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Everyone knows that statistics books are usually boring and almost impossible to read. Rosling’s book is not only extremely interesting and captivating, but it is also very easy to read. This is the reason why, even though published only few months ago - March, 2018 - *Factfulness* became a bestseller, having hundreds of good reviews all over the world. Being a doctor of international health, a professor and a public speaker, Rosling spent his entire life until he died last year, fighting the ignorance of people by designing vivid and attractive statistics. His style is not as dry as we might think when it comes to a discipline such as statistics. His talent as public speaker made him a showman, capable of enlivening his speeches about malnutrition, child rate mortality or other similar things.

The basic point presented by the author is simple: the vast majority of people have distorted opinions about the world. The facts illustrated by his statistics and longitudinal studies are more astonishing than one can imagine. Over the years, Rosling has made a tremendous work by
interrogating multiple groups of students, journalists, Nobel Prize
laureates, teachers, bankers or common people across the world. The
questions he was asking were about simple facts: global trends, what
percentage of the world’s population lives in poverty, why the world’s
population is increasing, etc. He observed that people were systematically
wrong. So wrong that “a chimpanzee choosing answers at random” will
outguess everyone.

*Factfulness* reveals a radical vision about why we have distorted
perception about the world. It presents ten instincts that distort human
perspective – from our tendency of dividing the world into “us and them”
to the way we let media (which is based on fear) influence us to how we
look at evolution (we tend to believe that almost everything is getting
worse).

According to Rosling, our problem is that “we don’t know what we
don’t know” and our guesses are totally biased.

The author sustains that the world is in a much better state that we
might believe. That does not mean that some concerns are not real, but
when our focus is on getting worried for everything instead of getting
informed about real facts, we lose our ability to observe the things that are
a real danger for us.

The numerous statistics and graphs presented in the book speak for
themselves. We divide the world into rich and poor, but the facts
demonstrate that “the idea of a divided world with a majority stuck in
misery and deprivation is an illusion. A complete misconception. Simply
wrong”. 75 per cent of people live in the middle-class, they are not poor.
65 per cent of the world’s population has a mobile phone. The annual
death percentage from natural disaster in 1930s was 971000 per year, while
nowadays we have a large population and a far way smaller number of
deaths – 72000 per year.

At the end of each chapter Rosling gives the readers a number of rules
of thumb designed to help us understand and handle statistics and take
control of our own mind: “Look for the causes, not villains” is one of the
most important rule that will help us avoid the reality-distorting instinct to
blame the system, the state, the politicians, everyone but us, anything but
taking responsibility for our life.
“Beware of vivid examples…[which] are easier to recall but might be the exception, rather than the rule” is another advice to help us avoid ignorant and lazy generalization. Another important observation of the author is that we tend to base our beliefs on information we have learned in school: “In the social sciences, even the most basic knowledge goes very quickly. As with milk or vegetables, you have to keep getting it fresh. Because everything changes”.

The book is clearly inspiring and revelatory, filled with vivid and touching stories, lively anecdotes and interesting graphs. It offers us a new way of thinking that will change our habits and empower us to face the challenges and the opportunities of the future more accurately. The author has made great efforts in order to write it and put his best in it in order to diminish the ignorance that characterizes the 21st century population: “This book is my last battle in my life-long mission to fight devastating ignorance…Previously I armed myself with huge data sets, eye-opening software, an energetic learning style and Swedish bayonet for sword-swallowing. It wasn’t enough. But I hope this book will be”. – Hans Rosling, February 2017.

In conclusion, Rosling’s book offers us a revelatory way of perceiving life and of observing the world, a way based on strong supporting facts, rather than on all sort of opinions presented by the others. The book will captivate you through its vivid spirit and astonishing facts that will completely rock your world and the way you see life.
BOOK PRESENTATIONS


She was the first woman to serve as U.S. Secretary of State, one of America’s most admired personalities. In *Fascism: A Warning*, Madeleine Albright draws on her experiences as a child in war-torn Europe and her distinguished career as a diplomat to question that assumption. The twentieth century was defined by the clash between democracy and Fascism, a struggle that created uncertainty about the survival of human freedom and left millions dead. But Fascist, observes Madeleine Albright, not only endured through the twentieth century but now presents a more virulent threat to peace and justice than at any time since the end of World War II. The momentum toward democracy that swept the world when the Berlin Wall fell has gone into reverse. In many countries, economic, technological, and cultural factors are weakening the political center and empowering the extremes of right and left and several contemporary leaders such as Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong-un are employing tactics used by Fascists in the 1920s and 30s. The author points out that we are, unfortunately, on the way of repeating the tragic errors of the past.


Author of *1493*, a New York Times best-seller, and *1491*, which won the U.S. National Academy of Sciences' Keck award for the best book of the year, Charles C. Mann is facing a new challenge. In 40 years, Earth’s population will reach ten billion. Can our world support that? What kind of world will it be? Those answering these questions generally fall into two deeply divided groups - Wizards and Prophets, as Charles Mann calls them in this balanced, authoritative, non polemical new book.
The Prophets follow William Vogt, a founding environmentalist who believed that in using more than our planet has to give, our prosperity will lead us to ruin. The Wizards are the heirs of Norman Borlaug, whose research, wrangled the world in service to our species to produce modern high-yield crops that then saved millions from starvation. The author delves into these diverging viewpoints to assess the four great contemporary issues - food, water, energy, climate change - grounding each in historical context and weighing the options for the future.


Ta-Nehisi Coates is a national correspondent for *The Atlantic*. His book *Between the World and Me* won the National Book Award in 2015. In his most recent text, Coates offers us a biting cultural and political analysis, reflecting on race, Barack Obama’s presidency and its jarring aftermath, and on his own evolution as a writer in eight stunningly incisive essays. The story of these present-day eight years is not just about presidential politics. This book also examines the new voices, ideas, and movements for justice that emerged over this period -and the effects of the persistent, haunting shadow of America’s old and unreconciled history. Coates powerfully examines the events of the Obama era from his intimate and revealing perspective - the point of view of a young writer who begins his journey in an unemployment office in Harlem and ends it in the Oval Office, interviewing a president.
ISBN 978-1455582327

Who can speak better about Google than Eric Schmidt, Google's executive chairman, who served as Google's CEO from 2001 to 2011 and transformed it into a global technology leader, and Jonathan Rosenberg, presently an advisor to Google CEO Larry Page? Google is a global icon that regularly pushes the boundaries of innovation in a variety of fields. *How Google Works* contains entertaining lessons on what the authors learned as they helped build the company. Covering topics like corporate culture, strategy, talent, decision-making, communication, innovation, and dealing with disruption, they explain how technology has shifted the balance of power from companies to consumers, and that the only way to succeed in this ever-changing landscape is to create superior products and attract a new breed of multifaceted employees, the "smart-creative people".

ISBN: 978-0735211513

A quite unusual mix between Jorge Cham, the creator of the popular online comic Piled Higher and Deeper, holding a PhD in robotics at Stanford, and Daniel Whiteson, a professor of experimental particle physics at the University of California, Irvine, a fellow of the American Physical Society, who conducts research using the Large Hadron Collider at CERN. The authors have teamed up to explore the humbling vastness of our ignorance about the universe, but this witty book also reveals, with charming insights, what we actually do understand. Armed with their popular infographics, cartoons, and lucid yet entertaining explanations of science, they give us the best answers currently available for a lot of questions that are still perplexing scientists, including: Why does the universe have a speed limit? Why aren't we all made of antimatter? What is dark matter, and why does it keep ignoring us? Cham and Whiteson make a compelling case that the questions we can't answer are as interesting as the ones we can.

A celebrated literary critic and journalist, Michelle Dean mixes biography, criticism and cultural and social history to create an enthralling exploration of how a group of brilliant women became central figures in the world of letters, staked out territory for themselves and began to change the world. The ten brilliant women who are the focus of *Sharp* came from different backgrounds and had vastly divergent political and artistic opinions. But they all made a significant contribution to the cultural and intellectual history of America and ultimately changed the course of the twentieth century, in spite of the men who often undervalued or dismissed their work. Fiercely intelligent, glamorous and iconoclastic, Dorothy Parker, Hannah Arendt, Mary McCarthy, Susan Sontag, Joan Didion, Nora Ephron and Janet Malcolm, among others, were united by their “sharpness”: an accuracy and precision of thought and wit, which they used to argue as fervently with each other as they did with the men who so often belittled their work as journalists, novelists, critics and poets.


Floods, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, and other natural events stem from the same forces that give our planet life and have always played a role in molding our environment, history, and culture. Dr. Lucy Jones is a world-renowned seismologist, Science Advisor for Risk Reduction, holding a PhD in geophysics from MIT and a BA in Chinese language and literature from Brown University. The history of natural disasters is a history of our world and of ourselves. Dr. Jones offers a look at our past, readying us to face down the Big Ones in our future. At Pompeii, the author explores how a volcanic eruption in the first century AD challenged prevailing views of religion. She examines the California floods of 1862 and the limits of human memory. And she probes more recent events - such as the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 and the
American hurricanes of 2017 - to illustrate that natural hazards are inevitable, but human catastrophes are not.


Carlo Rovelli is a theoretical physicist who has made significant contributions to the physics of space and time. Currently directing the quantum gravity research group of the Centre de physique théorique in Marseille, France, he is considered to be the new Stephen Hawking. His books *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics* and *Reality Is Not What It Seems* are international bestsellers translated into forty-one languages. *The Order of Time* is a concise, elegant, deeply intelligent and culturally rich exploration of an unfamiliar terrain for most readers. Why do we remember the past and not the future? What does it mean for time to "flow"? Do we exist in time or does time exist in us? Rovelli reveals a strange and mysterious universe where at the most fundamental level time disappears. Weaving together ideas from philosophy, science and literature, he suggests that our perception of the flow of time depends on our perspective, better understood starting from the structure of our brain and emotions than from the physical universe.


Adam Becker is a science writer with a PhD in astrophysics from the University of Michigan and a BA in philosophy and physics from Cornell. In 1965, the year he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his work on quantum theory, Richard Feynman wrote: “I think I can safely say that nobody understands quantum mechanics”. Almost 100 years later, physicists are still debating. Does quantum mechanics mean there is no true reality at the subatomic level? Does it imply that the universe is constantly splitting off into billions of copies of itself? Is it telling us that reality is inherently random? Or
that consciousness brings the world into being? Or are there deeper laws we have yet to find from which quantum laws emerge? Most physicists have followed Niels Bohr's Copenhagen interpretation and yet, from the 1920s to today, scientists like John Bell, David Bohm, and Hugh Everett persisted in seeking the true meaning of quantum mechanics. *What Is Real?* is the gripping story of this battle of ideas and the courageous scientists who dared to stand up for truth.


Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) was an eminent cultural anthropologist, a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University, one of the best-known and most influential American anthropologists of the past several decades. *The Interpretation of Cultures* is a lucid and authoritative explanation of religion and ideology as cultural systems, aiming at a definition of culture from the perspective of a cultural anthropologist. Geertz explains that culture does not determine human behavior, as it cannot be reduced to laws, systematic rules, or paradigms of behavior, whether conscious or unconscious. Culture, on the contrary, “is a context” giving meaning to individual acts. Behind the theory and the case studies, always lies the fascinating question: which parts of our behaviour are cross-cultural universals, which are culturally produced? Geertz’s conclusion is that, comparing cultures, he never ceased being surprised at "how much difference difference makes".

ISBN: 978-0813350608

James Stanlaw and Nobuko Adachi are professors of anthropology at Illinois State University, while Zdenek Salzmann is professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. *Language, Culture, and Society* covers all the critical aspects of linguistic anthropology and tries to answer to questions like: Why should we study language? How do the ways in which we communicate define our identities? And how is this all changing in the digital world? The author do not neglect the new and exciting challenges of the 21st century, such as issues of language and power, language ideology, and linguistic diasporas. Chapters on gender, race, and class also examine how language helps create - and is created by - identity.


ISBN 978-1501144318

Matthew Walker is a professor of neuroscience and psychology at Berkeley, the Director of its Sleep and Neuroimaging Lab, and a former professor of psychiatry at Harvard University. This is the first sleep book written by a leading scientific expert. Sleep is one of the most important but least understood aspects of our life, wellness, and longevity, but until very recently, science had no answer to the question of why we sleep, or what good it served, or why we suffer such devastating health consequences when we don't sleep. Matthew Walker gives us a new understanding of the vital importance of sleep and dreaming. Within the brain, sleep enriches our ability to learn, memorize, and make logical decisions, it recalibrates our emotions and metabolism, restocks our immune system. In this fascinating an accessible book, the author also answers important questions about sleep: How do caffeine and alcohol affect sleep? What really happens during REM sleep? Why do our sleep patterns change across a lifetime?