at the heart of any definition of why the Renaissance was a time of such restless innovation. The study of the stars, architecture, warfare, even medicine: all of these and more were revolutionized in some way by the experiments and tricks of these extraordinary individuals.

No book does a better job of allowing us to understand the ways that magic, religion and science were once so intertwined and often so hard to tell apart.

Anthony Grafton is the author of The Footnote, Defenders of the Text, Forgers and Critics, and Inky Fingers, among other books. The Henry Putnam University Professor of History and the Humanities at Princeton University, he writes regularly for the New York Review of Books.
Unshrinking
How to Fight Fatphobia
Kate Manne

Size discrimination harms everyone. Acclaimed philosopher Kate Manne shows how to combat it.

For as long as she can remember, Kate Manne has wanted to be smaller. She can tell you what she weighed on any significant occasion: her wedding day, the day she became a professor, the day her daughter was born. She’s been bullied and belittled for her size, leading to extreme dieting. As a feminist philosopher, she wanted to believe that she was exempt from the cultural gaslighting that compels so many of us to ignore our hunger. But she was not.

Blending intimate stories with trenchant analysis, Manne shows why fatphobia matters, now more than ever. Over the last decades, bias has waned in every category except one: body size. Here she examines how anti-fatness operates – how it leads us to make devastating assumptions about a person’s attractiveness, fortitude and intellect, and how it intersects with other systems of oppression. Fatphobia is responsible for wage gaps, medical neglect and poor educational outcomes. It is a straitjacket, restricting our freedom, our movement, our potential. Fatphobia is a social justice issue.

In this urgent call to action, Manne proposes a new politics of ‘body reflexivity’ – a radical re-evaluation of who our bodies exist in the world for: ourselves and no one else. When it comes to fatphobia, the solution is not to love our bodies more. Instead, we must dismantle the forces that control and constrain us, and remake the world to accommodate people of every size.

Kate Manne is an associate professor of philosophy at Cornell University. The author of the acclaimed books Entitled and Down Girl, she was named one of the ‘World’s Top 10 Thinkers’ by Prospect magazine.
How far would you go for the missing?

When Clair Wills was in her twenties, she discovered she had a cousin she had never met. Born in a Mother and Baby home in 1950s Ireland, Mary grew up in an institution not far from the farm where Clair spent happy childhood summers. Yet she was never told of her existence. How could a whole family – a whole country – abandon unmarried mothers and their children, erasing them from history?

To discover the missing pieces of her family’s story, Clair searched across archives and nations, in a journey that would take her from the 1890s to the 1980s, from West Cork to rural Suffolk and Massachusetts, from absent fathers to the grief of a lost child.

There are some experiences that do not want to be remembered. What began as an effort to piece together the facts became an act of decoding the most unreliable of evidence – stories, secrets, silences. The result is a moving, exquisitely told story of the secrets families keep, and the violence carried out in their name.

Clair Wills is a critic and cultural historian. She is the author of Lovers and Strangers: An Immigrant History of Post-War Britain, which won the Irish Times International Non-Fiction Book of the Year and was shortlisted for the Orwell Prize, That Neutral Island: A History of Ireland During the Second World War, which won the PEN Hessell-Tiltman History Prize, Dublin 1916, The Best Are Leaving, and most recently The Family Plot: Three Pieces on Containment. Wills is the Regius Professor of English Literature at the University of Cambridge.
From the time of the ancient Greeks onwards the West’s relationship with Asia consisted for the most part of outrageous tales of strange beasts and monsters, of silk and spices shipped over vast distances and an uneasy sense of unknowable empires fantastically far away. By the twentieth century much of Asia might have come under Western rule after centuries of warfare, but its intellectual, artistic and spiritual influence was fighting back.

The Light of Asia is a wonderfully varied and entertaining history of the many ways in which Asia has shaped European and North American culture over centuries of tangled, dynamic encounters, and the central importance of this vexed, often confused relationship. From Marco Polo onwards Asia has been both a source of genuine fascination and equally genuine failures of comprehension. China, India and Japan were all acknowledged to be both great civilizations and in crude ways seen as superseded by the West. From Chicago to Calcutta, and from antiquity to the new millennium, this is a rich, involving story of misunderstandings and sincere connection, of inspiration and falsehood, of geniuses, adventurers and con-men.

Christopher Harding’s captivating gallery of people and places celebrates Asia’s impact on the West in all its variety.

Christopher Harding is the author of the widely praised Japan Story: In Search of a Nation – described by Neil MacGregor as ‘Masterly. How much I admired it, what a lot I learned from it and, above all, how very much I enjoyed it’ – and The Japanese. Harding teaches at the University of Edinburgh and frequently broadcasts on Radio 3 and Radio 4.
How We Break
Navigating the Wear and Tear of Living
Vincent Deary

An expert, empathetic guide to the science, psychology and physiology of breaking, from the acclaimed author of How We Are

Vincent Deary is a health psychologist who helps people cope with whatever life has thrown at them. In How We Break, he examines, with great empathy, what happens to our minds and bodies when we are pushed to, and beyond, our limits.

Drawing on clinical case studies, cutting edge scientific research, intimate personal stories and references from philosophy, literature and film, How We Break offers us a map through the challenging terrain of everyday human suffering. The big traumas in life, Deary points out, are relatively rare. Much more common is when too many things go wrong at once, or when we are exposed to prolonged periods of difficulty or precarity. In these scenarios, he shows us, our breaking is embodied, as our physical and mental distress are linked, and is what happens when the same systems that enable us to navigate through life become dysregulated. Moreover, we break where we live: stress and pressure interact with our individual genetics, life experiences and circumstances in entirely unique and personal ways. Ultimately, anyone can be laid low in the right conditions, no matter how stoic: the book reveals that it’s a clinical falsehood to assume we can weather life’s storms through force of will alone.

In these anxious times, Vincent Deary’s voice is a reassuring hand on the shoulder. By equipping us with a better understanding of what happens to us when we’re struggling to cope, Deary charts a path through the suffering, helping us find compassion for ourselves and for those around us.

Vincent Deary is a health psychologist at Northumbria University, where his research focuses on the development of new psychosocial interventions for people with a variety of health complaints, including cancer survivors and fear of falling in older adults. As a clinician he works in the UK’s first trans-diagnostic Fatigue Clinic, working as part of a multidisciplinary team to research and develop new treatments for people for whom fatigue is a disabling symptom. He is the author of How We Are.

JANUARY 2024
9780241008355
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 304 PAGES
We all notice when the poor get poorer: when there are more rough sleepers and food-bank queues start to grow. But if the rich become richer, there is nothing much to see in public and, for most of us, daily life doesn’t change. Or at least, not immediately.

In this astonishing, eye-opening intervention, world-leading philosopher and economist Ingrid Robeyns exposes the true extent of our wealth problem, which has spent the past fifty years silently spiralling out of control. In moral, political, economic, social, environmental and psychological terms, she shows, extreme wealth is not only unjustifiable but harmful to us all — the rich included.

In place of our current system, Robeyns offers a breathtakingly clear alternative: limitarianism. The answer to so many of the problems posed by neoliberal capitalism — and the opportunity for a vastly better world — lies in placing a hard limit on the wealth that any one person can accumulate. Because nobody deserves to be a millionaire. Not even you.

Ingrid Robeyns holds master’s degrees in economics and philosophy, and obtained her PhD at Cambridge University under the supervision of Amartya Sen. She currently holds the Chair in Ethics of Institutions at Utrecht University. She previously served as the director of the Ethics Institute at Utrecht University, and as the first director of the Dutch Research School for Philosophy. Her academic work has been supported by several grants from the Dutch Research Council, as well as by a €2 million ERC Consolidator Grant. In 2018, she was elected as a member of the Netherlands Royal Academy of Sciences and Arts. In September 2021, she was awarded an Emma Goldman Award for her work on inequality studies and feminism by the FLAX Foundation in Vienna. Limitarianism is her first trade book.
The Performer
Art, Life, Politics
Richard Sennett

An exploration of public performance in everyday life, by the leading cultural and social thinker

*The Performer* explores the rich relations of the performing arts to society. It traces performing spaces in the city; the emergence of actors, musicians, and dancers as independent artists; the inequality between performer and spectator; the uneasy relations between artistic creation and social and religious ritual, the uses and abuses of acting by politicians. *The Performer* ties issues together by exploring the sensory powers which the performing arts themselves share, via physical gesture and blocking onstage, lighting, costuming, scenery. Sensory expression rather than art ‘messages’ are, *The Performer* asserts, the deepest ways in which the performing arts engage with the world.

Performing is a Janus-faced art. It can be destructive, as when artful demagogues seduce and degrade their followers; but it can also be creative, when art on stage widens and deepens imaginations. The book explains how the same sensory materials of this ethically impure art can be used to degrade or to enlighten the public.

*The Performer* draws on history and sociology, and also more personally on the author’s early career as a professional cellist, and his later work as a city planner and social thinker. It is the first in a trilogy of books on the fundamental DNA of human expression: performing, narrating, and imaging.

Richard Sennett grew up in the Cabrini Green housing project in Chicago, attended the Julliard School in New York and then studied social relations at Harvard. Over the course of the last five decades, he has written about social life in cities, changes in labour and social theory. His books include *The Hidden Injuries of Class* and *The Fall of Public Man*. Sennett currently serves as member of the UN Committee on Urban Initiatives and is Visiting Professor of Urban Studies at Harvard. Among other awards, he has received the Hegel Prize, the Spinoza Prize and the Centennial Medal from Harvard University.
In a hyper-competitive world obsessed with rankings, super-wealth and greatness, how can we live up to democratic ideals of equality?

Erica Benner has spent a lifetime thinking about this question from different angles in different countries: from post-war Japan, where democracy was imposed on a defeated country, to post-communist Poland, with its sudden gaps of wealth and security, to the USA and South Africa with their legacies of slavery and racism.

*Adventures in Democracy* draws on her experiences and the deep history of democracies – in ancient Rome and Athens, the American and French revolutions and Renaissance Florence – to offer an unflinching portrait of modern democracy. To salvage democratic institutions and ideals, Benner argues, we need to pay more attention to inequalities and struggles for power among citizens. Probing myths of heroic triumph over tyranny and inexorable progress towards equality, she reveals the vulnerabilities of people power, inviting us to consider why democracy is worth fighting for and the role each citizen must play.

Erica Benner is a political philosopher who has taught at Oxford University, the London School of Economics and Yale. She is the author of *Be Like the Fox*, which was selected as one of the *Guardian*’s Best Books of 2017 and shortlisted for the 2018 Elizabeth Longford Prize for Historical Biography. Erica was born in Japan and currently lives in Berlin.
Remembering Peasants
A Personal History of a Vanished World
Patrick Joyce

A way of life that once encompassed most of humanity is vanishing in one of the greatest transformations of our time: the eclipse of the rural world by the urban.

In this new history of peasantry, Patrick Joyce tells the story of this lost world and its people. In contrast to the usual insulting stereotypes, we discover a rich and complex culture: traditions, songs, celebrations and revolts, across Europe from the plains of Poland to the farmsteads and villages of Italy and Ireland, through the nineteenth century to the present day. Into this passionate history, written with exquisite care, Joyce weaves remarkable individual stories, including those of his own Irish family, and looks at how peasant life has been remembered – and misremembered – in contemporary culture.

This is a people whose voice is vastly underrepresented in human history. Yet for Joyce, we are all the children of peasants, who must respect the experience of our ancestors. This is particularly pressing when our knowledge of the land is being lost to climate crisis and the rise of industrial agriculture. Enlightening, timely and vital, this book commemorates an extraordinary culture whose impact on our history and our future remains profoundly relevant.

Patrick Joyce is Emeritus Professor of History at Manchester University, and one of the leading social historians of his generation. He has long been a radical and influential voice in debates on the politics and future of social and cultural history. Joyce has held visiting professorships and fellowships at Trinity College Dublin, the University of California at Berkeley, LSE, and elsewhere. His most recent book is a memoir of growing up to Irish parents in London, Going to My Father’s House, examining questions of immigration and home.

FEBRUARY 2024
9780241543023
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 400 PAGES
The Achilles Trap
Saddam Hussein, the United States and the Middle East, 1979–2003
Steve Coll

The inside story of America’s long and ruinous relationship with Saddam Hussein

*The Achilles Trap* masterfully untangles the people, ploys of power and geopolitics that led to America’s disastrous war with Iraq and, for the first time, details America’s fundamental miscalculations during its ruinous, decades-long relationship with Saddam Hussein.

Beginning with Saddam’s rise to power in 1979 and the birth of Iraq’s secret nuclear weapons programme, Steve Coll traces Saddam’s motives through understanding his inner circle. He brings to life the diplomats, scientists, family members and generals who had no choice but to defer to their leader – a leader directly responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, as well as the torture or imprisonment of many more. This was a man whose reasoning was impossible to reduce to a simple explanation, and the CIA and successive presidential administrations failed to grasp critical nuances in his paranoia, resentments and inconsistencies – even when the stakes were incredibly high.

Using unpublished and underreported sources, interviews with surviving participants, and Saddam’s own transcripts and audio files, *The Achilles Trap* is a remarkable picture of a dictator who was convinced the world was out to get him and acted accordingly. A work of great historical significance, it is the definitive account of how corruptions of power, lies of diplomacy and vanity – on both sides – led to avoidable errors of statecraft: ones that would enact immeasurable human suffering and forever change our political landscape.

*Steve Coll* is Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University. His major books include *Private Empire*, *The Bin Ladens* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Ghost Wars*. He is a staff writer for the *New Yorker*.

FEBRUARY 2024
9780241686652
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£35.00 | 576 PAGES
The high-wire true story of the millionaire trader, who won the finance game and then blew it wide open

‘If you were gonna rob a bank, and you saw the vault door there, left open, what would you do? Would you wait around?’

Ever since he was a kid, kicking broken footballs on the streets of East London in the shadow of Canary Wharf’s skyscrapers, Gary wanted something better. Something a whole lot bigger.

Then he won a competition run by a bank: ‘The Trading Game’. The prize: a golden ticket to a new life, as the youngest trader in the whole city. A place where you could make more money than you’d ever imagined. Where your colleagues are dysfunctional maths geniuses, overfed public schoolboys and borderline psychopaths, yet they start to feel like family. Where soon you’re the bank’s most profitable trader, dealing in nearly a trillion dollars. A day. Where you dream of numbers in your sleep — and then stop sleeping at all.

But what happens when winning starts to feel like losing? When the easiest way to make money is to bet on millions becoming poorer and poorer — and, as the economy starts slipping off a precipice, your own sanity starts slipping with it? You want to stop, but you can’t. Because nobody ever leaves.

Would you stick, or quit? Even if it meant risking everything?

This is an outrageous, unvarnished, white-knuckle journey to the dark heart of an intoxicating world — from someone who survived the game and then blew it all wide open.

Gary Stevenson left his trading career behind, convinced that solving inequality was the only way to repair the world economy. He has since studied for an MPhil at Oxford, worked with economic think-tanks and founded a YouTube channel, GarysEconomics, teaching people about real-world economics. He regularly appears on television and radio and has written for the Guardian and OpenDemocracy, among others.

FEBRUARY 2024
9780241636602
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 336 PAGES
Pathless Forest
The Quest to Save the World’s Largest Flowers
Chris Thorogood

As a child, Chris Thorogood dreamed of seeing Rafflesia – the plant with the world’s largest flowers. Today he’s a botanist at the University of Oxford, dedicating his life to studying the biology of such plants, working alongside others in Southeast Asia to document these huge, mysterious blooms.

Pathless Forest is the story of his journey to study and protect this extraordinary plant – a biological enigma which invades vines as a leafless parasite, stealing food. We join him on a mind-bending adventure, as he faces a seemingly impenetrable barrier of weird, wonderful and sometimes fearsome flora, following indigenous tribes into remote, untrodden rainforests in search of Rafflesia’s ghostly, foul-smelling blooms, more than a metre across.

We depend on plants for our very existence, but many of the world’s species are threatened with extinction. Pathless Forest is part thrilling adventure story and part inspirational call to action to safeguard a fast-disappearing wilderness. To view plants in a different way, as vital for our own future as for that of the planet we share. And to see if Rafflesia itself can be saved.

Chris Thorogood is a lecturer at the University of Oxford, where he’s Deputy Director and Head of Science at Oxford Botanic Garden, and a Visiting Professor at the University of the Philippines. He makes regular TV and radio appearances and is an award-winning botanical illustrator and wildlife artist. Obsessed with plants, he’s on a mission to make us see them differently – how we, they, and our planet, are all connected.
Judith Butler, the ground-breaking philosopher whose influential work has redefined how we think about gender and sexuality, confronts the attacks on gender that have become central to right-wing movements today. Global networks have formed ‘anti-gender ideology movements’ dedicated to circulating a fantasy that gender is a dangerous threat to families, local cultures, civilization – and even ‘man’ himself. Inflamed by the rhetoric of public figures, this movement has sought to abolish reproductive justice, undermine protections against violence, and strip trans and queer people of their rights.

But what, exactly, is so scary about gender? In this vital, courageous book, Butler carefully examines how ‘gender’ has become a phantasm for emerging authoritarian regimes, fascist formations, and transexclusionary feminists. They illuminate the concrete ways that this phantasm displaces anxieties and fears of destruction. Operating in tandem with deceptive accounts of critical race theory and xenophobic panics about migration, the anti-gender movement demonizes struggles for equality, fuels aggressive nationalism, and leaves millions of people vulnerable to subjugation.

An essential intervention into one of the most fraught issues of our moment, Who’s Afraid of Gender? is a bold call to make a broad coalition with all those whose struggle for equality is linked with fighting injustice. Imagining new possibilities for both freedom and solidarity, Butler offers us an essentially hopeful work that is both timely and timeless.

Judith Butler is a philosopher and distinguished professor in the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley. Their books, including Gender Trouble and Bodies That Matter, have been translated into over twenty-five languages.

MARCH 2024
9780241595824
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 320 PAGES
A foundational reckoning with how Black Americans have used the written word to define and redefine themselves, by one of the nation’s major literary critics

Distilled over many years from Henry Louis Gates Jr’s legendary Harvard introductory course in African American Studies, The Black Box: Writing the Race is the story of Black self definition in America through the prism of the writers who have led the way. From Phillis Wheatley and Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, to Zora Neale Hurston and Richard Wright, James Baldwin and Toni Morrison – these writers used words to create a liveable world – a ‘home’ – for Black people destined to live out their lives in a bitterly racist society.

It is a book grounded in the beautiful irony that a community formed legally and conceptually by its oppressors to justify brutal sub-human bondage, transformed itself through the word into a community whose foundational definition was based on overcoming one of history’s most pernicious lies. This collective act of resistance and transcendence is at the heart of its self-definition as a ‘community’. Out of that contested ground has flowered a resilient, creative, powerful, diverse culture formed by people who have often disagreed markedly about what it means to be ‘Black’, and about how best to shape a usable past out of the materials at hand to call into being a more just and equitable future.

This is the epic story of how, through essays and speeches, novels, plays and poems, a long line of creative thinkers has unveiled the contours of – and resisted confinement in – the ‘black box’ inside which this ‘nation within a nation’ has been assigned, from the nation’s founding through to today. This is a book that records the compelling saga of the creation of a people.

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and founding director of the Hutchins Centre for African and African American Research at Harvard University.

MARCH 2024
9780241678503
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 272 PAGES
The Anxious Generation
How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness
Jonathan Haidt

An urgent and insightful investigation into the collapse in youth mental health, from the influential social psychologist and international bestselling author

Jonathan Haidt has spent his career speaking truth and wisdom in some of the most difficult spaces – communities polarized by politics and religion, campuses battling culture wars, and now the mental health emergency hitting teenagers today in many countries around the world.

In The Anxious Generation, Haidt shows how, between 2010 and 2015, childhood and adolescence got rewired. As teens traded in their flip phones for smartphones packed with social media apps, time online soared, including time spent comparing oneself to a vast pool of others. Time engaging face-to-face with friends and family plummeted, and so did mental health.

But this is not just a story about technology; this profound shift took place against a backdrop of declining childhood freedom and free-play, as parents over-supervised every aspect of their children’s lives offline, depriving them of the experiences they most need to become strong and self-governing adults.

In this book, Haidt makes a compelling argument that the loss of play-based childhood and its replacement with a phone-based childhood that is not suitable for human development is the source of increased mental distress among teenagers. The Anxious Generation delves into the latest psychological and biological research to show the four fundamental ways in which a phone-based childhood disrupts development – sleep deprivation, social deprivation, cognitive fragmentation and addiction. Haidt offers separate in-depth analyses of what has happened to girls, and what has happened to boys, offering practical advice for parents, schools, governments, and teens themselves. Drawing on ancient wisdom and cutting-edge research, this eye-opening book is a life raft and a powerful call-to-arms.

Jonathan Haidt is a social psychologist and the Thomas Cooley Professor of Ethical Leadership at New York University’s Stern School of Business. He is the author of The Righteous Mind and The Happiness Hypothesis.

MARCH 2024
9780241647660
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 400 PAGES
House of Lilies
The Dynasty that Made Medieval France
Justine Firnhaber-Baker

A sweeping history of the Capetian monarchs

One of the great epics of Europe’s history, the story of the rise and rise of the Capetian dynasty dominates the Middle Ages. Starting in the tenth century from an insecure foothold around Paris, the Capetians built a nation that stretched from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean and from the Rhône to the Pyrenees. They founded practices and institutions that endured until the Revolution, transformed Paris from a muddy backwater to a splendid metropole, and popularized the fleur-de-lys, the lily, as the emblem of France. Time and again, their opponents woefully misjudged who they were up against, as through guile, ruthlessness, luck and marriage the Capetians disposed of them all.

This is their story, the story of the most powerful kingdom in Christendom. It is a tale of religious upheaval, heroism, adulterous affairs, holy wars, pogroms and persecution. From Hugh Capet to Eleanor of Aquitaine, the Capetians were men and women of vision and ambition, who considered themselves chosen by God to fulfil a great destiny. If they were mistaken in their assumptions and merciless in their methods, in one respect they were right. They did not simply rule France: they created it.

House of Lilies is a highly enjoyable, state-of-the-art account of this extraordinary sequence of events, set against one of the great eras in the history of western Europe, a time of remarkable cultural efflorescence. Justine Firnhaber-Baker brilliantly conveys not only the sheer glamour of the French court, but also the intellectual achievements, the battles and the centrality of religion, as well as the series of catastrophes that led to the dynasty’s ultimate demise.

Justine Firnhaber-Baker is Professor of History at the University of St Andrews. She is the author of The Jacquerie of 1358 and Violence and the State in Languedoc, 1250-1400.

MARCH 2024
9780241552773
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£30.00 | 432 PAGES
Growing up in Columbus, Ohio in the 1990s, Hanif Abdurraqib witnessed a golden era of basketball, one in which legends like LeBron were forged, and countless others weren’t. His lifelong love of the game leads Abdurraqib into a lyrical, historical, and emotionally rich exploration of what it means to make it, who we think deserves success, the tensions between excellence and expectation, and the very notion of role models, all of which he expertly weaves together with memoir.

There’s Always This Year is a triumph from one of America’s most celebrated and insightful critics, poets and authors. It brims with joy, pain, solidarity, comfort, outrage, and hope. It’s about basketball in the way They Can’t Kill Us Until They Kill Us is about music and A Little Devil in America is about history — no matter the subject, Abdurraqib’s exquisite writing is always poetry, always profound, and always a clarion call to radically reimagine how we think about our culture, and ourselves.

Hanif Abdurraqib is a poet, essayist, and cultural critic from Columbus, Ohio. His first full length poetry collection, The Crown Ain’t Worth Much, was named a finalist for the Eric Hoffer Book Prize, and was nominated for a Hurston-Wright Legacy Award. His first collection of essays, They Can’t Kill Us Until They Kill Us, was named a book of the year by BuzzFeed, Esquire, NPR, O: The Oprah Magazine, Paste, CBC, the Los Angeles Review, Pitchfork, and Chicago Tribune, among others. His most recent book, A Little Devil In America, was the winner of the 2021 Gordon Burn Prize and the 2022 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction.
The Weight of Nature
How a Changing Climate Changes our Minds, Brains and Bodies
Clayton Page Aldern

A riveting, revelatory account of how the climate emergency is changing us from the inside out

It is now inarguable that climate change threatens the future of life on Earth. But in The Weight of Nature, award-winning journalist and neuroscientist Clayton Page Aldern shows that the warming climate is not just affecting our planet – it is affecting our brains and bodies too.

Drawing on six years of ground-breaking research, Aldern documents a burgeoning public health crisis that has gone largely unreported. Eco-anxiety, he shows us, is just the tip of the iceberg. The rapidly changing environment is directly intervening in our brain health, behaviour, decision-making and cognition in real time, affecting everything from spikes in aggravated assault to lower levels of productivity and concentration, to the global dementia epidemic. Travelling the world to meet the scientists and doctors unravelling the tangled connections between us and our environment, and reporting the stories of those who are already feeling these shifts most keenly, Aldern shows how a weary world is wearing on us.

Written in urgent and deeply moving prose, The Weight of Nature is a revelation, bringing to light the myriad ways the changing environment is changing our very humanity from the inside out.

Clayton Page Aldern is a neuroscientist turned environmental journalist whose work has appeared in the Atlantic, the Guardian, the Economist and Grist, where he is a senior data reporter. A Rhodes Scholar, he holds a master’s in neuroscience and a master’s in public policy from the University of Oxford. He is also a research affiliate at the Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology at the University of Washington.

APRIL 2024
9780241597378
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 256 PAGES
Rural Hours

The Country Lives of Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Townsend Warner and Rosamond Lehmann

Harriet Baker

A joyful, rule-breaking experiment in biography, which celebrates ‘country life’ as a state of mind

1917. Virginia Woolf arrives at Asheham, on the Sussex Downs, immobilized by nervous exhaustion and creative block.

1930. Feeling jittery about her writing career, Sylvia Townsend Warner spots a modest workman’s cottage for sale on the Dorset coast.

1941. Rosamond Lehmann settles in a Berkshire village, seeking a lovers’ retreat, a refuge from war, and a means of becoming ‘a writer again’.

Rural Hours tells the story of three very different women, each of whom moved to the country and were forever changed by it.

In this bold new biography, Harriet Baker vividly recreates the ‘rural hours’ of the writers Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Townsend Warner, and Rosamond Lehmann. We encounter them at quiet moments – pausing to look at an insect on the windowsill; jotting down a recipe; or digging for potatoes, dirt beneath their nails. Slowly, we start to see transformations unfold.

Graceful, fluid, and enriched by previously untouched archival material, Rural Hours is both a paean to the bravery and vision of three pioneering writers, and a passionate invitation to us all: to recognize the radical potential of domestic life and rural places, and find new enchantment in the routines and rituals of each day.

Harriet Baker has written for the London Review of Books, the Paris Review, the New Statesman, the TLS, Apollo and Frieze. She read English at Oxford and holds a PhD from Queen Mary, University of London. In 2018, she was awarded the Biographers’ Club Tony Lothian Prize. She lives in Bristol.

APRIL 2024

9780241540510
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 256 PAGES
Age of
Revolutions
Fareed Zakaria

The international best-selling author explores the revolutions — past and present — that define the chaotic, polarized and unstable age in which we live.

Populist rage, ideological fracture, economic and technological shocks, geopolitical dangers and an international system studded with catastrophic risk — the early decades of the 21st century may be one of the most revolutionary periods in modern history. But they are not the first. Humans have lived, and thrived, through more than one great realignment. What makes an age a revolutionary one? And how do they end?

In this major new work, Fareed Zakaria masterfully investigates eras that have shattered and shaped humanity. Four such periods hold profound lessons for today. First, in seventeenth-century Netherlands a series of transformations made that tiny land the richest in the world — and created modern politics as we know it today. The ‘Glorious Revolution’ in Britain showed that major political change could happen peacefully. Next, the French Revolution, a dramatic decade and a half that devoured its ideological children and left a bloody legacy that haunts us to this day. Finally, the mother of all revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, which catapulted Britain and the U.S. to global dominance and created the modern world. Against these paradigm-shifting historical eras, Zakaria describes our current situation, unpacking the four revolutions we are living through now; in globalization, technology, identity, and geopolitics.

As few public intellectuals can, Zakaria combines intellectual range, deep historical insight, and uncanny prescience to reframe and illuminate a turbulent present.

Fareed Zakaria is the host of CNN’s flagship international affairs show, Fareed Zakaria GPS, as well as weekly columnist for the Washington Post. He is the author of four international bestsellers, including his last one, Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World. He lives in New York City.

APRIL 2024
9780241692417
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 320 PAGES
Over the past two centuries, economic growth has freed billions from poverty and made our lives far healthier and longer. As a result, the unfettered pursuit of growth defines economic life around the world. Yet this prosperity has come at an enormous price: deepening inequalities, destabilizing technologies, environmental destruction and climate change.

Confusion reigns. For many, in our era of anaemic economic progress, the worry is slowing growth — in the UK, Europe, China and elsewhere. Others understandably claim, given its costs, that the only way forward is through ‘degrowth’, deliberating shrinking our economies.

At this time of uncertainty about growth and its value, award-winning economist Daniel Susskind has written an essential reckoning. In a sweeping analysis full of historical insight, he argues that we cannot abandon growth but shows instead how we must redirect it, making it better reflect what we truly value. He explores what really drives growth, and offers original ideas for combatting our economic slowdown. Lucid, thought-provoking and brilliantly researched, Growth: A Reckoning is a vital guide to one of our greatest preoccupations.

Daniel Susskind is a Research Professor in Economics at King’s College London and a senior research associate at the Institute for Ethics in AI at Oxford University. He is the author of A World Without Work and co-author of the bestselling The Future of the Professions. Previously, he worked in the British government, as a policy adviser in the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, the Cabinet Office, and at 10 Downing Street.
The Invisible Doctrine

The Secret History of Neoliberalism (& How It Came to Control Your Life)

George Monbiot and Peter Hutchison

How can you fight something if you don’t know it exists?

We live under an ideology that preys on every aspect of our lives: our education and our jobs; our healthcare and our leisure; our relationships and our mental wellbeing; even the planet we inhabit – the very air we breathe. So pervasive has it become that, for most people, it has no name. It seems unavoidable, like a natural law.

But trace it back to its roots, and we discover that it is neither inevitable nor immutable. It was conceived, propagated, and then concealed by the powerful few. It is time to bring it into the light – and, in doing so, to find an alternative worth fighting for.

Neoliberalism. Do you know what it is?

George Monbiot is an author, Guardian columnist and environmental campaigner. His best-selling books include Feral: Rewilding the Land, Sea and Human Life, Heat: How We Can Stop the Planet Burning and Regenesis: Feeding the World without Devouring the Planet. In 2023 he was awarded the Orwell Prize for Journalism.

Peter Hutchison is a critically acclaimed filmmaker, New York Times bestselling author, educator and activist. His 2015 documentary, Requiem for the American Dream, was a New York Times Critics Pick and No.1 top-selling documentary on iTunes. The bestselling companion book has been translated into 12 languages.
A new story of rural Britain and its colonial past, through a series of country walks

The countryside is almost sacred to many Britons. There is a depth of feeling about rural places, the moors and lochs, valleys and mountains, cottages and country houses. Yet the British countryside, so integral to our national identity, is rarely seen as having anything to do with British colonialism. In Our Island Stories, historian Corinne Fowler brings rural life and colonial rule together, with transformative results. Through ten country walks with varied companions, Fowler combines local and global history, connecting the Cotswolds to Calcutta, Dolgellau to Virginia, and Grasmereto Canton.

Empire transformed rural lives: whether in Welsh sheep farms or Cornish copper mines, it offered both opportunity and exploitation. Fowler shows how the booming profits of overseas colonial activities directly contributed to enclosure, land clearances and dispossession. These histories, usually considered separately, continue to link the lives of their descendants now.

To give an honest account, to offer both affection and criticism, is a matter of respect: we should not knowingly tell half a history. This new knowledge of our island stories, once gained, can only deepen Britons’ relationship with their beloved landscape.

Corinne Fowler is Professor of Colonialism and Heritage in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. Between 2018 and 2022, Fowler directed a child-led history and writing project called ‘Colonial Countryside: National Trust Houses Reinterpreted’. She also co-authored the 2021 National Trust report on its country houses’ historical links to the British Empire. Her most recent book is Green Unpleasant Land: Creative Responses to Rural England’s Colonial Connections.
Alien Earths
Planet Hunting in the Cosmos
Lisa Kaltenegger

The world expert explains how we hunt new planets, then search them to discover if we’re alone in the universe

For thousands of years, we’ve wondered if we’re alone in the cosmos – now we have the technology to investigate. The answer should be a clear yes or no, but once you try to find life elsewhere, you realize it is not so simple. What actually is life? How do you find it over cosmic distances?

Astronomer Lisa Kaltenegger occupies Carl Sagan’s former office at Cornell University, where she works with teams of tenacious scientists to find life on faraway worlds, using Earth’s history as a Rosetta Stone. With infectious enthusiasm, she provides an insider’s guide to the most unusual exoplanets that have shaken our worldview – planets covered in oceans of lava, lonely wanderers lost in space, and others with more than one sun in their sky. And describes how close imagined sci-fi worlds come to reality.

We live in an incredible new epoch of exploration. As our charming tour guide, Professor Kaltenegger shows how we discover not merely new continents like explorers of old, but whole new worlds circling other stars. From where aliens may be gazing back at us.

Lisa Kaltenegger is Founding Director of the Carl Sagan Institute at Cornell University, and Associate Professor in Astronomy. A European Commission Role Model for Women in Science and Research, she serves on NSF and NASA committees and the JWST and TESS telescopes. One of America’s Young Innovators (Smithsonian), an Innovator to Watch (Time magazine), and star of the IMAX movie The Search for Life in Space, Asteroid Kaltenegger7734 is named after her.

APRIL 2024
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ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 288 PAGES
We live in an age of increasing complexity, where accelerating technology and global interconnection hold more promise – and more peril – than any other time in human history. As well as financial crises, the issues around climate change, automation, growing inequality and polarization are all rooted in the economy, yet standard economic predictions fail us.

Many books have been written about Doyne Farmer. Making Sense of Chaos is the first in his own words, presenting a manifesto for doing economics better. A tale of science and ideas, Farmer fuses his profound knowledge with personal stories to explain how to bring a scientific revolution to bear on the economic conundrums facing society.

Using big data and ever more powerful computers, we can for the first time apply complex systems science to economic activity, building realistic models of the global economy. The resulting simulations and emergent behavior observed form the cornerstone of complexity economics, a new science helping us test ideas and make far better economic predictions – to better address the hard problems facing the world.

J. Doyne Farmer is an American complex systems scientist and entrepreneur who pioneered many of the fields that define the scientific agenda of our times: dynamical systems, chaos, complexity theory, artificial life, wearable computing, and more. Currently he is Director of the Complexity Economics programme at the Institute for New Economic Thinking and Baillie Gifford Professor of Complex Systems Science at the University of Oxford, Chief Scientist at Macrocosm, and an External Professor at the Santa Fe Institute.

APRIL 2024
9780241201978
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 320 PAGES
Vladimir Lenin, an occasional resident of North London who went on to other things, has been credited with once saying that there are decades where nothing happens but weeks when decades happen. The first two and a half decades of this century in Britain have had plenty of those weeks. Indeed, our recent history has at times resembled an episode of *Casualty*, the long-running BBC hospital drama in which every hedge trimmer slips, every gas pipe leaks, every piece of scaffolding collapses and everyone ends up in intensive care.

In *Haywire* Andrew Hindmoor makes sense of the deluge of events which have rained down on Britain since 2000, from the Iraq War to financial collapse, austerity to Brexit, as well as more easily forgotten moments such as the MP’s expenses scandal. He shows not simply how one crisis has quickly followed another, but how each crisis has compounded the next, so that disaster feels like the new normal. Has Britain simply been the victim of a particularly prolonged run of bad luck which will, sooner or later, come to an end?

No. Hindmoor argues that the way the British state is organised has, time and again, made a crisis out of a drama — and that it is time to find an alternative before we all go haywire.

Andrew Hindmoor is Professor of Politics at the University of Sheffield. He has edited the journal *Political Studies* and is currently an Associate Editor of *New Political Economy*.
Despite its manifest failures, the narrative of neoliberalism retains its grip on the public mind and the policies of governments all over the world. By this, that less regulation and more ‘animal spirits’ capitalism produces not only greater prosperity, but more freedom for individuals in society and is therefore morally better.

But, in *The Road to Freedom* Stiglitz asks, whose freedom are we – should we be – thinking about? What happens when one person’s freedom comes at the expense of another’s? Should the freedoms of corporations be allowed to impinge upon those of individuals in the ways they now do?

Taking on giants of neoliberalism such as Hayek and Friedman and examining how public opinion is formed, Stiglitz reclaims the language of freedom from the right to show that far from ‘free’ – unregulated – markets promoting growth and enterprise, they in fact reduce it. He shows how neoliberal economics and its implied moral system have impacted our legal and social freedoms in surprising ways, from property and intellectual rights, to education and social media.

Stiglitz’s eye, as always, is on how we might create the true human flourishing which should be the great aim of our economic and social system. *The Road to Freedom* offers a powerful re-evaluation of democracy, economics and what constitutes a good society — and a roadmap of how we might achieve it.

*The Road to Freedom* offers a powerful re-evaluation of democracy, economics and what constitutes a good society — and a roadmap of how we might achieve it.

‘We were so happy and didn’t know it …’

A thirty-three-year-old writer lives in a quiet European suburb with his wife and his dog. His parents have bought an apartment nearby. On weekends they go out for brunch, cook and see friends. Life is good; it is normal. Then the invaders come.

The Language of War is about what happens when your world changes overnight. When you wake up to the sound of helicopters and the smell of gunpowder. When your home is hit by shells or broken into by gunmen, and you spend another night in a basement-turned-bomb shelter. When, even though you’ve never held a weapon before, you realise the only choice is to fight back. It is about things one can never forget, or forgive.

Bringing together Oleksandr Mykhed’s vivid day-by-day chronicles of the invasion of Ukraine with a chorus of other voices – his family, friends in exile, those who have fought and have witnessed unimaginable atrocities – this book is both a record, and a reckoning. Haunting and timeless, it asks how it is possible to find the words to describe a new reality; how you can still make sense of the world when the only language you can speak is the language of war.

Oleksandr Mykhed is a writer. Until March 2022, he lived in Kyiv; he is now enlisted in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. He is the author of nine books; selected essays and excerpts from his books have been translated into ten languages. He has participated in literary residencies in Finland, Latvia, Iceland, the USA and France, and virtual residency at Oxford University. He has written for publications including The Financial Times, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and The Guardian, and has appeared as a guest on CNN and NPR. He is a member of PEN Ukraine.

JUNE 2024
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DEMY OCTAVO
£18.99 | 224 PAGES
The study of ancient Greek history has been central to the western conception of history since the Renaissance. *The Muse of History* traces the shifting patterns of this preoccupation in the last three centuries, in which each generation has reinterpreted the Greeks in the light of their contemporary world, through times of revolution, conflicting ideologies and warfare. It aims to offer a new history of Greek historiography from the Enlightenment to the present, and to acknowledge the continuing spiritual importance of the ancient Greeks for European culture in the twentieth century under totalitarian persecutions. Through the study of different historians, many of them unjustly forgotten, it shows the problematic nature of the Anglo-Saxon tradition and the importance of ideas from the continent of Europe, the ambiguities of democracy, and the impossibility of understanding the past or the present outside our common European heritage. It ends by offering suggestions for the future of the study of the Greeks in the context of world history.

Oswyn Murray is a leading scholar of the ancient world. He is the author of *Early Greece* and *The Symposium: Drinking Greek Style*, and co-editor, with John Boardman and Jasper Griffin, of *The Oxford History of the Classical World*. His works have been translated into many languages.
In the great revolutionary year of 1968, Tony Benn was a respectable Labour minister in his forties, and he was restless. While new social movements were shaking up Britain and much of the world, Westminster politics seemed stuck. It was time, he decided, for a different approach.

Over the next half century, the radicalized Benn helped forge a new left in Britain. He was joined by four other politicians, who would become comrades, collaborators and rivals: Ken Livingstone, John McDonnell, Diane Abbott and Jeremy Corbyn.

For Andy Beckett, the story of these admired and loathed political explorers – both their sudden breakthroughs and long stretches in the wilderness – is the untold story of British politics in modern times. As he reveals, their project to create a radically more equal, liberal and democratic Britain has been much more influential than electoral history might suggest, and can be seen from the shape of our city life to the causes of our culture wars.

For their many detractors, this influence was and remains dangerous: a form of extremism that must be stamped out. But as these five searchers believed, in politics there is no total victory – nor total defeat.

Andy Beckett is a Guardian columnist. He has also written for the Economist, The New York Times magazine, the London Review of Books and the Independent on Sunday. His previous books are Promised You A Miracle, When the Lights Went Out and Pinochet in Piccadilly.
The rebirth of Italy after the Second World War is one of the most impressive political transformations in modern European history. In 1945, post-fascist Italy was devastated by war and its reputation in the international arena was nil. Yet by December 1955, when Italy was admitted to the United Nations, the nation had contested three acrimonious but free general elections, had a flourishing press, and was a leader in the process of building Europe. The contrast with Fascism was stark.

This book charts the descent of Italy into Fascism, the scale of the wartime disaster, the Italian resistance to Nazi occupation, and the establishment of the Republic in 1946. The Cold War divided, in 1947, the coalition of parties that had led the resistance to Fascism and Nazism.

The book’s final chapters deal with the consolidation of Italian democracy and with the statesmanship of Alcide De Gasperi, the premier from December 1945 to August 1953. The book argues, first, that De Gasperi deserves more credit than he has typically been accorded for Italy’s post-war democratization and, second, that Italian democracy was constructed on a sound foundation – which is why it has been able to survive its many post-war crises.

Mark Gilbert was educated at Durham University and the University of Wales. He has taught at Dickinson College, the University of Bath, the University of Trento, and SAIS Europe, the Bologna Centre of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, where he is C. Grove Haines Professor of History. In 2018, he chaired the international jury of the Cundill Prize for History. He is associate editor of the Journal of Modern Italian Studies.
In 2016, while working as a journalist in Yangon, Clare Hammond discovered an obscure map that showed a web of new railways spanning the length and breadth of the country — railways not shown on any other publicly available maps. She was determined to uncover the railways’ origins, purpose, and most of all, the silence that surrounded them. She would spend three months travelling on these mysterious railways, and the next five years piecing their story together.

Her journey would take her from Myanmar’s tropical south to the embattled mountain towns that border India and China. In dilapidated carriages, along tracks in disrepair, through contested ethnic states and former sites of forced labour, visiting temples, tea shops and festivals, Clare encountered a colourful and contradictory Myanmar through the stories of its people. Simultaneously a lush and evocative travelogue, an unsparing account of Myanmar’s recent history, and an astonishing, conversation-shifting engagement with Britain’s colonial legacy, *On the Shadow Tracks* is that rare and necessary thing: a book that finds and tells the truth.

**Clare Hammond** is a British journalist. Based in London, she works for non-profit Global Witness, investigating issues relating to natural resources, conflict and corruption. In Yangon, where she lived for six years, Hammond was most recently the digital editor of *Frontier*, Myanmar’s best-known investigative magazine, where she oversaw daily news coverage. A Google News Initiative and Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting grantee, her work has won multiple awards.
The Damascus
Events

The 1860 Massacre
and the Destruction
of the Old Ottoman
World

Eugene Rogan

The dramatic history of
a massacre in Damascus,
and the collapse of the
old Ottoman world order

This remarkable book recreates one of the
watershed moments in the history of the Middle
East: the ferocious outbreaks of disorder across the
Levant in 1860 which resulted in the massacre of
thousands of Christians in Damascus.

Eugene Rogan brilliantly recreates the lost world
of the Middle East under Ottoman rule. The
once mighty empire was under pressure from
global economic change and European imperial
expansion. Reforms in the mid-nineteenth century
raised tensions across the empire, nowhere more
so than in Damascus. A multifarious city linked by
caravan trade to Baghdad, the Mediterranean
and Mecca, the chaos of languages, customs
and beliefs made Damascus a warily tolerant
place. Until the reforms began to advantage the
minority Christian community at the expense of
the Muslim majority.

But in 1860 people who had generally lived side
by side for generations became bitter enemies as
news of civil war in Mount Lebanon arrived in the
city. Under the threat of a French expeditionary
force, the Ottomans dealt with the disaster
effectively and ruthlessly – but the old, generally
quite tolerant Damascene world lay in ruins.
It would take a quarter of a century to restore
stability and prosperity to the Syrian capital.

This is both an essential book for understanding
the emergence of the modern Middle East from
the destruction of the old Ottoman world, and a
uniquely gripping story.

Eugene Rogan is author of the bestselling
The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in
the Middle East, 1914-1920. He is professor of
modern Middle Eastern history at the University
of Oxford and Director of the Middle East Centre,
St Antony’s College, Oxford.
Why Machines Learn
The Elegant Maths Behind Modern AI
Anil Ananthaswamy

A rich, narrative explanation of the mathematics that has brought us machine learning and the ongoing explosion of artificial intelligence

Machine-learning systems are making life-altering decisions for us: approving mortgage loans, determining whether a tumour is cancerous, or deciding whether someone gets bail. They now influence discoveries in chemistry, biology and physics – the study of genomes, extra-solar planets, even the intricacies of quantum systems.

We are living through a revolution in artificial intelligence that is not slowing down. This major shift is based on simple mathematics, some of which goes back centuries: linear algebra and calculus, the stuff of eighteenth-century mathematics. Indeed by the mid-1850s, a lot of the groundwork was all done. It took the development of computer science and the kindling of 1990s computer chips designed for video games to ignite the explosion of AI that we see all around us today. In this enlightening book, Anil Ananthaswamy explains the fundamental maths behind AI, which suggests that the basics of natural and artificial intelligence might follow the same mathematical rules.

As Ananthaswamy resonantly concludes, to make the most of our most wondrous technologies we need to understand their profound limitations – the clues lie in the maths that makes AI possible.

Anil Ananthaswamy is an award-winning science writer and former staff writer for New Scientist. He is the author of several popular science books, including The Man Who Wasn’t There, which was long-listed for the Pen/E. O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award.
Playing with Reality

How Games Shape Our World

Kelly Clancy

A sweeping intellectual history of games and their importance to human progress

We play games to learn about the world, to understand our minds and the minds of others, and to make predictions about the future. They’re also a lot of fun. But what happens when we mistake games for reality?

Win or Lose explores the riveting history of games since the Enlightenment, weaving an unexpected path through military theory, biology, artificial intelligence, neuroscience, cognitive psychology and the future of democracy. As neuroscientist and physicist Kelly Clancy shows us, games have been deeply intertwined with the arc of history. War games shaped the outcomes of real wars in nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe. Game theory warped our understanding of human behaviour and brought us to the brink of annihilation – yet still underlies basic assumptions in economics, politics and technology. We used games to teach computers how to learn for themselves, and now we are designing games that will determine the shape of society and future of democracy.

Lucid, thought-provoking, and masterfully told, Playing With Reality makes the bold argument that the human fascination with games is the key to understanding our nature.

Kelly Clancy, PhD, is a neuroscientist and physicist who has held research positions at MIT, Berkeley, University College London, and DeepMind. She develops novel brain-computer interfaces with the aim of understanding the principles of intelligence. Her writing has appeared in Wired, Harper’s and The New Yorker. She spent her childhood being repeatedly murdered by her sisters in the video game GoldenEye 007.

MAY 2024

9780241545508
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 288 PAGES
Brave New Words

How AI Will Revolutionize Education (and Why That’s a Good Thing)
Salman Khan

The first book on the AI transformation of education, its implications for parenting, and harnessing its power for good

Whether we like it or not, the AI revolution is coming to education. In Brave New Words, Salman Khan, the visionary behind Khan Academy, explores how artificial intelligence and GPT technology will transform learning, offering a roadmap for teachers, parents and students to navigate this exciting (and sometimes intimidating) new world.

An insider in the world of education technology, Sal explains the ins and outs of these cutting-edge tools and how they will forever change the way we learn and teach. Rather than approaching the ChatGPT revolution with white-knuckled fear, Khan wants parents and teachers to embrace AI and adapt to it (while acknowledging its imperfections and limitations), so that every student can complement the work they’re already doing in profoundly new and creative ways, to personalize learning, adapt assessments, and support success in the classroom.

But Brave New Words is not just about technology — it’s about what this technology means for our society, and the practical implications for administrators, guidance counsellors and hiring managers who can harness the power of AI in education and the workplace. Khan also delves into the ethical and social implications of AI and GPT, offering thoughtful insights into how we can use these tools to build a more accessible education system for students around the world.

Salman Khan is the founder and CEO of Khan Academy, a nonprofit with the mission of providing a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere. He is also the founder of Schoolhouse. world, Khan Lab School, and Khan World School, all nonprofits focused on making top-notch, personalized mastery education accessible. Khan developed maths software for children with ADHD and tutored fourth- and seventh-grade public school students in Boston. He holds three degrees from MIT and an MBA from Harvard Business School.

MAY 2024
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ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 208 PAGES
The Struggle for Taiwan

A History

Sulmaan Wasif Khan

A gripping account of the past and future of Taiwan

In the overwhelming chaos across Asia at the end of the Second World War, one relatively minor issue was the future of the Japanese colony of Taiwan, a large island some one hundred miles off the coast of Fujian. Handed to the Kuomintang-ruled Republic of China, in 1949 it suddenly became the focus of global attention as a random cross-section of defeated nationalists, including President Chiang Kai-shek, fled there from Mao’s triumphant Communist forces.

The Struggle for Taiwan is a balanced and convincing account of the sequence of events that has left Taiwan for generations as a political anomaly, with issues around its status and future continuing to threaten war. With deepening democratization, Taiwan further goads Beijing, remaining functionally independent from China even as Xi Jinping clamours for unification.

This invaluable book allows readers to understand the complex story of this unique place and its role in international relations. With its striking economic dynamism and commitment to democracy, can Taiwan continue – as Hong Kong once did – to thrive, or will China conquer it? And will the world be able to maintain peace across the Taiwan Strait or will it stumble into war?

Sulmaan Wasif Khan is Associate Professor of International History and Chinese Foreign Relations and Denison Chair of History and Diplomacy at the Fletcher School at Tufts University. He is the author of Muslim, Trader, Nomad, Spy: China’s Cold War and the People of the Tibetan Borderlands.

MAY 2024

9780241674857
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 240 PAGES
A vital perspective is missing from the discussions we’re having about Artificial Intelligence: what does it mean for our identity?

Our fascination with AI stems from the perceived uniqueness of human intelligence. We believe it’s what differentiates us. Fears of AI not only concern how it invades our digital lives, but also the implied threat of an intelligence that displaces us from our position at the centre of the world.

Neil D. Lawrence’s visionary book shows why these fears may be misplaced. Atomism, proposed by Democritus, suggested it was impossible to continue dividing matter into ever smaller components: eventually we reach a point where a cut cannot be made (the Greek for uncuttable is ‘atom’). In the same way, by slicing away at the facets of human intelligence that can be replaced by machines, AI uncovers what is left: an indivisible core that is the essence of humanity.

By contrasting our own intelligence with the capabilities of machine intelligence through history, The Atomic Human reveals the technical origins, capabilities and limitations of AI systems, and how they should be wielded. Not just by the experts, but ordinary people. Either AI is a tool for us, or we become a tool of AI. Understanding this will enable readers to choose the future we want.

Neil Lawrence is the DeepMind Professor of Machine Learning at the University of Cambridge where he leads the university-wide initiative on AI, and a Senior AI Fellow at the Alan Turing Institute. Previously he was Director of Machine Learning at Amazon and, as co-host of the Talking Machines podcast, he’s written a series for the Guardian and appeared regularly on other media.

Known for his policy and societal work with the UK’s AI Council, the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, and the OECD’s Global Partnership on AI, his research focuses on improving data governance, accelerating scientific discovery, and how humans can take back control of large AI systems.
On the Edge
The Art of Risking Everything
Nate Silver

From the superstar statistician and ‘Galileo of number crunchers’ (Independent), the definitive guide to our era of risk – and the players raising the stakes

In The Signal and the Noise, Nate Silver showed how forecasting would define the age of Big Data. Now, in his timely new book, Silver investigates ‘the River’, or those whose mastery of risk allows them to shape, and dominate, so much of modern life.

The River is Silver’s term for professional risk takers – poker players and hedge fund managers, crypto true-believers and blue-chip art collectors – and in On the Edge, he reveals what we can learn about navigating uncertainty from those who do so for a living. Whether we like it or not, The River has increasing amounts of wealth and power in our society, and understanding their mindset – including the flaws in their thinking – is key to understanding what drives technology and the global economy today. By embedding within these worlds, Silver offers insight into a range of issues that affect us all, from the COVID-19 pandemic to the future of AI to the nature of capitalism.

Taking us behind the scenes from casinos to hedge funds to art fairs, On the Edge is a deeply reported, all-access journey into a hidden world of movers and shakers.

Nate Silver is the founder of FiveThirtyEight and the internationally bestselling author of The Signal and the Noise, which was published in a dozen languages. He writes the Substack ‘Silver Bulletin’.

JUNE 2024
9780241557037
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£20.00 | 256 PAGES
What causes addiction, and how should we treat it? Today it is understood primarily as a brain disease, yet in this bold reimagining of addiction, pioneering psychiatrist Elias Dakwar argues that this is false. It fails to explain, among other things, why many people can enjoy drugs without developing a dependency on them. Despite decades of neuroscientific research, we aren’t much closer to truly understanding the nature of addiction, nor to addressing it effectively.

In *The Captive Imagination*, Dakwar argues that addiction is an existential challenge, requiring a more philosophical and multidisciplinary approach, as well as a lens through which we can better understand ourselves. Addiction stems from our desire for happiness: whether addicts or not, we all struggle against meaninglessness, and resort to false solutions to our despair. Dakwar also shows how our individual capacity for self-delusion relates to our collective self-inflicted crises, from environmental destruction to social injustice.

Drawing on vivid stories of his own patients, path-breaking research, and decades of clinical experience, *The Captive Imagination* offers a novel framework for understanding and overcoming addiction, as well as human suffering more generally.

Elias Dakwar is an associate professor of psychiatry at Columbia University and a practising psychiatrist, working primarily with people suffering from addiction. He has been investigating novel treatments for addiction for over a decade, and most recently his research has focused on combining ketamine, meditation and psychotherapy to disrupt substance abuse disorders. His work has been published in numerous medical and academic journals, and he has spoken at conferences around the world.
Love Triangle
The Life-Changing Magic of Trigonometry
Matt Parker

Explore the life-changing magic of trigonometry with Matt Parker, stand-up mathematician and No.1 bestselling author of Humble Pi

Why do mobile phones work when you’re on a train? What happens when you pull a pop song apart into pure sine waves and play it back on a piano? And what did mathematicians have to do with the great pig stampede of 2012? The answer to each of these questions can be found in the triangle.

Humans have been using triangles for thousands of years to build structures, measure the earth, make music, paint vanishing points, pot snooker balls and much, much more. But trigonometry is not a thing of the past – triangles underpin all of modern data technology. When someone Snapchats a photo, the light travels into the camera as electromagnetic sine waves, Fourier analysis compresses the image and then trigonometry is used to send the data to someone else’s phone; when you listen to a track on Spotify, triangles remove the sounds which a human ear can’t perceive and reassemble the song so that it’s small enough to stream. Triangles are the hidden pattern beneath the surface of the contemporary world.

Join Matt Parker, stand-up comedian and author of the first ever maths book to be a No. 1 bestseller, as he uncovers the secrets of trigonometry and shares extraordinary stories about the mathematicians, philosophers and engineers who dared to take triangles seriously.

Originally a maths teacher from Australia, Matt Parker is now an award-winning comedian and No.1 bestselling maths author. His YouTube videos have been watched over a hundred million times, which you’ll have to trust him is a lot. Look at all those zeroes: 100,000,000. Matt also had a sell-out maths comedy show at the Edinburgh Fringe and once held world records for both the Rubik’s Cube and Space Invaders.

JUNE 2024
9780241505694
ROYAL OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 336 PAGES
After the devastation of World War Two, the international community came together to enshrine fundamental rights to refuge, health, education and living standards, for privacy, fair trials and free speech, and outlawing torture, slavery and discrimination. Their goal was greater global justice, equality, and peace. That settlement is now in danger, attacked by opponents from across the political spectrum and populist and authoritarian movements worldwide. We are threatened by wars, inequality, new technologies and climate catastrophe, and we need our human rights now more than ever. In this powerful, accessible book, Shami Chakrabarti, lawyer, parliamentarian and leading British human rights defender, shows us why human rights are essential for our future.

Outlining the historic national and international struggles for human rights, from the fall of Babylon, to the present day, Chakrabarti is an indispensable guide to the law and logic underpinning human dignity and universal freedoms. Her intervention will engage both sceptics and supporters, equipping believers in the battle of ideas and persuading doubters to think again. For human rights to survive, they must be far better understood by everyone.

Shami Chakrabarti is a leading British human rights lawyer and campaigner who has written and broadcast widely and held a number of public roles in recent decades. A legislator in the House of Lords, she is the author of On Liberty and Of Women. Director of Liberty (the National Council for Civil Liberties) from 2003 to 2016, she was Shadow Attorney General for England and Wales from 2016 to 2020.
When we talk about motherhood and politics together, we usually talk about isolated moments – the policing of breastfeeding, or the cost of childcare. But this is not enough: we need to understand motherhood itself as an inherently political state, one that poses a serious challenge to the status quo.

In *Mother State*, Helen Charman uses this provocative insight to write a new history of Britain and Northern Ireland. Beginning with Women’s Liberation and ending with austerity, the book follows mothers’ fights for an alternative future. Alongside the mother figures that loom large in British culture, from Margaret Thatcher to Kat Slater, we meet communities of lesbian squatters, anti-nuclear campaigners, the wives of striking miners and teenage mothers protesting housing cuts: groups who believed that if you want to nourish your children, you have to nourish the world around them too.

Here we see a world where motherhood is not a restrictive identity but a state of possibility. ‘Mother’ ceases to be an individual responsibility, and becomes an expansive collective term to organize under, for people of any gender, with or without children of their own. It begins with an understanding: that to mother is a political act.

Helen Charman is an assistant lecturer and fellow in English at Clare College, Cambridge. Her critical writing has been published in the *Guardian*, the *White Review*, *Another Gaze*, and the *Stinging Fly*, among others. As a poet, Charman was shortlisted for the *White Review* Poet’s Prize in 2017 and for the 2019 Ivan Juritz Prize for Creative Experiment, and has published four poetry pamphlets, most recently *In the Pleasure Dairy*. Charman volunteers as a birth companion in Glasgow.
Left behind places can be found in prosperous countries — from South Yorkshire, integral to the industrial revolution and now England’s poorest county, to Barranquilla, once Colombia’s portal to the Caribbean and now struggling. More alarmingly, the poorest countries in the world are diverging further from the rest of humanity. Why have these places fallen further behind? And what can we do about it?

World-renowned development economist Paul Collier has spent his life working in neglected communities. In this book he offers his candid diagnosis of why some regions and countries are falling further behind, and a new vision for how they can catch up. Collier lays the blame for widening inequality on stale economic orthodoxies that prioritize market forces and centralized bureaucracies like the UK Treasury. In contrast, a new wave of academic research has revealed the crucial role of collective learning, social capital and local agency in reversing decline and equalising life-chances.

Drawing on insights from social psychology, moral philosophy and behavioural economics, as well as a range of illuminating case studies, Collier shares a galvanizing vision for a more inclusive, prosperous world.

Paul Collier is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Oxford University’s Blavatnik School of Government. He is the author of *The Future of Capitalism* (Handesblatt Prize) and *The Bottom Billion* (Arthur Ross Prize), both widely translated. He works with governments and communities around the world. A communitarian, he was awarded the Adam Smith Prize by Glasgow’s Philosophical Society (2023) and the Global Citizenship Award by Belgium’s cooperative movement (2018).
Particular Books
How do you choose dining chairs that are still comfortable at the end of a long meal? A sofa you can sink into without sagging? A bed that doesn’t leave your neck and back aching?

Award-winning blogger and bestselling author of The Interior Design Handbook Frida Ramstedt is back with practical tips and insider secrets from the world of furniture design. In The Furnishing Handbook, she shares insights and advice on what to look out for to ensure the furniture we buy doesn’t just look good but is also well-made, long-lasting and, most importantly, comfortable to use every day.

Looking beyond the latest furniture trends and styles, Frida equips readers with everything they need to understand what works best when choosing furniture and why. With chapters on chairs, tables, sofas and more, The Furnishing Handbook is an indispensable guide for anyone investing in new pieces for their home.

Frida Ramstedt is the author of the international bestseller, The Interior Design Handbook, and the creator of Scandinavia’s biggest interior design blog, Trendenser.se, winner of the Elle Decoration Award for ‘Best Interior Design Blog’.
Welcome to Anxietyland!

Gemma Correll

A hilarious illustrated guide to all things anxiety, from a beloved award-winning cartoonist

Come and join us in the magical world of Anxietyland, a theme park like no other. Here, there’s so much to see and do: revel in the ups and downs of the Hormonal Rollercoaster, feel the twists and turns of the Overcaffeinated Teacups, and take a scenic ride on the Train of Overthinking to Comorbid Park. There’s no better place for making new friends such as our fun mascot Scaredy Cat, enjoying world-class entertainment, from the Parade of the Therapists to the Well-Meaning Advice Jamboree, and making memories that you’ll never forget – even if you want to!

In Welcome to Anxietyland! cartoonist, writer, and long-time-anxious-person, Gemma Correll takes us on a riotous journey through her struggles with anxiety, to the desperate search for relief and finally to the realization that it really is possible to feel OK again. Because sometimes all that’s left to do when you’ve tried every possible remedy you can imagine is laugh.

Gemma Correll is an award-winning cartoonist, writer and illustrator with a significant following on Instagram. Her comics about mental health have been very popular online and shared by a number of charities. Originally from England, she now lives in California with her husband and their two pugs, Mr Pickles and Zander.
An Album of British Trees
Susan Ogilvy and Richard Ogilvy

In Overleaf, the botanical painter Susan Ogilvy and the eminent forester Richard Ogilvy introduce us to each of the native trees of the British Isles – and a number of non-native, but much cherished, naturalized species – via close and artful consideration of their leaves.

From water-loving alder to long-lived yew, Susan paints both the front and back of every tree’s leaf or needle in exquisite, jewel-like detail, reproduced on the page at exactly life size. Running parallel to Susan’s paintings, Richard provides expert commentary on the natural history of the trees, the ecosystems they inhabit and the traditional uses of their timber, helping us identify each species in the wild while exploring the roles they have played and continue to play in our landscapes and communities.

As vivid and true to life as a book of freshly picked and pressed leaves, Overleaf will delight and inform tree-spotting beginners and seasoned naturalists alike.

Susan Ogilvy’s paintings can be found in various renowned public collections around the world, including the Shirley Sherwood Collection, the Highgrove and Transylvanian Florilegiums, the Smithsonian Collection and the Florilegium of the Royal Botanical Garden, Sydney. She was awarded an RHS Gold Medal in 1997, and lives in rural Somerset.

Richard Ogilvy’s love of the outdoors led him to forestry, and he has practised this art for more than sixty years in the northern Scottish highlands; he claims to have had a hand in planting more than 150 million trees, but lost count after the first year. A past president of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, most recently he has been instrumental in creating two thousand acres of native birch forest, where he hopes to see wildcat and other endangered species thrive.
Cloudspotting
For Beginners

Gavin Pretor-Pinney and William Grill

A guide to the wondrous world of clouds, by the internationally bestselling founder of the Cloud Appreciation Society and a prize-winning illustrator

Have you ever watched a cloud being born? Pick a clear day when just a few white puffs scatter the blue. Try to spot where the faintest patch of cloud is beginning to appear, and then pay attention. What will your cloud grow up to be?

Clouds exist in all manner of shapes and sizes. From low-lying stratus to high-flying cirrus via sun dogs and tornados, Gavin Pretor-Pinney and William Grill reveal the key facts, characteristics and stories about each of the major cloud types as well as their associated meteorological phenomena. We learn their fancy Latin names, explore the parts of the sky where they like to hang out, witness their snazzy optical effects – and even visit them on other planets, where they are made of acid.

Highly informative and beautifully illustrated, Cloudspotting for Beginners will inspire curious minds with a lifelong meteorological wonder.

Gavin Pretor-Pinney is founder of the Cloud Appreciation Society, which has more than 47,000 members in 120 countries. He is the author of the internationally bestselling Cloudspotter’s Guide and Cloud Collector’s Handbook. His third book, The Wavewatcher’s Companion, won the prestigious Royal Society Winton Prize for Science Books. Gavin is a TED Global speaker with over 1.2 million views. He has presented television documentaries for the BBC and Channel 4 and is a Visiting Fellow at the Meteorology Department of Reading University and winner of the Royal Meteorological Society’s Michael Hunt award.

William Grill is a Bristol-based illustrator whose main interest lies in narrative illustration and publishing. He draws most of his inspiration from the natural world, and enjoys working in coloured pencils and occasionally printmaking processes like lino and lithography. His first book, Shackleton’s Journey, won the 2015 Kate Greenaway award and has been translated into over fourteen languages, and his second book, The Wolves of Currumpaw, won the 2016 Bologna Ragazzi Prize for Non-fiction.

MAY 2024
9780241632543
OTHER HARDBACK
£20.00 | 96 PAGES
There is no green energy. Nor pink, nor black. Nor clean nor dirty, for that matter.

In this eye-opening and witty bestseller, an eminent climate expert takes a graphic novelist on a journey to understand the profound changes that our planet is experiencing. The scientist, Jancovici, explains the workings of superpowers and history; psychology and climate; ecology, economics and energy flows. He describes, in short, the world we live in today – a world whose future is deeply uncertain. The artist, Blain, intently listens and draws.

As the pair come face to face with global warming, they – along with Mother Nature and Popeye, among others – create a picture of what the solution to our predicament actually looks like. It’s not just about switching to renewable energy sources, they show. It’s about rethinking everything: our energy supply, our economies and our whole world. We’re left with a vision of the future in which food, education, housing, transport and technology – all of us – come together to succeed in creating a world without end.

Christophe Blain is an award-winning graphic novelist and writer. He is one of very few authors to have twice won the prestigious Graphic Novel prize at the Festival of Angouleme. His bestselling books include the sensational hit Quai d’Orsay.

Jean-Marc Jancovici is a leading specialist in the field of energy and climate change, a co-founding partner of Carbone 4 and president of the think tank The Shift Project. He also teaches at Mines ParisTech and is a member of the French government’s High Council for the Climate. He is the author of several books including Le Plein S’il Vous Plait! La Solution au problème de l’énergie.
As the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, Marie Mitchell’s cooking is motivated by a powerful desire to understand and celebrate those recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation. In Kin, she shares dishes from the Caribbean and its diaspora, exploring the connection food can foster between different times and places, and between friends, families and strangers.

Accompanied by gorgeous photographs, many shot on location in the Caribbean, the book’s eighty recipes – which include crispy saltfish fritters, slow cooked jerk pork, zingy lime and ginger cheesecake and sweet Guinness punch – confound the widespread misconceptions about Caribbean food that abound in the West, which draw on stereotypes of intense heat, pungent smoke and a handful of familiar dishes. But while chilli is certainly a key ingredient and cooking over fire has a long and storied history, Caribbean cookery is also subtle and playful, layering different notes and spices carefully to create delicate, rewarding flavours.

Here, Caribbean food emerges as one of the first truly global cuisines, born out of the violent convergence of African, American, European and South Asian cultures in the long, troubling history of empire and emancipation, its legacy preserved – and, ultimately, transformed – by the kinship of those who share food.

Marie Mitchell is the chef and co-founder of Island Social Club, a sell-out Caribbean supper club aimed at filling the void left by the erosion of London’s once thriving Caribbean social scene. Once a deeply fussy child, nowadays she can often be found cooking, talking or writing about food. Based in East London, she believes that the best conversations are to be had at the dinner table, and she is an advocate for social inclusivity, sustainability, and creating spaces for self-care and mental health awareness.
Moral AI
And How We Get There
Jana Schaich Borg, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Vincent Conitzer

A reassuring and thought-provoking guide to all the big questions about AI and ethics

Should robots ever be considered free? Will computers transcend human intelligence? And what can we do to make sure AI is safe?

The artificial intelligence revolution has begun. Today, there are self-driving cars on our streets, autonomous weapons in our armies, robot surgeons in our hospitals – and AI’s presence in our lives will only increase. Some see this as the dawn of a new era in innovation and ease; others are alarmed by its destructive potential. But one thing is clear: this is a technology like no other, one that raises profound questions about freedom, justice and the very definition of human agency.

In Moral AI, world-renowned researchers in artificial intelligence and philosophy Jana Schaich Borg, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Vincent Conitzer tackle these thorny issues head-on. Writing lucidly and calmly, they lay out the recent advances in this still nascent field, peeling away the exaggeration and alarm, and offer clear examinations of the moral concerns at the heart of AI programs. Ultimately, they argue that artificial intelligence can be built and used safely and ethically, but that its potential cannot be achieved without careful reflection on the values we wish to imbue it with. This is an essential primer for any thinking person.

Jana Schaich Borg is an Assistant Research Professor at the Social Science Research Institute, Duke University.

Walter Sinnott-Armstrong is the Chauncey Stillman Professor of Practical Ethics in the Department of Philosophy and the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University. His books include Think Again and Moral Skepticisms.

Vincent Conitzer is Professor of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University, where he directs the Foundations of Cooperative AI Lab, and at the University of Oxford. He is also Head of Technical AI Engagement at the Institute for Ethics in AI.

FEBRUARY 2024
9780241454749
DEMY OCTAVO HARDBACK
£20.00 | 208 PAGES
Why is our education system unequal?
How does race play a part?
Is Britain still institutionally racist?

Education remains the greatest indicator of life chances in Britain. What we study, where we study, and how long for shape all aspects of our lives. Our careers, our long-term health, our wealth and security are all moulded in the classroom.

But who we are ultimately matters the most.

In Race and Education, Professor Kalwant Bhopal shows how race still determines who gains the best education in Britain, and who falls by the wayside. Through case studies, original research and interviews with students, teachers and academics alike, she reveals how the construction of privilege starts at a young age: with Whiteness taking some students on a gilded path from cradle to career, while many still struggle to build the futures they deserve.

This book highlights how classrooms and lecture halls are at the centre of perpetuating White privilege – and how racism continues to exist in Britain.

Kalwant Bhopal is Professor of Education and Social Justice and Director of the Centre for Research in Race and Education at the University of Birmingham. She is the author of multiple books, including the highly influential White Privilege, which helped to popularize the term.
Our lives are more mediated than ever before. Adults in economically advanced countries spend on average over eight hours per day interacting with the media. The world now has more than 5 billion internet users, and big tech continues to amass more and more money and power. Are we living through a media revolution? *Understanding Media* addresses this question by drawing on decades of research investigating how the news, television, film and technology are intertwined with power and social change.

Changes in the media are related to wider changes in society. The media have supported dictatorship in some places, social liberalism in others and reflect the spread of neoliberal orthodoxy and inequality around much of the globe.

Tracing overarching trends while attending to crucial local context, from the United States to China, Norway to Malaysia, and Brazil to Britain, this book arms the reader with the facts and perspectives needed to navigate the reality of the media and the world we live in.

**James Curran** is Professor of Communications at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is the co-author of the award-winning *Power Without Responsibility* and his other books include *Media and Democracy* and *Media and Power*.

**Joanna Redden** is an Associate Professor at Western University. She is co-author of *Data Justice* and her other books include *The Mediation of Poverty* and the co-edited *Compromised Data: From Social Media to Big Data*. 

**APRIL 2024**
9780241685402
DEMY OCTAVO HARDBACK
£25.00 | 448 PAGES
There can be few more important but also more contentious issues than attempting to understand the human propensity for conflict. Our history is inextricably tangled in wave after wave of inter-human fighting from as far back as we have records.

How can we make sense of what Einstein called ‘the dark places of human will and feeling’? Richard Overy draws on a lifetime’s study of conflict to write this challenging, invaluable book. Studying every facet of war from biology to belief, psychology to security, Overy allows readers to understand the many contradictory or self-reinforcing ways in which warfare can suddenly appear a legitimate option.

Repeatedly humans have foresworn war, have understood its appalling risks and have wished to create more pacific, productive societies. And yet almost inevitably circumstances emerge under which war once more seems inevitable or even desirable.

Richard Overy is one of Britain’s most distinguished historians. His most recent book is Blood and Ruins: The Great Imperial War, 1931–45 which was a New York Times bestseller and winner of the Duke of Wellington Medal for Military History. His other major works include The Dictators, winner of the 2005 Wolfson Prize, The Morbid Age and The Bombing War, which was a finalist for the 2014 Cundhill Prize. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and a Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts.

JUNE 2024
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The Holocaust
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Dan Stone

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Mark Sedgwick

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Penguin Classics
The short story tells the many stories of Bengali literature like no other form can. Arriving in Bengal in the wake of British colonizers, Bengali writers quickly made the prose short story their own, and by the twentieth century a profusion of literary magazines and journals meant that short stories were being avidly read by millions.

Writers responded to this hunger for words with a ferocious energy which reflected the turmoil of their times: their stories covered land wars, famine, the caste system, religious conflict, patriarchy, Partition and the liberation war that saw the emergence of the independent country of Bangladesh. Across these shifting geographical borders, writers also looked inward, evolving new literary styles and stretching the possibilities of social realism, political fiction and intimate domestic tales.

A first in English, this anthology gathers together a century’s worth of extraordinary stories. From a woman who eats fish in secret to the woes of an ageing local footballer, from the anxieties of a middle-class union rep to a lawyer who stumbles upon a philosopher’s stone, this is a collection that celebrates making art of life, in all its difficulty and joy.

Arunava Sinha translates classic, modern and contemporary Bengali fiction and non-fiction into English. Sixty-one of his translations have been published so far. Twice the winner of the Crossword Translation Award, for Sankar’s Chowringhee and Anita Agnihotri’s Seventeen, respectively, and the winner of the Muse India Translation Award for Buddhadeva Bose’s When The Time Is Right, he has also been shortlisted for the Independent Foreign Fiction prize for his translation of Chowringhee, and longlisted for the 2018 Best Translated Book Award USA for his translation of Bhaskar Chakravarti’s Things That Happen and Other Poems. He is Associate Professor of Creative Writing at Ashoka University. He was born and grew up in Kolkata, and lives and writes in New Delhi.
Concerning the Spiritual in Art

Wassily Kandinsky

A seminal text in the history of modern art, from one of the most famous artists of the twentieth century

In Concerning the Spiritual in Art Wassily Kandinsky, one of the most famous abstract painters of all time, urges the reader to free themselves from art’s traditional bonds to material reality. In this radical theoretical work, he calls for a spiritual revolution in painting, arguing that artists, much like musicians, should be allowed to express their own inner lives in abstract, non-material terms. Investigating form and colour, spirituality and tradition, Kandinsky explores art’s resonance with the soul, its purpose and nature, and its power to inspire us, to stir our emotions and to help us see beyond the limits of our world. A significant contribution to the understanding of non-objectivism in art, this book serves as an important landmark in modern art history and is necessary reading for every artist and art-lover.

Translated by Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp, with an introduction by Lisa Florman.

Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) was a Russian-born painter and art theorist. Regarded as a key pioneer of abstract art, he was a founding member of the artistic group Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider). He taught at the Bauhaus School of Art and Architecture in Germany until the mid-1930s, after which he settled in France.
Diaries
Franz Kafka

An essential new translation of the author’s complete, uncensored diaries – a revelation of the idiosyncrasies and rough edges of one of the twentieth century’s most influential writers

Dating from 1909 to 1923, Franz Kafka’s Diaries contains a broad array of writing, including accounts of daily events, assorted reflections and observations, literary sketches, drafts of letters, records of dreams, and unrevisted texts of stories. This volume makes available for the first time in English a comprehensive reconstruction of Kafka’s handwritten diary entries and provides substantial new content, restoring all the material omitted from previous publications – notably, names of people and undisguised details about them, a number of literary writings, and passages of a sexual nature, some of them with homoerotic overtones.

By faithfully reproducing the diaries’ distinctive – and often surprisingly unpolished – writing as it appeared in Kafka’s notebooks, translator Ross Benjamin brings to light not only the author’s use of the diaries for literary invention and unsparing self-examination but also their value as a work of genius in and of themselves.

Franz Kafka (1883–1924) was born in Prague in 1883 to German-speaking Jewish parents. During his lifetime, he published groundbreaking short stories, including “The Judgement,” “The Stoker,” and “The Metamorphosis.” After his death in 1924, his friend and literary executor, Max Brod, defied his testamentary instructions to burn all his unpublished writing. Kafka’s posthumous work – including three unfinished novels, The Trial, The Castle, and Amerika – brought him worldwide renown.

Ross Benjamin’s translations include Friedrich Hölderlin’s Hyperion, Joseph Roth’s Job, and Daniel Kehlmann’s You Should Have Left and Tyll. He was awarded the Helen and Kurt Wolff Translator’s Prize for his rendering of Michael Maar’s Speak, Nabokov, and he received a Guggenheim Fellowship for his work on Franz Kafka’s diaries.

MAY 2024
9780241695746
ROYAL OCTAVO
£20.00 | 704 PAGES

Peter Parker

In the 1940s, homosexuality was believed to be increasing in the aftermath of war. A moral panic ensued, centred around London as the place to which gay men gravitated. Homosexuality became a topic of fierce debate, from newspaper letters’ pages to the House of Commons.

In a major new anthology, Peter Parker explores what it was actually like for queer men in London in this period, whether they were famous figures or living lives of quiet – or occasionally rowdy – anonymity, in pubs, clubs, more public places of assignation, or at home. It is rich with letters, diaries, medical textbooks, novels, films and police records, covering a wide range of viewpoints, from those who deplored homosexuality to those who campaigned for its decriminalization.

This first volume, from 1945 to 1959, details a community forced to live at constant risk of blackmail or prison. Yet it also shows a thriving and joyous subculture, one that enriched a mainstream culture often ignorant of its debt to gay creators. Some Men In London is a testament to queer life, which was always much more complex than newspapers, governments and the Metropolitan Police Force imagined.

The concluding volume will be published in September.

The ancient Roman empire was the supreme arena, where emperors had no choice but to fight, to thrill, to dazzle. To rule as a Caesar was to stand as an actor upon the great stage of the world. No collection of biographies invites us into the lives of the Caesars more vividly or intimately than that by Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus. Placing each Caesar in the context of the generations that had gone before, and connecting personality with policy, Suetonius injects flesh and blood into their stories. Their shortfalls, foreign policy crises and sex scandals are laid bare; we are shown their tastes, foibles, and eccentricities; we sit at their tables and enter their bedrooms, resulting in a series of biographies mediated through the lives of the Caesars themselves.

That Rome lives more vividly in people’s imagination than any other ancient empire owes an inordinate amount to Suetonius, and now award-winning author and translator Tom Holland brings us even closer in a new, spellbinding translation. The Lives of the Caesars is an astonishing, immersive experience of a time and culture at once familiar and utterly alien to our own.

Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus was probably born in AD 69. According to Pliny the Younger, he practiced briefly at the bar, avoided political life, and became chief secretary to the Emperor Hadrian (AD 117–38). Suetonius seems to have lived to a good age and probably died around the year AD 140.

Tom Holland is an award-winning historian, biographer and broadcaster. He is the author of several books, including Rubicon, which won the Hessell-Tiltman Prize for History, and Persian Fire, which won the Anglo-Hellenic League’s Runciman Award. Pax, his most recent, covers the heyday of the Roman Empire, from the death of Nero to Hadrian.
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Penguin Modern Classics
This further collection of cruel, strange and gripping novels combines some very famous books with some wonderful rarities. The stories may play out around the world, but they all share the same commitment to battles between the forces of light and the forces of darkness, although sometimes it can be hard to tell which is which.

From a haunted and surreal wartime New York to a remote French hamlet, from the dazzling escapes of a Japanese master-criminal to the blood-soaked machinations of SMERSH, there is something here for all tastes.
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‘You could be lonely as hell in the city, then one day you look around you and you realise everybody else is lonely too’

This irresistible, bittersweet collection of short stories from the supreme chronicler of West Indian lives in Britain brings together two worlds: Trinidad and London. Here is an illicit love affair on a plantation, gossip and rivalry between village washerwomen, a boy rebelling against his parents’ traditions. Here too is life after leaving for England: hustling for work, eking out money for the gas meter in winter, dancing in clubs, discovering romance in a night-time park, experiencing unexpected kindness, dreams and disenchantment.

‘A delightful book, a pleasure to read and reflect over afterwards … for humour, sprightliness and downright exuberance at being alive’ Sunday Times

Sam Selvon was born in San Fernando (Trinidad) in 1923 and worked in his homeland as a wireless operator and reporter. In 1950 he left Trinidad for the UK, where he established himself as a writer with A Brighter Sun (1952). Many other books followed, including his best-known novel, The Lonely Londoners (1956), and its two sequels, Moses Ascending (1975) and Moses Migrating (1983). He moved to Canada in the late 1970s and died in 1994.
Love’s Work
Gillian Rose

An extraordinary, uncompromising and consoling celebration of a life – through childhood, faith, family, love, friendship, pain and loss – written as its author was facing her own mortality.

Gillian Rose was a star academic, acclaimed as one of the most dazzling and original thinkers of her time. Told that she had incurable cancer, she found a new way to explore the world and herself. Tender, heartbreakingly honest, written with moments of surprising humour and often exhilarating, Love’s Work is the result.

In this short, unforgettable memoir, Rose looks back on her childhood, from the young dyslexic girl, torn between father and stepfather, to the adolescent confronting her Jewish inheritance. As an adult, Gillian Rose proves herself a passionate friend, a searcher for truth, a woman in love and, finally, an exacting but generous patient.

Intertwining the personal and the philosophical, Rose meditates on faith, conflict and injustice; the fallibility and endurance of love; our yearning for independence and for connection to others. With droll self-knowledge (‘I am highly qualified in unhappy love affairs,’ Rose writes) and with unsettling wisdom (‘To live, to love, is to be failed’), Love’s Work asks the unanswerable question: how is a life best lived?

Gillian Rose was a teacher and philosopher. She studied philosophy and sociology at the universities of Oxford, Columbia and Berlin. She was a professor at the University of Warwick, where she taught modern European philosophy, social and political thought and theology. Her books include Dialectic of Nihilism, The Broken Middle, Judaism and Modernity and Hegel. She died in December 1995.

FEBRUARY 2024
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Stefan Zweig was born in 1881 in Vienna to a wealthy Austrian-Jewish family. Recognition as a writer came early for Zweig; by the age of forty, he had already won literary fame. In 1934, with Nazism entrenched, Zweig left Austria for England, and became a British citizen in 1940. In 1941 he and his second wife went to Brazil, where they committed suicide. Zweig’s best-known works of fiction are Beware of Pity (1939) and Chess (1942).

Jonathan Katz is Lecturer in Classics at Brasenose College, Oxford, a Fellow of All Souls College Oxford and is the University Public Orator. He is the translator of Stefan Zweig’s Beware of Pity (originally published in this translation as Impatience of the Heart).
The epic 1968 Malian novel that scandalized a generation, by the first African winner of the Prix Renaudot

Envisioned as a criticism of and insider’s guide to African history, this dark, pugnacious epic, spanning the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries, recounts the fate of the imaginary empire of Nakem. In its acerbic pen portraits of the dynasty of devious, asp-wielding Saïfs who reign in Nakem, visiting white exploiters and savours, and persecuted citizens – especially the tragicomic, Paris-educated hero Raymond-Spartacus Kassoumi – Bound to Violence is a biting satire of unusual and alarming power.

In this new edition, professor and award-winning documentary filmmaker Chérif Keïta provides invaluable context for the novel, whose publication in the West was mired by accusations of plagiarism fraught with racist undertones. What emerges is a thrillingly excessive, defiant novel that paints a universally relevant portrait of sex, violence and power in human relationships.


Ralph Manheim was a Jewish-American translator of German and French literature. He translated the works of Louis-Ferdinand Céline, Günter Grass, Peter Handke, Martin Heidegger and Hermann Hesse, among others. Manheim received the 1964 PEN Translation Prize, the 1970 National Book Award in the Translation category and a 1983 MacArthur Fellowship in Literary Studies. He won the PEN/Ralph Manheim Medal for Translation, a major lifetime achievement award in the field of translation, in 1988. He died in 1992.
Nikki Giovanni’s poetry has dazzled and inspired readers for more than sixty years. When she first emerged from the Black Arts Movement in the late 1960s, she immediately became one of the most celebrated and controversial poets of the era. Now considered a living legend, this is the first new selection since the late 1990s and offers readers a chance to be introduced to and to celebrate her incredible lifetime’s work.

Giovanni’s poetry has always been a powerful expression of her ideas about love, race, politics and gender, but part of that power has also been the sensitive and intimate way Giovanni is able to bring to light the heart and soul of herself and her readers. Giovanni’s poetry speaks from and to the Black experience, with Black love, Black struggle and Black joy at the centre. Arranged chronologically and spanning the entirety of her career, this selection charts not only the development of a great poet but also of sixty years of American life, bringing together motherhood and revolution, political dreams and great loves, men, women, children and community, and shows Giovanni at her essential, profound best.

Nikki Giovanni, poet, activist, mother and professor, is a seven-time NAACP Image Award winner and the first recipient of the Rosa Parks Woman of Courage Award, and holds the Langston Hughes Medal for Outstanding Poetry, among many other honours. She is the author of thirty books and has received thirty-one honorary doctorates. Until 2022 she was the University Distinguished Professor of English at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia.
Alexander Jessiersky, Austrian aristocrat and shipping magnate, finds the Nazis distasteful – but in war and in business, distaste can lead to negligence. When Jessiersky’s board of directors sends his mysterious neighbour Count Luna to a concentration camp on trumped-up charges in order to seize his land, Jessiersky can’t shake the feeling that Count Luna blames him – and, after the war ends, that Count Luna will have his revenge. So begins a wild, weird and witty cat-and-mouse chase through windswept moors, shadow-filled houses and, eventually, the catacombs of Rome, as an increasingly paranoid Jessiersky asks himself: who is Count Luna? Where is he hiding? And will he stop at nothing – not even the edges of the plausible and canny – to exact his bloody vengeance?

Alexander Lernet-Holenia was born in Vienna in 1897. He served in the Austro-Hungarian army in the First World War and became a protégé of Rainer Maria Rilke. During his life he wrote poetry, novels, plays and was a successful screenwriter. His books were included on the first Nazi blacklist and subsequently burned, but after the end of the Second World War, he again became a vital figure in Austrian cultural life.

Jane B. Greene was a translator best known for her translations of Count Luna by Alexander Lernet-Holenia and Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke, 1892–1910.
Selected Poems
Zbigniew Herbert

Published for the centenary of his birth, a gathering of lucid, intensely lyrical poetry from one of the twentieth century’s pre-eminent literary voices.

Zbigniew Herbert was born in Lwów, Poland, in 1924, and studied law, economics and philosophy at the universities of Krakow, Torun, and Warsaw. His books include Report from the Besieged City and Other Poems, Mr Cogito, Still Life with a Bridle and The King of the Ants. He died in 1998.

J. M. Coetzee was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2003. He lives in Australia.

Alissa Valles is a poet and translator from Polish and Russian.

be courageous when reason fails you be courageous in the final reckoning it is the only thing that counts.

Zbigniew Herbert was one of the best-known and most-translated poets of post-war Poland, opposed alike to Communism, Fascism, nationalism and the Church, yet moved, throughout his work, by ‘a powerful sense of right and wrong without a corresponding belief in a system’ (New York Times).

His is a poetry of compression, lucidity and profound humanity. The universe he conjures is deeply informed not only by his own time, but by history – by that of the Medieval Mediterranean and Central Europe, as much as of the Classical world – and by a taste for historical and philosophical paradox. In the early and middle works, the figure of the trickster never seems far from view. Throughout, Herbert asks questions about the nature and needs of sentient beings. His desire, always, is to ‘touch the essence’: to get to the heart of life.

Selected with an introduction and afterword by J. M. Coetzee and Alissa Valles, this outstanding gathering from the full range of Herbert’s poetic output invites readers to experience the beauty and profundity of a remarkable body of work.

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Ten tales of loss and longing, from one of Japan’s greatest writers

Nine of Yukio Mishima’s finest stories were selected by Mishima himself for translation in this book; they represent his extraordinary ability to depict a wide variety of human beings in moments of significance. A moonlit journey to fulfil a wish; a mother lost in mourning; a night of infidelity; and a young lieutenant who ends his life. Filled with rich description and luxurious beauty, these hauntingly beautiful short stories from one of Japan’s greatest writers show the pull between duty and desire, ecstasy and death.

In the title story, ‘Death in Midsummer’, which is set at a beach resort, a triple tragedy becomes a cloud of doom that requires exorcising. In another, ‘Patriotism’, a young army officer and his wife choose a way of vindicating their belief in ancient values that is as violent as it is traditional; it prefigured his own death by seppuku in November 1970. There is a story in which the sad truth of the relationship between a businessman and his former mistress is revealed through a suggestion of the unknown, and another in which a working-class couple, touching in their simple love for each other, pursue financial security by rather shocking means.

Yukio Mishima was born in 1925 in Tokyo, and is considered one of the Japan’s most important writers. His books broke social boundaries and taboos at a time when Japan found itself in a state of rapid social change. His interests, besides writing, included body-building, acting and practising as a Samurai. In 1970 he attempted to start a military coup, which failed. Upon realizing this, Mishima performed seppuku, a ritual suicide, upon himself. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature three times.
Tokyo, 1960. As the first rays of morning light hit the rails at Kamata Station, a man’s body is found on the tracks: blood-stained, disfigured and unrecognisable. With only two leads – a distinctive accent and a single word, “kameda” – senior inspector Imanishi Eitaro is called in to solve the puzzle. Accompanied by junior detective Yoshimura, he crosses Japan in search of answers, determined to uncover the secrets of this gruesome crime. With no suspect, no evidence and no witnesses, the two quickly reach a dead end.

But, before long, a series of strange coincidences reopen the unsolved case: a young woman scatters pieces of white paper out the window of a train; an actor, on the verge of revealing an important secret, drops dead of a heart attack; and Inspector Imanishi investigates …

A fascinating glimpse into 1960s Japanese society, this is one of Seichō Matsumoto’s best-loved novels – a riveting thriller from the master of Japanese crime.

Seichō Matsumoto was born in 1909 in Fukuoka, Japan. Self-educated, Matsumoto published his first book when he was forty years old and he quickly established himself as a master of crime fiction. His exploration of human psychology and Japanese post-war malaise, coupled with the creation of twisting, dark mysteries, made him one of the most acclaimed and best-selling writers in Japan. He received the prestigious Akutagawa Literary Prize in 1950 and the Kikuchi Kan Prize in 1970. He died in 1992.

Beth Cary has interpreted for many Japanese filmmakers, including Studio Ghibli’s Miyazaki Hayao and Takahata Isao. She has also worked on the translation of Miyazaki’s volumes of interviews and essays, Starting Point: 1979–1996 and Turning Point: 1997–2008, among many other titles.

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The Great Transformation
The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time
Karl Polanyi

A classic work of social science from ‘the twentieth century’s most prophetic critic of capitalism’ Prospect

Tracing the history of capitalism in England and beyond, Karl Polanyi’s landmark 1944 classic brilliantly exposed the myth of laissez-faire economics. From the great transformation that occurred during the industrial revolution onwards, he showed, there has been nothing ‘natural’ about the market state. Instead, the economy must always be embedded in society, and human needs and relations. Witnessing the ‘avalanche of social dislocation’ of his time — from the Great Depression, to the rise of fascism and communism and the First and Second World Wars — Polanyi ends with a rallying cry for freedom, and a passionate vision to protect our common humanity.

Karl Polanyi (1886 – 1964) is considered one of the twentieth century’s most prophetic and perceptive economic historians. He left his native Austria with the rise of fascism and became a British citizen. During his academic career he taught at Bennington College, the University of Oxford, and the University of London, and wrote The Essence of Fascism, The Great Transformation, and (with A. Rotstein) Dahomey and the Slave Trade.
Aharon Appelfeld authored more than 45 acclaimed works of fiction and nonfiction and received many international awards including the MLA Commonwealth Award, the Independent Foreign Fiction prize, the prix Médicis étranger, the Israel prize, and the Nelly Sachs prize. Born in Czernowitz, Bukovina (now part of Ukraine) in 1932, he survived the Holocaust and passed away in Israel in 2018.

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Quarterlife
The Search for Self in Early Adulthood
Satya Doyle Byock

A pioneering psychotherapist tackles the overlooked stage of Quarterlife – and provides a guide to navigate it and thrive

Why do I feel lost? What’s wrong with me? Is this all there is?

Satya Doyle Byock hears these questions regularly in her psychotherapy practice, where she works with Quarterlifers – people between adolescence and midlife – who are searching for meaning and direction in their lives. She understands their frustration. Some clients have done everything ‘right’: graduate, get a job, meet a partner – yet they are unfulfilled. Others are still struggling to find their way in the world, and are unclear on what to do next.

Quarterlife offers a compassionate roadmap for finding understanding, happiness, and wholeness in early adulthood. While society is quick to label the struggles of young people as generational traits, Byock sees things differently. She believes these emotions are part of the developmental journey of Quarterlife, a distinct stage that every person goes through.

Through the stories of four of her clients – blending personal storytelling with mythology, Jungian psychology with pop culture and literature – Quarterlife pioneers a new way of thinking about adult life, to help us navigate our futures and ourselves.

Satya Doyle Byock is a psychotherapist and writer, and the director of the Salome Institute of Jungian Studies. She has been researching and writing about the first stage of adulthood, which she calls Quarterlife, for twenty years. Her work has been featured on many podcasts and in The New York Times, Oprah Daily, Goop, and Literary Hub. Quarterlife: The Search for Self in Early Adulthood is her first book.

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Rangikura

Tayi Tibble

Maori mythology and endless summers: the sparkling second collection from a daring new poetic voice

I am made in the image of my mother ...
I am made in the image of / my mountain / my river / my whenua

In Rangikura, plastic tiaras melt into boiling rivers, and family memories blur with ancestral mythologies. Satanic stepbrothers play jenga while the deity Mahuika burns – and the temperature is rising. Here, anger and loss, history and pop culture are spun into verses woven with vernacular and Te Reo Maori. At the collection’s centre, our protagonist whirls through a love/hate story for the internet age, facing the sting of unanswered texts and unmet expectations with wit, sensibility and devastating glamour.

Rangikura is the captivating second collection from award-winning poet Tayi Tibble. From feminism to colonialism, skuxes to daddies, wild swimming to schoolboy hakas, these poems at once mark the end of the world and the dawn of a new day. Poignant, hilarious and liberatory, Rangikura reminds us that the personal is sometimes political, the political is always personal, and poetry can be revolutionary.

Tayi Tibble (Te Whanau a Apanui / Ngati Porou) was born in 1995 and lives in Wellington, New Zealand. Her first book, Poukahangatus, won the Jessie Mackay Best First Book of Poetry Award in 2019, and had its first UK publication in 2022.

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Listen to the Golden Boomerang Return

CAConrad

The new collection from ‘one of America’s most legendary living poets’ (Ocean Vuong), written in the drive to fall in love with the world again not as it was, but as it is

when the hammer
approached we thought
is that thing coming this way

Breathing, moving, living on the page, CAConrad’s exhilarating work is centred on the (Soma)tic ritual, their celebrated practice which draws on nature, crystals, meditation and interactions with strangers to create an ‘extreme present’ of unfettered creativity from which poems can emerge.

Listen to the Golden Boomerang Return gathers the results of a single new ritual, focused on fellow animals who have found ways to thrive in the Anthropocene, and spanning environments from Seattle – a city built in the midst of an abundant non-tropical rainforest – to the Mojave Desert. The poet receives gifts from a crow; associates different parts of their body with nine different species encountered in the desert; and joins a woman each morning in feeding rats in the streets of Rome, taking turns looking out for the police.

Written with urgency, hope, anger and joy, the poems that result are an ode to survival in a world that humanity has poisoned, and a testament to a love that knows no by-laws.

CAConrad has been working with the ancient technologies of poetry and ritual since 1975. They are the author of numerous poetry collections, including The Book of Frank (2010), Amanda Paradise: Resurrect Extinct Vibration (2021) and the selected volume You Don’t Have What It Takes to Be My Nemesis: And Other (Soma)tics (2022). They have received many grants and awards, including most recently the 2022 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize. They regularly teach at Columbia University in New York City and at the Sandberg Art Institute in Amsterdam.

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