

# The Bed Of Procrustes Philosophical And Practical

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What I Learned Losing a Million Dollars Jim Paul 2013-05-21 Jim Paul's meteoric rise took him from a small town in Northern Kentucky to governor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, yet he lost it all--his fortune, his reputation, and his job--in one fatal attack of excessive economic hubris. In this honest, frank analysis, Paul and Brendan Moynihan revisit the events that led to Paul's disastrous decision and examine the psychological factors behind bad financial practices in several economic sectors. This book--winner of a 2014 Axiom Business Book award gold medal--begins with the unbroken string of successes that helped Paul achieve a jet-setting lifestyle and land a key spot with the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. It then describes the circumstances leading up to Paul's \$1.6 million loss and the essential lessons he learned from it--primarily that, although there are as many ways to make money in the markets as there are people participating in them, all losses come from the same few sources. Investors lose money in the markets either because of errors in their analysis or because of psychological barriers preventing the application of analysis. While all analytical methods have some validity and make allowances for instances in which they do not work, psychological factors can keep an investor in a losing position, causing him to abandon one method for another in order to rationalize the decisions already made. Paul and Moynihan's cautionary tale includes strategies for avoiding loss tied to a simple framework for understanding, accepting, and dodging the dangers of investing, trading, and speculating.

Calling Bullshit Carl T. Bergstrom 2020-08-04 Bullshit isn't what it used to be. Now, two science professors give us the tools to dismantle misinformation and think clearly in a world of fake news and bad data. "A modern classic . . . a straight-talking survival guide to the mean streets of a dying democracy and a global pandemic."—Wired Misinformation, disinformation, and fake news abound and it's increasingly difficult to know what's true. Our media environment has become hyperpartisan. Science is conducted by press release. Startup culture elevates bullshit to high art. We are fairly well equipped to spot the sort of old-school bullshit that is based in fancy rhetoric and weasel words, but most of us don't feel qualified to challenge the avalanche of new-school bullshit presented in the language of math, science, or statistics. In *Calling Bullshit*, Professors Carl Bergstrom and Jevin West give us a set of powerful tools to cut through the most intimidating data. You don't need a lot of technical expertise to call out problems with data. Are the numbers or results too good or too dramatic to be true? Is the claim comparing like with like? Is it confirming your personal bias? Drawing on a deep well of expertise in statistics and computational biology, Bergstrom and West exuberantly unpack examples of selection bias and muddled data visualization, distinguish between correlation and causation, and examine the susceptibility of science to modern bullshit. We have always needed people who call bullshit when necessary, whether within a circle of friends, a community of scholars, or the citizenry of a nation. Now that bullshit has evolved, we need to relearn the art of skepticism.

*Monkeys, Myths, and Molecules* Joe Schwarcz 2015-05-01 The bestselling popular science author "has made it his mission to tackle myths about science and the so-called experts who spread them" (CBC Radio). The internet is a powerful beast when it comes to science; the answer to any query you may have is just a few keystrokes away. But when there are multiple answers from various sources, how do we know what information is reliable? In *Monkeys, Myths, and Molecules*, bestselling author Dr. Joe Schwarcz takes a critical look at how facts are misconstrued in the media. He debunks the myths surrounding canned food, artificial dyes, SPF, homeopathy, cancer, chemicals, and much more. Unafraid to expose the sheer nonsense people are led to believe about health, food, drugs, and our environment, Dr. Joe confronts pseudoscience and convincingly and entertainingly advocates for a scientific approach to everyday life. "A compendium of short articles on a variety of subjects, written in a humorous, accessible style, and larded with intriguing trivia . . . Dr. Joe skewers food myths, opposition to GMOs, Dr.

Oz, and Vani Hari, aka the Food Babe.” —Science-Based Medicine “Ultimately, the author successfully demonstrates how claims should be queried and analyzed before they are accepted . . . Recommended for readers of health, nutrition, and popular science.” —Library Journal “The book is chock-full of captivating anecdotes . . . The author engages readers with his wit and wisdom.” —The Canadian Jewish News

**The New Evolution Diet** Arthur De Vany 2011-12-20 Believe it or not, our DNA is almost exactly the same as that of our ancestors. While scientific advances in agriculture, medicine, and technology have protected man, to some degree, from dangers such as starvation, illness, and exposure, the fact remains that our cave-dwelling cousins were considerably healthier than we are. Our paleolithic ancestors did not suffer from heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, or obesity. In fact, a good deal of what we view as normal aging is a modern condition that is more akin to disease than any natural state of growing older. Our predecessors were incomparably better nourished than we are, and were incredibly physically fit. And certainly none of them ever craved a doughnut, let alone tasted one. In fact, the human preference for sweet tastes and fatty textures was developed in an environment where such treats were rare, and signaled dense, useful energy. This once-helpful adaptation is the downfall of many a dieter today. It's what makes it hard to resist fats and sweets, especially when they are all around us. We are not living as we were built to live. Our genes were forged in an environment where activity was mandatory—you were active or you starved or were eaten. This created strong selective pressure for genes encoding a smart, physically adept individual capable of very high activity levels. Humans are among the most active of species, and we carry energetically expensive brains to boot. Our energy expenditures rank high among all animals. At least they once did. *The New Evolution Diet* by Arthur De Vany, PhD is a roadmap back to the better health our ancestors once enjoyed. By eliminating modern foods, including carbohydrates, dairy, and all processed foods from our diets, we can undo much of the damage caused by our modern food environment. The plan is based on three simple principles: 1. Enjoy the pleasure of food and do not count or restrict calories. Eat three satisfying meals a day filled with non-starchy vegetables, fruits, and high-quality, lean proteins 2. Do not starve yourself, but do go hungry episodically, for brief periods, to promote a low fasting blood insulin level and increase metabolic fat-burning. 3. Exercise less, not more, but with more playfulness and intensity. The goal is to create a strong body with a high resting metabolism and a

large physiologic capacity to move through life easily—not to burn calories.

*Maxims and Reflections* Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 1893 The translation of Goethe's "Prose Maxims" now offered to the public is the first attempt that has yet been made to present the greater part of these incomparable sayings in English. In the complete collection they are over a thousand in number, and not more perhaps than a hundred and fifty have already found their way into our language, whether as contributions to magazines here and in America, or in volumes of miscellaneous extract from Goethe's writings. Some are at times quoted as though they were common literary property. To say that they are important as a whole would be a feeble tribute to a work eloquent for itself, and beyond the need of praise; but so deep is the wisdom of these maxims, so wide their reach, so compact a product are they of Goethe's wonderful genius, that it is something of a reproach to literature to find the most of them left untranslated for the sixty years they have been before the world. From one point of view, the neglect they have suffered is in no way surprising: they are too high and severe to be popular so soon; and when they meet with a wide acceptance as with other great works, much of it will rest upon authority. But even for the deeper side of his writings, Goethe has not been denied a fair measure of popular success. No other author of the last two centuries holds so high a place, or, as an inevitable consequence, has been attacked by so large an army of editors and commentators; and it might well be supposed by now that no corner of his work, and least of all one of the best, had remained almost unnoticed, and to the majority unknown. Many of these maxims were early translated into French, but with little success; and even in Germany it was only so late as the year 1870 that they appeared in a separate form, with the addition of some sort of critical comment and a brief explanation of their origin and history.

Incerto 4-Book Bundle Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2016-01-26 Nassim Nicholas Taleb's landmark Incerto series is an investigation of luck, uncertainty, probability, opacity, human error, risk, disorder, and decision-making in a world we don't understand, in nonoverlapping and standalone books. All four volumes—*Antifragile*, *The Black Swan*, *Fooled by Randomness*, and the expanded edition of *The Bed of Procrustes*, updated with more than 50 percent new material—are now together in one ebook bundle. ANTIFRAGILE "Startling . . . richly crammed with insights, stories, fine phrases and intriguing asides."—The Wall Street Journal Just as human bones get stronger when subjected to stress and

tension, many things in life benefit from disorder, volatility, and turmoil. What Taleb has identified and calls “antifragile” is that category of things that not only gain from chaos but need it in order to survive and flourish. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better and better. What is crucial is that the antifragile loves errors, as it incurs small harm and large benefits from them. Spanning politics, urban planning, war, personal finance, economic systems, and medicine in an interdisciplinary and erudite style, Antifragile is a blueprint for living in a Black Swan world. THE BLACK SWAN “[A book] that altered modern thinking.”—The Times (London) A black swan is a highly improbable event with three principal characteristics: It is unpredictable; it carries a massive impact; and, after the fact, we concoct an explanation that makes it appear less random and more predictable. The astonishing success of Google was a black swan; so was 9/11. In this groundbreaking and prophetic book, Taleb shows that black swan events underlie almost everything about our world, from the rise of religions to events in our own personal lives, and yet we—especially the experts—are blind to them. FOOLED BY RANDOMNESS “[Fooled by Randomness] is to conventional Wall Street wisdom approximately what Martin Luther’s ninety-five theses were to the Catholic Church.”—Malcolm Gladwell, The New Yorker Are we capable of distinguishing the fortunate charlatan from the genuine visionary? Must we always try to uncover nonexistent messages in random events? Fooled by Randomness is about luck: more precisely, about how we perceive luck in our personal and professional experiences. Set against the backdrop of the most conspicuous forum in which luck is mistaken for skill—the markets—Fooled by Randomness is an irreverent, eye-opening, and endlessly entertaining exploration of one of the least understood forces in our lives. THE BED OF PROCRUSTES “Taleb’s crystalline nuggets of thought stand alone like esoteric poems.”—Financial Times This collection of aphorisms and meditations expresses Taleb’s major ideas in ways you least expect. The Bed of Procrustes takes its title from Greek mythology: the story of a man who made his visitors fit his bed to perfection by either stretching them or cutting their limbs. With a rare combination of pointed wit and potent wisdom, Taleb plows through human illusions, contrasting the classical views of courage, elegance, and erudition against the modern diseases of nerdiness, philistinism, and phoniness.

**Skin in the Game** Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2018-02-27 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A bold work from the author of The Black Swan that challenges many of our long-held beliefs about risk and reward, politics and religion, finance and personal responsibility In his most provocative and practical book yet,

one of the foremost thinkers of our time redefines what it means to understand the world, succeed in a profession, contribute to a fair and just society, detect nonsense, and influence others. Citing examples ranging from Hammurabi to Seneca, Antaeus the Giant to Donald Trump, Nassim Nicholas Taleb shows how the willingness to accept one's own risks is an essential attribute of heroes, saints, and flourishing people in all walks of life. As always both accessible and iconoclastic, Taleb challenges long-held beliefs about the values of those who spearhead military interventions, make financial investments, and propagate religious faiths. Among his insights:

- For social justice, focus on symmetry and risk sharing. You cannot make profits and transfer the risks to others, as bankers and large corporations do. You cannot get rich without owning your own risk and paying for your own losses. Forcing skin in the game corrects this asymmetry better than thousands of laws and regulations.
- Ethical rules aren't universal. You're part of a group larger than you, but it's still smaller than humanity in general.
- Minorities, not majorities, run the world. The world is not run by consensus but by stubborn minorities imposing their tastes and ethics on others.
- You can be an intellectual yet still be an idiot. "Educated philistines" have been wrong on everything from Stalinism to Iraq to low-carb diets.
- Beware of complicated solutions (that someone was paid to find). A simple barbell can build muscle better than expensive new machines.
- True religion is commitment, not just faith. How much you believe in something is manifested only by what you're willing to risk for it. The phrase "skin in the game" is one we have often heard but rarely stopped to truly dissect. It is the backbone of risk management, but it's also an astonishingly rich worldview that, as Taleb shows in this book, applies to all aspects of our lives. As Taleb says, "The symmetry of skin in the game is a simple rule that's necessary for fairness and justice, and the ultimate BS-buster," and "Never trust anyone who doesn't have skin in the game. Without it, fools and crooks will benefit, and their mistakes will never come back to haunt them."

*The Bed of Procrustes* Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2010-12-02 In this profound and playful book, Nassim Nicholas Taleb presents his ideas about life in the form of aphorisms, the world's earliest - and most memorable - literary form. Procrustes was a character from Greek mythology who abducted travellers and invited them to spend the night in a special bed, which they had to fit to perfection. They never did. Those who were too tall had their legs chopped off; those who were too short were stretched. Every aphorism here is about a Procrustean bed of sorts - we humans, facing the limits of our knowledge, the unseen and

the unknown, resolve the tension by squeezing life and the world into crisp commoditized ideas, reductive categories, specific vocabularies and pre-packaged narratives. Only by embracing the unexpected - and accepting what we don't know - can we see the world as it really is.

*A Beginner's Guide to Japan* Pico Iyer 2019-09-03 “Arguably the greatest living travel writer” (Outside magazine), Pico Iyer has called Japan home for more than three decades. But, as he is the first to admit, the country remains an enigma even to its long-term residents. In *A Beginner's Guide to Japan*, Iyer draws on his years of experience—his travels, conversations, readings, and reflections—to craft a playful and profound book of surprising, brief, incisive glimpses into Japanese culture. He recounts his adventures and observations as he travels from a meditation hall to a love hotel, from West Point to Kyoto Station, and from dinner with Meryl Streep to an ill-fated call to the Apple service center in a series of provocations guaranteed to pique the interest and curiosity of those who don't know Japan—and to remind those who do of its myriad fascinations.

**The Next Factory of the World** Irene Yuan Sun 2017-10-17 A Best Business Book of 2017 -- The Financial Times China is now the biggest foreign player in Africa. It's Africa's largest trade partner, the largest infrastructure financier, and the fastest-growing source of foreign direct investment. Chinese entrepreneurs are flooding into the continent, investing in long-term assets such as factories and heavy equipment. Considering Africa's difficult history of colonialism, one might suspect that China's activity there is another instance of a foreign power exploiting resources. But as author Irene Yuan Sun vividly shows in this remarkable book, it is really a story about resilient Chinese entrepreneurs building in Africa what they so recently learned to build in China—a global manufacturing powerhouse. The fact that China sees Africa not for its poverty but for its potential wealth is a striking departure from the attitude of the West, particularly that of the United States. Despite fifty years of Western aid programs, Africa still has more people living in extreme poverty than any other region in the world. Those who are serious about raising living standards across the continent know that another strategy is needed. Chinese investment gives rise to a tantalizing possibility: that Africa can industrialize in the coming generation. With a manufacturing-led transformation, Africa would be following in the footsteps of the United States in the nineteenth century, Japan in the early twentieth, and the Asian Tigers in the late twentieth. Many may consider this an old-fashioned way to

develop, but as Sun argues, it's the only one that's proven to raise living standards across entire societies in a lasting way. And with every new Chinese factory boss setting up machinery and hiring African workers--and managers--that possibility becomes more real for Africa. With fascinating and moving human stories along with incisive business and economic analysis, *The Next Factory of the World* will make you rethink both China's role in the world and Africa's future in the globalized economy.

*Fooled by Randomness* Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2008-10-14 *Fooled by Randomness* is a standalone book in Nassim Nicholas Taleb's landmark *Incerto* series, an investigation of opacity, luck, uncertainty, probability, human error, risk, and decision-making in a world we don't understand. The other books in the series are *The Black Swan*, *Antifragile*, *Skin in the Game*, and *The Bed of Procrustes*. *Fooled by Randomness* is the word-of-mouth sensation that will change the way you think about business and the world. Nassim Nicholas Taleb--veteran trader, renowned risk expert, polymathic scholar, erudite raconteur, and New York Times bestselling author of *The Black Swan*--has written a modern classic that turns on its head what we believe about luck and skill. This book is about luck--or more precisely, about how we perceive and deal with luck in life and business. Set against the backdrop of the most conspicuous forum in which luck is mistaken for skill--the world of trading--*Fooled by Randomness* provides captivating insight into one of the least understood factors in all our lives. Writing in an entertaining narrative style, the author tackles major intellectual issues related to the underestimation of the influence of happenstance on our lives. The book is populated with an array of characters, some of whom have grasped, in their own way, the significance of chance: the baseball legend Yogi Berra; the philosopher of knowledge Karl Popper; the ancient world's wisest man, Solon; the modern financier George Soros; and the Greek voyager Odysseus. We also meet the fictional Nero, who seems to understand the role of randomness in his professional life but falls victim to his own superstitious foolishness. However, the most recognizable character of all remains unnamed--the lucky fool who happens to be in the right place at the right time--he embodies the "survival of the least fit." Such individuals attract devoted followers who believe in their guru's insights and methods. But no one can replicate what is obtained by chance. Are we capable of distinguishing the fortunate charlatan from the genuine visionary? Must we always try to uncover nonexistent messages in random events? It may be impossible to guard ourselves against the vagaries of the goddess Fortuna, but after reading *Fooled by Randomness* we can be a little better prepared. Named by Fortune One of the

## Smartest Books of All Time A Financial Times Best Business Book of the Year

*Joyful* Ingrid Fetell Lee 2018-09-04 Make small changes to your surroundings and create extraordinary happiness in your life with groundbreaking research from designer and TED star Ingrid Fetell Lee. Next Big Idea Club selection—chosen by Malcolm Gladwell, Susan Cain, Dan Pink, and Adam Grant as one of the "two most groundbreaking new nonfiction reads of the season!" "This book has the power to change everything! Writing with depth, wit, and insight, Ingrid Fetell Lee shares all you need to know in order to create external environments that give rise to inner joy." —Susan Cain, author of *Quiet* and founder of Quiet Revolution Have you ever wondered why we stop to watch the orange glow that arrives before sunset, or why we flock to see cherry blossoms bloom in spring? Is there a reason that people—regardless of gender, age, culture, or ethnicity—are mesmerized by baby animals, and can't help but smile when they see a burst of confetti or a cluster of colorful balloons? We are often made to feel that the physical world has little or no impact on our inner joy. Increasingly, experts urge us to find balance and calm by looking inward—through mindfulness or meditation—and muting the outside world. But what if the natural vibrancy of our surroundings is actually our most renewable and easily accessible source of joy? In *Joyful*, designer Ingrid Fetell Lee explores how the seemingly mundane spaces and objects we interact with every day have surprising and powerful effects on our mood. Drawing on insights from neuroscience and psychology, she explains why one setting makes us feel anxious or competitive, while another fosters acceptance and delight—and, most importantly, she reveals how we can harness the power of our surroundings to live fuller, healthier, and truly joyful lives.

Big Panda and Tiny Dragon James Norbury 2021-09-21 A thought-provoking journey of companionship, courage, tenderness, and tea. Big Panda and Tiny Dragon embark on a journey through the seasons of the year together. They get lost, as many of us do. But while lost, they discover many beautiful sights they'd never have found had they gone the right way. Told through a series of beautiful drawings and quiet, sometimes silly, conversations, the panda and the dragon explore the thoughts and emotions, hardships and happiness that connect us all. In nature, they learn how to live in the moment, how to be at peace with uncertainty, and how to find the strength to overcome life's obstacles together. Inspired by Buddhist philosophy and spirituality, British author and artist James Norbury created the adventures of Big

Panda and Tiny Dragon to share ideas that have helped him through difficult times. The book's series of vignettes can be read cover to cover or dipped into whenever inspiration is needed. James hopes the book's words and images will inspire others to pause, enjoy the stillness, and look at life in a positive new way. WORDS OF WISDOM: The seemingly simple, and often silly, conversations between Big Panda and Tiny Dragon reveal meaningful insights on friendship, inner wisdom, and self-acceptance. INSPIRING IMAGES: Depicted in bold brush strokes reminiscent of calligraphy, big, fluffy Panda and tiny, wiry Dragon journey through rolling hills, wooded forests, and blooming meadows in more than 120 elegant black-and-white and full-color scenes. FOR READERS OF ALL AGES: From youngsters at story time to new graduates with the world ahead of them to adults in moments of challenge or transition, Big Panda and Tiny Dragon offer comfort, inspiration, and a wry smile for every reader. WORK OF ART: Featuring a beautiful cover and a collection of stunning illustrations, each one more beautiful than the next, every page in this book is worthy of framing. HEARTFELT GIFT: Full of wisdom and touching humor, Big Panda and Tiny Dragon makes a thoughtful gift to be treasured.

Incerto Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2016-11-08 Nassim Nicholas Taleb's landmark Incerto series is an investigation of luck, uncertainty, probability, opacity, human error, risk, disorder, and decision-making in a world we don't understand, in nonoverlapping and standalone books. All four volumes--Antifragile, The Black Swan, Fooled by Randomness, and the expanded edition of The Bed of Procrustes, updated with more than 50 percent new material--are now together in one boxed set. ANTIFRAGILE "Startling . . . richly crammed with insights, stories, fine phrases and intriguing asides."--The Wall Street Journal Just as human bones get stronger when subjected to stress and tension, many things in life benefit from disorder, volatility, and turmoil. What Taleb has identified and calls "antifragile" is that category of things that not only gain from chaos but need it in order to survive and flourish. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better and better. What is crucial is that the antifragile loves errors, as it incurs small harm and large benefits from them. Spanning politics, urban planning, war, personal finance, economic systems, and medicine in an interdisciplinary and erudite style, Antifragile is a blueprint for living in a Black Swan world. THE BLACK SWAN "[A book] that altered modern thinking."--The Times (London) A black swan is a highly improbable event with three principal characteristics: It is unpredictable; it carries a massive impact; and, after the fact, we concoct an explanation that makes it appear less random and

more predictable. The astonishing success of Google was a black swan; so was 9/11. In this groundbreaking and prophetic book, Taleb shows that black swan events underlie almost everything about our world, from the rise of religions to events in our own personal lives, and yet we--especially the experts--are blind to them. FOOLED BY RANDOMNESS "[Fooled by Randomness] is to conventional Wall Street wisdom approximately what Martin Luther's ninety-five theses were to the Catholic Church."--Malcolm Gladwell, *The New Yorker* Are we capable of distinguishing the fortunate charlatan from the genuine visionary? Must we always try to uncover nonexistent messages in random events? Fooled by Randomness is about luck: more precisely, about how we perceive luck in our personal and professional experiences. Set against the backdrop of the most conspicuous forum in which luck is mistaken for skill--the markets--Fooled by Randomness is an irreverent, eye-opening, and endlessly entertaining exploration of one of the least understood forces in our lives. THE BED OF PROCRUSTES "Taleb's crystalline nuggets of thought stand alone like esoteric poems."--Financial Times This collection of aphorisms and meditations expresses Taleb's major ideas in ways you least expect. The Bed of Procrustes takes its title from Greek mythology: the story of a man who made his visitors fit his bed to perfection by either stretching them or cutting their limbs. With a rare combination of pointed wit and potent wisdom, Taleb plows through human illusions, contrasting the classical views of courage, elegance, and erudition against the modern diseases of nerdiness, philistinism, and phoniness.

Ethics in the Conflicts of Modernity Alasdair MacIntyre 2016-11-14 Alasdair MacIntyre explores some central philosophical, political and moral claims of modernity and argues that a proper understanding of human goods requires a rejection of these claims. In a wide-ranging discussion, he considers how normative and evaluative judgments are to be understood, how desire and practical reasoning are to be characterized, what it is to have adequate self-knowledge, and what part narrative plays in our understanding of human lives. He asks, further, what it would be to understand the modern condition from a neo-Aristotelian or Thomistic perspective, and argues that Thomistic Aristotelianism, informed by Marx's insights, provides us with resources for constructing a contemporary politics and ethics which both enable and require us to act against modernity from within modernity. This rich and important book builds on and advances MacIntyre's thinking in ethics and moral philosophy, and will be of great interest to readers in both fields.

*The Rational Optimist* Matt Ridley 2010-06-15 “A delightful and fascinating book filled with insight and wit, which will make you think twice and cheer up.” – Steven Pinker In a bold and provocative interpretation of economic history, Matt Ridley, the New York Times-bestselling author of *Genome* and *The Red Queen*, makes the case for an economics of hope, arguing that the benefits of commerce, technology, innovation, and change—what Ridley calls cultural evolution—will inevitably increase human prosperity. Fans of the works of Jared Diamond (*Guns, Germs, and Steel*), Niall Ferguson (*The Ascent of Money*), and Thomas Friedman (*The World Is Flat*) will find much to ponder and enjoy in *The Rational Optimist*. For two hundred years the pessimists have dominated public discourse, insisting that things will soon be getting much worse. But in fact, life is getting better—and at an accelerating rate. Food availability, income, and life span are up; disease, child mortality, and violence are down all across the globe. Africa is following Asia out of poverty; the Internet, the mobile phone, and container shipping are enriching people's lives as never before. An astute, refreshing, and revelatory work that covers the entire sweep of human history—from the Stone Age to the Internet—*The Rational Optimist* will change your way of thinking about the world for the better.

*The Bed of Procrustes* Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2016-10-25 *The Bed of Procrustes* is a standalone book in Nassim Nicholas Taleb's landmark *Incerto* series, an investigation of opacity, luck, uncertainty, probability, human error, risk, and decision-making in a world we don't understand. The other books in the series are *Fooled by Randomness*, *The Black Swan*, *Antifragile*, and *Skin in the Game*. By the author of the modern classic *The Black Swan*, this collection of aphorisms and meditations expresses his major ideas in ways you least expect. *The Bed of Procrustes* takes its title from Greek mythology: the story of a man who made his visitors fit his bed to perfection by either stretching them or cutting their limbs. It represents Taleb's view of modern civilization's hubristic side effects—modifying humans to satisfy technology, blaming reality for not fitting economic models, inventing diseases to sell drugs, defining intelligence as what can be tested in a classroom, and convincing people that employment is not slavery. Playful and irreverent, these aphorisms will surprise you by exposing self-delusions you have been living with but never recognized. With a rare combination of pointed wit and potent wisdom, Taleb plows through human illusions, contrasting the classical values of courage, elegance, and erudition against the modern diseases of nerdiness, philistinism, and phoniness. “Taleb's crystalline nuggets of thought stand alone like esoteric

poems.”—Financial Times

**When Reason Goes on Holiday** Neven Sesardic 2016-11-15 Philosophers usually emphasize the importance of logic, clarity and reason. Therefore when they address political issues they will usually inject a dose of rationality in these discussions, right? Wrong. This book gives a lot of examples showing the unexpected level of political irrationality among leading contemporary philosophers. The body of the book presents a detailed analysis of extreme leftist views of a number of famous philosophers and their occasional descent into apology for—and occasionally even active participation in—totalitarian politics. Most of these episodes are either virtually unknown (even inside the philosophical community) or have received very little attention. The author tries to explain how it was possible that so many luminaries of twentieth-century philosophy, who invoked reason and exhibited rigor and careful thinking in their professional work, succumbed to irrationality and ended up supporting some of the most murderous political regimes and ideologies. The huge leftist bias in contemporary philosophy and its persistence over the years is certainly a factor but it is far from being the whole story. Interestingly, the indisputably high intelligence of these philosophers did not actually protect them from descending into political insanity. It is argued that, on the contrary, both their brilliance and the high esteem they enjoyed in the profession only made them more self-confident and less cautious, thereby eventually making them blind to their betrayal of reason and the monstrosity of the causes they defended.

**Safe Haven** Mark Spitznagel 2021-08-17 What is a safe haven? What role should they play in an investment portfolio? Do we use them only to seek shelter until the passing of financial storms? Or are they something more? Contrary to everything we know from modern financial theory, can higher returns actually come as a result of lowering risk? In *Safe Haven*, hedge fund manager Mark Spitznagel—one of the top practitioners of safe haven investing and portfolio risk mitigation in the world—answers these questions and more. Investors who heed the message in this book will never look at risk mitigation the same way again.

**Risk and Decision Making** 1982-01-01

**Statistical Consequences of Fat Tails** Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2020-06-30 The book investigates the misapplication of conventional statistical techniques to fat tailed distributions and looks for remedies, when possible. Switching from thin tailed to fat tailed distributions requires more than "changing the color of the dress." Traditional asymptotics deal mainly with either  $n=1$  or  $n=\infty$ , and the real world is in between, under the "laws of the medium numbers"-which vary widely across specific distributions. Both the law of large numbers and the generalized central limit mechanisms operate in highly idiosyncratic ways outside the standard Gaussian or Levy-Stable basins of convergence. A few examples: - The sample mean is rarely in line with the population mean, with effect on "naïve empiricism," but can be sometimes be estimated via parametric methods. - The "empirical distribution" is rarely empirical. - Parameter uncertainty has compounding effects on statistical metrics. - Dimension reduction (principal components) fails. - Inequality estimators (Gini or quantile contributions) are not additive and produce wrong results. - Many "biases" found in psychology become entirely rational under more sophisticated probability distributions. - Most of the failures of financial economics, econometrics, and behavioral economics can be attributed to using the wrong distributions. This book, the first volume of the Technical Incerto, weaves a narrative around published journal articles.

**A Brief Guide to the Greek Myths** Stephen P. Kershaw 2013-02-07 The book leads the reader through these vibrant stories, from the origins of the gods through to the homecomings of the Trojan heroes. All the familiar narratives are here, along with some less familiar characters and motifs. In addition to the tales, the book explains key issues arising from the narratives, and discusses the myths and their wider relevance. This long-overdue book crystallises three key areas of interest: the nature of the tales; the stories themselves; and how they have and might be interpreted. For the first time, it brings together aspects of Greek mythology only usually available in disparate forms - namely children's books and academic works. There will be much here that is interesting, surprising, and strange as well as familiar. Experts and non-experts, adults, students and schoolchildren alike will gain entertainment and insight from this fascinating and important volume.

**The Viking Book of Aphorisms** Wystan Hugh Auden 1962 An anthology of pithy sayings dealing with man's ideas. Divided for easy reference into categories such as love, marriage, friendship, religion, science, the

arts, and many others.

**The Glamour of Grammar** Roy Peter Clark 2010-08-16 Early in the history of English, the words "grammar" and "glamour" meant the same thing: the power to charm. Roy Peter Clark, author of *Writing Tools*, aims to put the glamour back in grammar with this fun, engaging alternative to stuffy instructionals. In this practical guide, readers will learn everything from the different parts of speech to why effective writers prefer concrete nouns and active verbs. *THE GLAMOUR OF GRAMMAR* gives readers all the tools they need to "live inside the language"--to take advantage of grammar to perfect their use of English, to instill meaning, and to charm through their writing. With this indispensable book, readers will come to see just how glamorous grammar can be.

*Antifragile* Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2014-01-28 *Antifragile* is a standalone book in Nassim Nicholas Taleb's landmark *Incerto* series, an investigation of opacity, luck, uncertainty, probability, human error, risk, and decision-making in a world we don't understand. The other books in the series are *Fooled by Randomness*, *The Black Swan*, *Skin in the Game*, and *The Bed of Procrustes*. Nassim Nicholas Taleb, the bestselling author of *The Black Swan* and one of the foremost thinkers of our time, reveals how to thrive in an uncertain world. Just as human bones get stronger when subjected to stress and tension, and rumors or riots intensify when someone tries to repress them, many things in life benefit from stress, disorder, volatility, and turmoil. What Taleb has identified and calls "antifragile" is that category of things that not only gain from chaos but need it in order to survive and flourish. In *The Black Swan*, Taleb showed us that highly improbable and unpredictable events underlie almost everything about our world. In *Antifragile*, Taleb stands uncertainty on its head, making it desirable, even necessary, and proposes that things be built in an antifragile manner. The antifragile is beyond the resilient or robust. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better and better. Furthermore, the antifragile is immune to prediction errors and protected from adverse events. Why is the city-state better than the nation-state, why is debt bad for you, and why is what we call "efficient" not efficient at all? Why do government responses and social policies protect the strong and hurt the weak? Why should you write your resignation letter before even starting on the job? How did the sinking of the Titanic save lives? The book spans innovation by trial and error, life decisions, politics, urban planning, war, personal finance,

economic systems, and medicine. And throughout, in addition to the street wisdom of Fat Tony of Brooklyn, the voices and recipes of ancient wisdom, from Roman, Greek, Semitic, and medieval sources, are loud and clear. Antifragile is a blueprint for living in a Black Swan world. Erudite, witty, and iconoclastic, Taleb's message is revolutionary: The antifragile, and only the antifragile, will make it. Praise for Antifragile "Ambitious and thought-provoking . . . highly entertaining."—The Economist "A bold book explaining how and why we should embrace uncertainty, randomness, and error . . . It may just change our lives."—Newsweek

**Sociophysics** Serge Galam 2012-02-10 Do humans behave much like atoms? Sociophysics, which uses tools and concepts from the physics of disordered matter to describe some aspects of social and political behavior, answers in the affirmative. But advocating the use of models from the physical sciences to understand human behavior could be perceived as tantamount to dismissing the existence of human free will and also enabling those seeking manipulative skills . This thought-provoking book argues it is just the contrary. Indeed, future developments and evaluation will either show sociophysics to be inadequate, thus supporting the hypothesis that people can primarily be considered to be free agents, or valid, thus opening the path to a radically different vision of society and personal responsibility. This book attempts to explain why and how humans behave much like atoms, at least in some aspects of their collective lives, and then proposes how this knowledge can serve as a unique key to a dramatic leap forwards in achieving more social freedom in the real world. At heart, sociophysics and this book are about better comprehending the richness and potential of our social interaction, and so distancing ourselves from inanimate atoms.

*The Great Mental Models: General Thinking Concepts* Farnam Street 2019-12-16 The old saying goes, "To the man with a hammer, everything looks like a nail." But anyone who has done any kind of project knows a hammer often isn't enough. The more tools you have at your disposal, the more likely you'll use the right tool for the job - and get it done right. The same is true when it comes to your thinking. The quality of your outcomes depends on the mental models in your head. And most people are going through life with little more than a hammer. Until now. *The Great Mental Models: General Thinking Concepts* is the first book in *The Great Mental Models* series designed to upgrade your thinking with the best, most useful

and powerful tools so you always have the right one on hand. This volume details nine of the most versatile, all-purpose mental models you can use right away to improve your decision making, productivity, and how clearly you see the world. You will discover what forces govern the universe and how to focus your efforts so you can harness them to your advantage, rather than fight with them or worse yet- ignore them. Upgrade your mental toolbox and get the first volume today. AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY Farnam Street (FS) is one of the world's fastest growing websites, dedicated to helping our readers master the best of what other people have already figured out. We curate, examine and explore the timeless ideas and mental models that history's brightest minds have used to live lives of purpose. Our readers include students, teachers, CEOs, coaches, athletes, artists, leaders, followers, politicians and more. They're not defined by gender, age, income, or politics but rather by a shared passion for avoiding problems, making better decisions, and lifelong learning. AUTHOR HOME Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

**Incerto** Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2021-05-04 The landmark five-book series--all together in one boxed set The Incerto is an investigation of opacity, luck, uncertainty, probability, human error, risk, and decision making when we don't understand the world, expressed in the form of a personal essay with autobiographical sections, stories, parables, and philosophical, historical, and scientific discussions, in non-overlapping volumes that can be accessed in any order. The main thread is that while there is inordinate uncertainty about what is going on, there is great certainty as to what one should do about it. This boxed set includes: FOOLED BY RANDOMNESS THE BLACK SWAN THE BED OF PROCRUSTES ANTIFRAGILE SKIN IN THE GAME

The Moral Sayings of Publius Syrus, a Roman Slave Publius Syrus 1856

**Incerto 5-Book Bundle** Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2021-05-04 The landmark five-book series—all together in one ebook bundle The Incerto is an investigation of opacity, luck, uncertainty, probability, human error, risk, and decision making when we don't understand the world, expressed in the form of a personal essay with autobiographical sections, stories, parables, and philosophical, historical, and scientific discussions, in non-overlapping volumes that can be accessed in any order. The main thread is that while there is inordinate uncertainty about what is going on, there is great certainty as to what one should do about it.

This ebook bundle includes: FOOLED BY RANDOMNESS THE BLACK SWAN THE BED OF PROCRUSTES ANTIFRAGILE SKIN IN THE GAME

**The Decision Book: 50 Models for Strategic Thinking** Mikael Krogerus 2012-01-30 A short, sharp guide to tackling life's biggest challenges: understanding ourselves and making the right choices. Every day offers moments of decision, from what to eat for lunch to how to settle a dispute with a colleague. Still larger questions loom: How can I motivate my team? How can I work more efficiently? What is the long tail anyway? Whether you're a newly minted MBA, a chronic second-guesser, or just someone eager for a new vantage point, The Decision Book presents fifty models for better structuring, and subsequently understanding, life's steady challenges. Interactive and thought-provoking, this illustrated workbook offers succinct summaries of popular strategies, including the Rubber Band Model for dilemmas with many directions, the Personal Performance Model to test whether to change jobs, and the Black Swan Model to illustrate why experience doesn't guarantee wisdom. Packed with familiar tools like the Pareto Principle, the Prisoner's Dilemma, and an unusual exercise inspired by Warren Buffet, The Decision Book is the ideal reference for flexible thinkers.

What Owen Didn't Know Laurence Endersen 2020-10-19 WHAT OWEN DIDN'T KNOW is a modern day philosophical fable and a timeless life lesson. It starts with a chance encounter between Rose Hilsfit and Owen Higgins and the story builds from there. There are months when nothing much happens and then there are moments when everything changes. In the end, What Owen Didn't Know is a gentle reminder to consider what truly matters to us.

How Adam Smith Can Change Your Life Russ Roberts 2015-10-13 "How the insights of an 18th century economist can help us live better in the 21st century. Adam Smith became famous for The Wealth of Nations, but the Scottish economist also cared deeply about our moral choices and behavior--the subjects of his other brilliant book, The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759). Now, economist Russ Roberts shows why Smith's neglected work might be the greatest self-help book you've never read. Roberts explores Smith's unique and fascinating approach to fundamental questions such as: - What is the deepest source of human satisfaction? - Why do we sometimes swing between selfishness and altruism? - What's the

connection between morality and happiness? Drawing on current events, literature, history, and pop culture, Roberts offers an accessible and thought-provoking view of human behavior through the lenses of behavioral economics and philosophy"--

**A Man for All Markets** Edward O. Thorp 2017-01-24 The incredible true story of the card-counting mathematics professor who taught the world how to beat the dealer and, as the first of the great quantitative investors, ushered in a revolution on Wall Street. A child of the Great Depression, legendary mathematician Edward O. Thorp invented card counting, proving the seemingly impossible: that you could beat the dealer at the blackjack table. As a result he launched a gambling renaissance. His remarkable success—and mathematically unassailable method—caused such an uproar that casinos altered the rules of the game to thwart him and the legions he inspired. They barred him from their premises, even put his life in jeopardy. Nonetheless, gambling was forever changed. Thereafter, Thorp shifted his sights to “the biggest casino in the world”: Wall Street. Devising and then deploying mathematical formulas to beat the market, Thorp ushered in the era of quantitative finance we live in today. Along the way, the so-called godfather of the quants played bridge with Warren Buffett, crossed swords with a young Rudy Giuliani, detected the Bernie Madoff scheme, and, to beat the game of roulette, invented, with Claude Shannon, the world’s first wearable computer. Here, for the first time, Thorp tells the story of what he did, how he did it, his passions and motivations, and the curiosity that has always driven him to disregard conventional wisdom and devise game-changing solutions to seemingly insoluble problems. An intellectual thrill ride, replete with practical wisdom that can guide us all in uncertain financial waters, *A Man for All Markets* is an instant classic—a book that challenges its readers to think logically about a seemingly irrational world. Praise for *A Man for All Markets* “In *A Man for All Markets*, [Thorp] delightfully recounts his progress (if that is the word) from college teacher to gambler to hedge-fund manager. Along the way we learn important lessons about the functioning of markets and the logic of investment.”—*The Wall Street Journal* “[Thorp] gives a biological summation (think Richard Feynman’s *Surely You’re Joking, Mr. Feynman!*) of his quest to prove the aphorism ‘the house always wins’ is flawed. . . . Illuminating for the mathematically inclined, and cautionary for would-be gamblers and day traders”—*Library Journal*

*Tao of Charlie Munger* David Clark 2017-01-03 Words of wisdom from Charlie Munger—Warren Buffett’s

longtime business partner and the visionary Vice Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway—collected and interpreted with an eye towards investing by David Clark, coauthor of the bestselling Buffettology series. Born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1924 Charlie Munger studied mathematics at the University of Michigan, trained as a meteorologist at Cal Tech Pasadena while in the Army, and graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School without ever earning an undergraduate degree. Today, Munger is one of America's most successful investors, the Vice Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway, and Warren Buffett's business partner for almost forty years. Buffett says "Berkshire has been built to Charlie's blueprint. My role has been that of general contractor." Munger is an intelligent, opinionated business man whose ideas can teach professional and amateur investors how to be successful in finance and life. Like The Tao of Warren Buffett and The Tao of Te Ching, The Tao of Charlie Munger is a compendium of pithy quotes including, "Knowing what you don't know is more useful than being brilliant" and "In my whole life, I have known no wise people who didn't read all the time—none, zero." This collection, culled from interviews, speeches, and questions and answers at the Berkshire Hathaway and Wesco annual meetings, offers insights into Munger's amazing financial success and life philosophies. Described by Business Insider as "sharp in his wit and investing wisdom," Charlie Munger's investment tips, business philosophy, and rules for living are as unique as his life story; intelligent as he clearly is; and as successful as he has been.

**A People's History of the Supreme Court** Peter Irons 2006-07-25 A comprehensive history of the people and cases that have changed history, this is the definitive account of the nation's highest court Recent changes in the Supreme Court have placed the venerable institution at the forefront of current affairs, making this comprehensive and engaging work as timely as ever. In the tradition of Howard Zinn's classic A People's History of the United States, Peter Irons chronicles the decisions that have influenced virtually every aspect of our society, from the debates over judicial power to controversial rulings in the past regarding slavery, racial segregation, and abortion, as well as more current cases about school prayer, the Bush/Gore election results, and "enemy combatants." To understand key issues facing the supreme court and the current battle for the court's ideological makeup, there is no better guide than Peter Irons. This revised and updated edition includes a foreword by Howard Zinn. "A sophisticated narrative history of the Supreme Court . . . [Irons] breathes abundant life into old documents and reminds readers that today's fiercest arguments about rights are the continuation of the endless American conversation." -Publisher's

Weekly (starred review)

**Dynamic Hedging** Nassim Nicholas Taleb 1997-01-14 Destined to become a market classic, *Dynamic Hedging* is the only practical reference in exotic options hedging and arbitrage for professional traders and money managers. Watch the professionals. From central banks to brokerages to multinationals, institutional investors are flocking to a new generation of exotic and complex options contracts and derivatives. But the promise of ever larger profits also creates the potential for catastrophic trading losses. Now more than ever, the key to trading derivatives lies in implementing preventive risk management techniques that plan for and avoid these appalling downturns. Unlike other books that offer risk management for corporate treasurers, *Dynamic Hedging* targets the real-world needs of professional traders and money managers. Written by a leading options trader and derivatives risk advisor to global banks and exchanges, this book provides a practical, real-world methodology for monitoring and managing all the risks associated with portfolio management. Nassim Nicholas Taleb is the founder of Empirica Capital LLC, a hedge fund operator, and a fellow at the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences of New York University. He has held a variety of senior derivative trading positions in New York and London and worked as an independent floor trader in Chicago. Dr. Taleb was inducted in February 2001 in the Derivatives Strategy Hall of Fame. He received an MBA from the Wharton School and a Ph.D. from University Paris-Dauphine.

[One Tin Soldier](#) Phil Knight 2009-09 A father stops his white son from playing with his black friend. The ten-year-olds, Billy and Eugene, defy him. Sam and Ruby Lowe, Billy's parents, gave the McGeeas a place to live and help to better their lives. No good deed goes unpunished. Their kindness places the Loweas and McGeeas at risk. Risk turns to reality when one of the McGee girls is murdered. The racially volatile Riverhills County, Alabama, ignites. An old war hero, Sheriff A.B. Compton, must solve the crime or fight another war. The funeral is more than Eugene can bear, having just lost his father. Eugene and Billy leave the funeral to find a burnt out mansion and a swamp are keys in solving the murder. Sam Lowe is arrested for the murder. The Devil is set loose as Sam Lowe faces execution. But in the end two other men lay dead. Why?

**Ten Global Trends Every Smart Person Should Know** Ronald Bailey 2020-08-31 "Ten Global Trends Every Smart Person Should Know is a pleasure: gorgeous, self-contained vignettes on human progress, which you can sample at your leisure or devour in a sitting." –Steven Pinker, author of *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* Think the world is getting worse? If so, you're wrong. The world is, for the most part, actually getting better. But 58 percent of people in 17 countries who were surveyed in 2016 thought that the world was either getting worse or staying the same. Americans were even more glum: 65 percent thought the world was getting worse and only 6 percent thought it was getting better. The uncontroversial data on major global trends in this book will persuade you that this dark view of the state of humanity and the natural world is, in large part, badly mistaken. World population will peak at 8–9 billion before the end of this century, as the global fertility rate continues its fall from 6 children per woman in 1960 to the current rate of 2.4. The global absolute poverty rate has fallen from 42 percent in 1981 to 8.6 percent today. Satellite data show that forest area has been expanding since 1982. Natural resources are becoming ever cheaper and more abundant. Since 1900, the average life expectancy has more than doubled, reaching more than 72 years globally. Of course, major concerns such as climate change, marine plastic pollution, and declining wildlife populations are still with us, but many of these problems are already being ameliorated as a result of the favorable economic, social, and technological trends that are documented in this book. You can't fix what is wrong in the world if you don't know what's actually happening. *Ten Global Trends Every Smart Person Should Know* will provide busy people with quick-to-read, easily understandable, and entertaining access to surprising facts that they need to know about how the world is really faring.

**The Black Swan** Nassim Nicholas Taleb 2007-04-17 *The Black Swan* is a standalone book in Nassim Nicholas Taleb's landmark *Incerto* series, an investigation of opacity, luck, uncertainty, probability, human error, risk, and decision-making in a world we don't understand. The other books in the series are *Fooled by Randomness*, *Antifragile*, and *The Bed of Procrustes*. A black swan is a highly improbable event with three principal characteristics: It is unpredictable; it carries a massive impact; and, after the fact, we concoct an explanation that makes it appear less random, and more predictable, than it was. The astonishing success of Google was a black swan; so was 9/11. For Nassim Nicholas Taleb, black swans underlie almost everything about our world, from the rise of religions to events in our own personal lives.

Why do we not acknowledge the phenomenon of black swans until after they occur? Part of the answer, according to Taleb, is that humans are hardwired to learn specifics when they should be focused on generalities. We concentrate on things we already know and time and time again fail to take into consideration what we don't know. We are, therefore, unable to truly estimate opportunities, too vulnerable to the impulse to simplify, narrate, and categorize, and not open enough to rewarding those who can imagine the "impossible." For years, Taleb has studied how we fool ourselves into thinking we know more than we actually do. We restrict our thinking to the irrelevant and inconsequential, while large events continue to surprise us and shape our world. In this revelatory book, Taleb explains everything we know about what we don't know, and this second edition features a new philosophical and empirical essay, "On Robustness and Fragility," which offers tools to navigate and exploit a Black Swan world. Elegant, startling, and universal in its applications, *The Black Swan* will change the way you look at the world. Taleb is a vastly entertaining writer, with wit, irreverence, and unusual stories to tell. He has a polymathic command of subjects ranging from cognitive science to business to probability theory. *The Black Swan* is a landmark book—itsself a black swan. Praise for Nassim Nicholas Taleb "The most prophetic voice of all."—GQ Praise for *The Black Swan* "[A book] that altered modern thinking."—The Times (London) "A masterpiece."—Chris Anderson, editor in chief of *Wired*, author of *The Long Tail* "Idiosyncratically brilliant."—Niall Ferguson, *Los Angeles Times* "The *Black Swan* changed my view of how the world works."—Daniel Kahneman, Nobel laureate "[Taleb writes] in a style that owes as much to Stephen Colbert as it does to Michel de Montaigne. . . . We eagerly romp with him through the follies of confirmation bias [and] narrative fallacy."—The Wall Street Journal "Hugely enjoyable—compelling . . . easy to dip into."—Financial Times "Engaging . . . *The Black Swan* has appealing cheek and admirable ambition."—The New York Times Book Review From the Hardcover edition.