

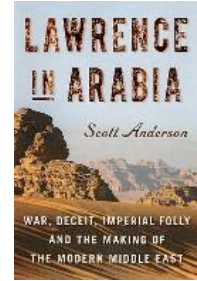
## The 2014 Highlands Reading List

We began compiling our annual reading list in 2000, and it is a continuing work. On the 2014 Highlands Reading List we are featuring twenty-five books, six by first-time authors. Of the twenty-five books, there are nineteen works of non-fiction and six novels. Many of our titles are current and address timely themes; some are timeless classics worth discovering for the first time; others are works of fiction to stretch the imagination. They have been selected for their themes; for their capacity to broaden our understanding of emerging issues; and for their ability to inform the way we think about things.

Each year we are joined by a small group of guest reviewers who share with us one or two books that they read during the year and found compelling. This year's panel of distinguished guest reviewers provided eight of the twenty-five books on our list. The panel includes **Wade Davis**, an ethnographer and Explorer-in-Residence at the National Geographic Society; **John J. DeGioia**, President of Georgetown University; **Lynn Hirshfield**, author and Senior Vice President of Strategic Alliances at Participant Media; **Elan Lee**, Chief Design Officer at Xbox Entertainment Studios; **James L. Olds**, neuroscientist and Director of the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study; **Keith Tan**, Deputy Secretary of Defence in the Republic of Singapore; and **Amy Zalman**, Chief Executive Officer of the World Future Society.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OUR GUEST EDITORS

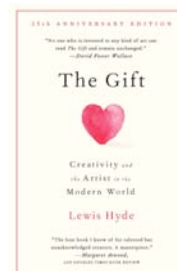
**Wade Davis** is Explorer-in-Residence at the National Geographic Society (NGS) and was named by the NGS as one of the "Explorers for the Millennium". He has been described as "a rare combination of scientist, scholar, poet and passionate defender of all of life's diversity." An ethnographer, writer, photographer, and filmmaker, Davis holds degrees in anthropology and biology and received his Ph.D. in ethnobotany, all from Harvard University. Mostly through the Harvard Botanical Museum, he spent over three years in the Amazon and Andes as a plant explorer, living among fifteen indigenous groups in eight Latin American nations while making some 6000 botanical collections. His work later took him to Haiti to investigate folk preparations implicated in the creation of zombies, an assignment that led to his writing *Passage of Darkness* (1988) and *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1986), an international best seller later released by Universal as a motion picture. Davis is the recipient of numerous awards including: The Explorers Medal, the highest award of the Explorers Club (2011), the Gold Medal of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society (2009), the 2002 Lowell Thomas Medal (The Explorer's Club) and the 2002 Lannan Foundation \$125,000 prize for literary non-fiction.



Wade tells us: “The most interesting book that I have read in recent weeks is Scott Anderson's [Lawrence in Arabia: War, Deceit, Imperial Folly and the Making of the Modern Middle East](#). Beautifully written and thoroughly researched, the book reveals that T E Lawrence in spite of himself really was a hero, and a hero betrayed. Anderson brilliantly chronicles how utterly arbitrary was the process that bequeathed the diplomatic and military quagmire euphemistically referred to today as the Middle East. Indeed it is difficult to recall any moment in history where vanity and folly, deception, opportunism, and venality on the part of a host of nations and political leaders more effectively came together to sow the seeds of disaster for future generations”.

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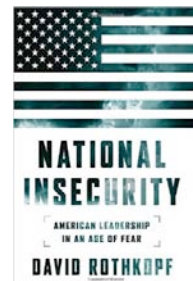
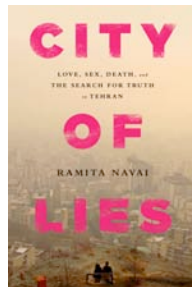
**John J. DeGioia** is the President of Georgetown University. For over three decades, he has helped to define and strengthen Georgetown University as a premier institution for education and research. Since graduating from the University in 1979, he has served both as a senior administrator and as a faculty member. On July 1, 2001, he became Georgetown's 48th president. Dr. DeGioia is also a Professorial Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy. He earned a bachelor's degree in English from Georgetown University in 1979 and his PhD in Philosophy from the University in 1995. This fall, he taught an Ignatius Seminar called "Fusing Horizons: Knowing Each Other, Knowing Our Selves." Previous courses include "Working on Ourselves: Imagination, Interior Freedom and the Academy," "Ethics and Global Development," and "Human Rights: A Culture in Crisis." Prior to his appointment as president, Dr. DeGioia held a variety of senior administrative positions at Georgetown, including senior vice president and dean of student affairs. He has been presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Academia by the Sons of Italy, and the Catholic in the Public Square Award by *Commonweal*. He was also named a Brave Thinker by *The Atlantic* magazine and a Washingtonian of the Year by *Washingtonian* magazine.



His recommendation for us is a modern classic: [\*The Gift: Creativity and the Artist in the Modern World\*](#) by Lewis Hyde. “It is an extraordinary examination of the enduring value of creativity. It gives us an alternative way of seeing the world. Guiding Hyde’s logic is an underlying conviction that art is a gift—the opposite of a commodity. As such, it is the currency of a powerful second economy running in parallel to a world governed by the exchange of money. Through examples drawn from across history, Hyde provides a deep examination of the value of this alternative framework in building relationships and culture. More than thirty years past its first publication date, *The Gift* continues to enrich the lives and work of artists, writers and, as Hyde himself notes, ‘all thinking people’. *The Gift* endures as a remarkably fresh perspective that broadens the options we have before us for interacting as humans”.

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**Lynn Hirshfield** is Participant Media’s Senior Vice President of Strategic Alliances. She joined Participant Media in September 2005 and is responsible for leading the development of strategic partnerships and integrating these partners into social action and advocacy campaigns and across all of the company’s platforms, including the film divisions, Takepart.com and Pivot TV. Lynn is also responsible for launching Participant’s publishing division to complement the company’s films and social action campaigns. She is the author of *Girls Gone Green* and two more books for younger readers, the "Sassafras" series. Prior to joining the staff of Participant, she consulted for a number of Internet content and technology start-ups, and various studios and venture capital groups specializing in creating new verticals and generating strategic partnerships with corporate sponsors. Previous to entering the Internet arena, Lynn worked as a development executive for productions garnering a number of awards, including four Emmys, a Peabody Award and two Television Critics Awards -- among them the PBS series “Wishbone.” She was also a story editor for National Geographic Feature Films, Scott Rudin, Norman Lear, Tim Burton and Sony, Fox and Warner Bros. Studios. Lynn is a graduate of U.C. Berkeley and the Radcliffe Publishing Procedures Graduate Program at Harvard University.



Lynn has given us two compelling recommendations for this year’s list: *City of Lies*, and *National Insecurity*.

“Ramita Navai is a British-Iranian journalist. In her new book, [\*City of Lies: Love, Sex, Death, and the Search for Truth in Tehran\*](#), she tells the stories of Tehranis who live one life publicly, and another privately. ‘Let’s get one thing clear,’ she says in the first sentence of her book. ‘In order to live in Tehran you have to lie.’ This is a crackling, fearless, real life look at the underbelly of modern Tehran, told through the lives of 8 intriguing protagonists, including a porn star, an ageing socialite, a dutiful housewife who files for divorce, and an old-time thug running a gambling den. All of whom Navai got to know when she was living and working as an undercover journalist in Tehran. Navai exposes the startling realities of lives lived behind a veil of necessary falsehoods and announces herself as a dazzling new writer”.

Of her second recommendation, Lynn told us: “Over the past decade, America has struggled to cope with a relentless array of new threats, from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the financial crisis, from Washington dysfunction to the rise of China and the dawn of the era of cyber warfare. David Rothkopf, one of America’s foremost experts on foreign policy and national security, shows in his book [\*National Insecurity: American Leadership in an Age of Fear\*](#) how America was shocked into a series of missteps, what it tried to do to recover, and what it must do to emerge from one of the most difficult periods in its history. It is the story of a superpower in crisis, seeking to adapt to a rapidly changing world, and struggling to maintain resilience in spite of mismanagement, and unwillingness to draw the right lessons from the recent past.

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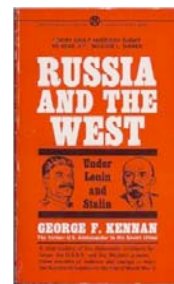
**Elan Lee** is a professional technologist and storyteller. His pioneering work in entertainment has spanned everything from multiple startups raising millions of dollars to creating the Alternate Reality Game genre. Elan started his career at the Microsoft Games Studio where he was a Lead Designer for the X-Box launch portfolio. Next, he co-founded and served as the Vice President of 42 Entertainment (the company behind *I Love Bees*, *Nine Inch Nails: Year Zero*, and *The Dark Knight*.) Elan was also the Co-Founder of EDOC Laundry, a company that embeds secret narratives in clothing, and the founder and Chief Creative Officer for Fourth Wall Studios in Los Angeles. He is currently the Chief Design Officer for Xbox Entertainment Studios. He has won a Primetime Emmy for the series, “Dirty Work”, and the 2012 Indie Cade Trailblazer Award for a distinguished career in interactive entertainment.



“My nomination is [Daemon](#), a novel by Daniel Suarez. I’ve read a lot of books about the menace of machines. Yes, digital viruses are scary. Yes, computers coming to life are scary. Yes, video games where real people die are scary...but if I have to read another book about why we should all unplug our machines, stomp on our cellphones, and live in constant fear of the great digital boogiemán, I’m going to track down that author and throttle them with my MacBook power cable. Daemon is the first book I’ve ever read about a sentient(ish) machine that is based on realistic models, actual code, and plausible human reactions. Daemon is a story about a video game designer who writes a series of scripts to communicate with the world after his own death. These scripts have the ability to help or harm humans based on the degree to which they can manipulate others to follow their rules. The premise forces the reader to think about our dependence on machines, the appeal of competition, and our reliance on each other. At times, it gets overly fetishized, but it’s solid writing that explores an actual implementation of the gamification of life. This is the best book I’ve read this year. I pass this book on to all my reading friends because it inevitably leads to hours of fascinating conversation about a premise that should not be ignored. It’s clever, thought provoking, and wildly educational on the kind of digital structures we’re surrounded by. (Plus, the fact that not everyone dies is a nice cherry on top.)”

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**James L. Olds** is a neuroscientist and Director and Chief Academic Unit Officer of the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study, and Krasnow University Professor of Molecular Neuroscience. His scientific interests focus on the functional role of the mammalian neocortex, hippocampus and cerebellum, in health and disease, with special emphasis on how these highly ordered neuroanatomical regions interact to store and retrieve complex memories (ranging from face recognition to motor programs). He also has an interest in public policy, especially with regard to federal funding of biomedical research here in the United States and around the world. The international Decade of the Mind project was begun under his leadership at Krasnow, which helped shape President Obama's BRAIN Initiative.



Adhering to Andy Marshall’s advice to us many years ago, “If you want a new idea, read an old book”, Jim sent us his recommendation of a 1961 classic, [Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin](#), by a towering figure of international relations, George F. Kennan. Jim tells us, “Sometimes the old stuff is still the best. In this case, Kennan's

book about the first forty years of Communism in Russia provides a terrific context for current foreign policy challenges with Russia under Putin. Kennan masterfully paints a complicated picture of a ruthlessly single-minded Soviet foreign policy intersected with an often naive and shortsighted West (and especially the United States) that avoided coming to grips with the existential nature of the confrontation until it was too late. Most interestingly the book reveals the Russian obsession with control of its near frontier, including Ukraine, Poland, the Baltics and Finland in a way that eerily is mirrored in the present. At the same time, Kennan reaches back into the historical record to bring the early Soviet leadership to life: Lenin, with his absolute dedication to a plan to destroy the Western democracies; Molotov working cynically with Ribbentrop to buy time for both Russian and Germany (each planning to eventually devour the other); Stalin consumed with a personal insecurity that led him to purge the best and the brightest. In each of these portraits, there perhaps is a little of Putin. Read and enjoy--*plus ca change, plus que la meme chose*".

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**Keith Tan** assumed the appointment of Deputy Secretary (Policy), in the Ministry of Defence of Singapore, on 1 Sep 2014. Prior to his present appointment, he was the Senior Director of Public Service Division's PS 21 Office. He concurrently held the appointment of Institute Director in the Institute of Governance and Policy of Singapore's Civil Service College. In these complementary roles, he thought about how to engage Public Sector leaders, middle managers and rank-and-file officers on public sector transformation efforts, and led a number of such outreach efforts. He also served as the Editorial Advisor for *Challenge* magazine and *Ethos*. Keith spent five years in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, where he served as Director of the Economics and Strategy Division (2008 – 2010) and the Foreign Economic Policy Division (2010 – 2013). As Director of MTI's Economics and Strategy Division, he worked with the Singapore government's Economist Service and supported the work of the Economic Strategies Committee. From 2010 to 2013, he served as Singapore's Chief Negotiator for the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement negotiations. He also led negotiations on various "21st Century" trade issues in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations. A career civil servant, he spent the first eight years of his working life in various posts in the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Home Affairs. He graduated with highest honors in English and Comparative Literature, and a Certificate (with Distinction) in Russian Studies, from Princeton University in 1997. In 2008, he obtained a Masters degree in Management from the Peter Drucker School of Management, Claremont Graduate University.

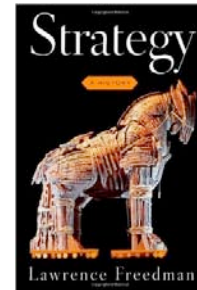


Keith writes: “The book I am recommending is Elizabeth Pisani’s magnificent [\*Indonesia, Etc.\*](#) Most people outside Indonesia would only associate Indonesia with Bali, Jakarta, and, maybe, the Aceh tsunami of 2004. This book is an encyclopedic introduction to the richness and mystery of the rest of this vast, inscrutable and almost ungovernable country. The writer, an ex-journalist and healthcare advisor, spent several months travelling the length and breadth of the country, on all manner of rickety, overladen and completely unreliable public transport, revealing the layers of a country that seems miraculous upon reflection. Reading this book gave me a newfound respect for the well-meaning men and women who are trying to build roads, protect rainforests, attract foreign investment, and manage communal and religious disagreements in this miraculous and sometimes surreal patchwork of a country.”

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**Amy Zalman** is the Chief Executive Officer of the World Future Society, a nonprofit educational and scientific organization with 9500 members in 80 countries and an electronic community of 45,000 throughout the world. WFS’s mission is to understand and identify the social, economic, and technological developments that shape the course of human society. Dr. Zalman has significant experience identifying leaders and influencers in markets that range from military and national security to media and communications. Previously, she was the Department of Defense Chair of Information Integration and a professor of Strategic Studies at the National War College in Washington, DC, educating future leaders of the Armed Forces, State Department, and other civilian agencies in national security policy and strategy. Prior to that, Dr. Zalman worked at Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC, now Leidos), a Washington, DC based science and technology firm, where she developed new market strategies and basic research projects in the government strategic communications sector. As the founder of Oryx Communications, an intercultural communication and executive education firm, her outreach was global, providing advisory services and information products to organizations expanding in the Middle East and North Africa. Her Strategic Narrative website has been a key influencer in guiding strategy and communications for governments as well as the private sector. Dr. Zalman serves on the steering committee of the National Defense University Foresight Initiative, the Board of Directors of the Council on Emerging National Security Affairs, the Influence Advisory Panel, and the Senior Information Operations Advisory Council. She is a former research fellow at the EastWest Institute, a former Fulbright scholar, and holds a Ph.D. in Middle

Eastern Studies from New York University, a Masters Degree of Fine Arts from Cornell University, a Bachelors Degree from Columbia University, and an honorary Masters Degree in Security Studies from the National War College. She is proficient in Arabic and Hebrew.



She tells us: “The book I’ve selected is [Strategy: A History](#) by Lawrence Freedman. *Strategy* is the non-fiction counterpart to the novel you hope will never end: a page turning epic about a hero who encounters many adventures and trials, but nevertheless endures. In this case, the hero is an idea and a practice. Yet much like any human hero, Strategy is complex, flawed, and always aspiring for better things. For Freedman, the tendency to seek strategic advantage is so deeply embedded that it can be found among chimpanzees, which is where his tale begins. From chimpanzees, Freedman takes us through canonical military literature such as Sun Tzu and Clausewitz, through insurgent strategies ‘from below,’ through the emergence and development of strategy as an element of business management. Puzzlingly, given strategy’s endurance, is how seldom it works as planned. Rather than charging us with creating better strategies, Freedman faults Enlightenment rationalism for producing the fiction that through reason and knowledge, we can eliminate error and control our own futures. As an antidote to the idea of strategy as the perfect rational document, Freedman finally proposes strategy as a kind of story, told incrementally in an ongoing effort to rescript events in the midst of inevitably complex circumstances. In the last resort, strategy may be ‘a story about power told in future tense from the point of view of a leading character’”.

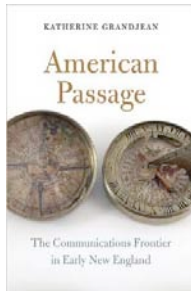


## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HIGHLANDS STAFF

### NON-FICTION

#### [\*American Passage: The Communications Frontier in Early New England\*](#)

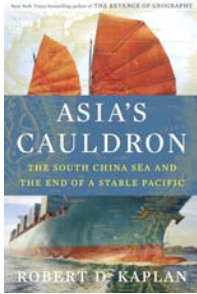
by Katherine Grandjean



Most often, our image of Early American society is an idealized one, mostly stuff of legend and lore picturing a 1600's New England as a series of iconic moments. From the landing at Plymouth Rock to the celebration of the first Thanksgiving, we have been asked to see a rather bucolic view of Early American culture in this region. In ***American Passage: The Communications Frontier in Early New England***, Dr. Katherine Grandjean paints a much darker portrait of this landscape as she depicts, in scholarly detail, a region plagued by constant fear of war and starvation. The isolation of these early inhabitants is a stark reality and it shows vividly in the letters of this literate population, missives that range from common rumor to the more formal disposition of colonial business. Letters are at the heart of Grandjean's research, and she has scoured thousands of them, more than three thousand from the John Winthrop collection alone. It is from these letters that she forms a narrative of a slowly developing region, a patchwork quilt of colonial settlements focused on survival and needing communication with others in order to assure it. Grandjean tells us who writes these letters, who delivers them, and how they lead to a larger communication network. Roads, newspapers, and postal service are the eventual results, but it is the story of how these staples of civilization came to be that is most fascinating, and Grandjean's attention to the details of this eventual development provide us with an understanding of a major building block of the overall American experience.

#### [\*Asia's Cauldron: The South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific\*](#)

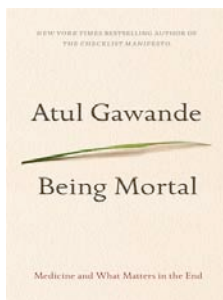
by Robert Kaplan



Robert Kaplan, whose previous book, *Monsoon*, was featured on last year's reading list, continues his "Asian pivot" with a view of how the future of Asia's critical maritime region might be calmed or roiled. In ***Asia's Cauldron: The South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific***, Kaplan explores the history, cultures, philosophies, politics, and leaders of the countries whose destinies will be drawn together in the South China Sea. Kaplan lays it out succinctly in his opening chapter: "Europe is a landscape; East Asia is a seascape. Therein lies a crucial difference between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries". He tackles the underlying strategy impelling Chinese presence in the small islands of the Senkaku, Paracel, and Spratley chains which have led to friction with Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, and Malaysia, and puts forth an argument that China may see its influence in this region much as the United States saw the Caribbean in the early twentieth century. With the building of the Panama Canal enabling the extension of U.S. military and economic power in the linking of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the stage was set for American global influence for the future. The massive growth of the PLA Navy along with its contesting of mineral, fishery, and navigation rights in the South China Sea, clearly outline Chinese strategy. Kaplan takes it to a judgment: this does not necessarily mean a warring China, but it does mean a China whose influence we must take seriously in both cooperation and competition in the preservation of stability in the geostrategically vital South China Sea.

### **[Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End](#)**

by Atul Gawande

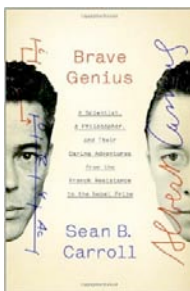


We first spoke with Dr. Atul Gawande before Gov2.0 in 2009 when he was writing about health care reform in *The New Yorker*. His essays that year covered the importance of physicians using checklists prior to medical procedures to eliminate

mistakes; and citing cost differentials for similar medical procedures within and across geographic regions. Now he has turned his attention to something far more personal in an important new book—***Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End***—for anyone struggling with end of life issues or looking for guidance on how to help a loved one approach the end of their life. Dr. Gawande provides a heartfelt exploration of what it means to support another’s desire for dignity and quality of life. His criticisms of the lack of insight by medical professionals and their inability to listen to patients’ wishes are discouraging, but this theme ultimately forms the crux of his findings and suggestions. His own very personal story of his father’s decline poignantly underscores this and motivated Dr. Gawande to write this book. He cites the need to ask the patient what is of most importance and again, to listen carefully. He stresses important options such as palliative care and hospice, both of which are too infrequently used. And most importantly, he reminds us to have this very personal important talk with family and health care providers, and to then listen.

**[Brave Genius: A Scientist, a Philosopher, and Their Daring Adventures from the French Revolution to the Nobel Prize](#)**

by Sean B. Carroll



***Brave Genius: A Scientist, a Philosopher, and Their Daring Adventures from the French Resistance to the Nobel Prize*** concerns the genius and courage of two little-known, but aspiring young thinkers during World War II. Albert Camus and Jacques Monod, both to become Nobel Prize Winners (philosopher and molecular biologist, respectively) were friends and fighters in the French Resistance. Carroll weaves the history of the period, with much emphasis on war and Nazi occupation, with the science and Monod’s research, and the remarkable personalities of Monod and Camus to create a biographical thriller about the spirit of man and of creative genius in art and science.

**[The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and its Dangerous Legacy](#)**

by David Hoffman



For those who practiced hiding under their desks at school to protect them from a nuclear blast, David Hoffman’s riveting Pulitzer Prize-winning story of the Cold War will bring that era back with immediacy. This is a recollection of the race between the West and the USSR for primacy and the means that they would use to get there—supported by the threat of weapons of mass destruction. Hoffman’s title, *The Dead Hand*, refers to the automatic retaliatory system developed by Leonid Brezhnev and the Soviet military to launch their strategic rockets after their command and control system no longer functioned or existed (think of the dead body whose hand and fingers are still twitching on the big red button). But there is also an excursion into the attempt by Soviet military scientists to develop super germs capable of devastating entire populations. There are heroes and villains, and black humor abounds, as the race unwinds and the nations work to dismantle these weapons systems before a miscalculation or accident resulted in historic destruction. Wonderfully written by Hoffman, this is a fascinating—and frightening—tale.

### **[Flash Boys: A Wall Street Revolt](#)**

by Michael Lewis

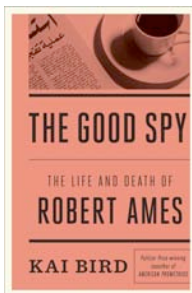


Several years ago, we held a Highlands session at the Santa Fe Institute to explore failure or collapse in complex systems. *Failure* was thought of as a part of a large system failing, which sometimes—but not always—leads to larger effects such as crashes. *Crashes*, in turn could propagate to collapses thanks to feedback effects among actors in the system. One way that this could happen was the destruction of information, such as through “algorithmic shredding” of trades that renders them impossible for competitors to parse, or parse information more quickly than anyone else through faster computing (i.e. [high-frequency trading](#)). These strategies create a complexity that it is analogous to warfare—what [John Boyd](#) called the strategic game of

question mark and question mark: You try to be non-anticipatable to both competitors and regulators. This year, author Michael Lewis, the best-selling author of *Liar's Poker* and *Money Ball*, delivered his latest effort—***Flash Boys: A Wall Street Revolt***. In it he tells us that the stock market is rigged for the benefit of insiders (not so shocking to many), and that since the crash of the financial markets it has become more controlled by the same actors who brought us the crash—the Big Banks. This is a result of high frequency trading, made possible by computer algorithms and a cable running from Chicago to New Jersey that would cut the time it takes data to travel that distance to 13 milliseconds. It doesn't sound like much but when computers are placing the trades, every millisecond provides an enormous financial advantage. This presented a serious advantage for the Big Banks. The main narrative concerns Brad Katsuyama, a trader at Royal Bank of Canada, who figured this out and responded by creating a fully transparent exchange (IEX), to ensure that trading information reaches all investors at the same time. This fast paced and exciting book (and controversial as well, as there are many in the financial world who disagree with his thesis) hints at the negative possibilities that await—and not just the unfair advantages of institutional players—including flash crashes and another market meltdown.

### [The Good Spy: The Life and Death of Robert Ames](#)

by Kai Bird



***The Good Spy*** recounts the story of Robert Ames, perhaps one of the most legendary and important agents in the history of the CIA, who died in a 1983 bomb explosion outside the U.S. embassy in Beirut. Ames was a remarkable person, an Arabist who built relationships across the delicate and dangerous lines in the Middle East. Among the contacts that he cultivated were Ali Hassan Salameh, PLO intelligence chief and the successor-in-waiting to its Chairman Yasir Arafat; this relationship forms the crux of the success story that Ames crafted in trying to move toward a peaceful settlement, but it was a risky one: Salameh was known to Israeli intelligence operatives as the Black September planner of the Munich Olympics terrorist attack and murder of Israeli athletes. Ames is seen as different from his peers in understanding the Arab culture and cause, and in fact, may have been too close to it. The story of Ames and Salameh—two seemingly opposite characters—is told in tragic terms of what might have been in the peace process, but also in the bookended deaths of each by car bombing, perhaps with

one leading to the other. Kai Bird, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, tells Ames's story in great richness after many years of research and interviews with his agency and embassy colleagues. Our Highlands colleague David Ignatius of the Washington Post, spent a great deal of time in Beirut during this period and covered the relationship between these two men in his wonderful and deeply characterized novel *Agents of Innocence*. Both of these books shed light on the shadows in their own ways and are most highly recommended.

### [How We Got To Now: Six Innovations That Made the Modern World](#)

by Steven Johnson

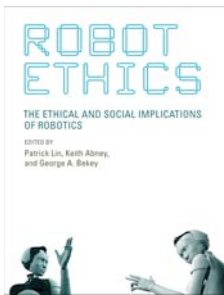


Steven Johnson is one of our most frequently reviewed authors on the Highlands annual reading list. He has written a number of remarkable books, many linked thematically by their attention to the concept of "connectedness". His praised works have included: *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software*; *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic-and How it Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World* (a personal favorite of ours); and *Where Good Ideas Come From: the Natural History of Innovation*, which was a foundational work in our research for a forum on imagination, creativity, and innovation. He is a wonderful storyteller, using fascinating and often little-known episodes to weave a larger narrative and make a major point. That is particularly true in his new book, ***How We Got to Now: Six Innovations That Made the Modern World***, which we liken to one of our all-time favorite and most highly recommended books, *Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk*, by the late Peter Bernstein. In *How We Got to Now*, Johnson tackles theories of innovation and concludes: "It was not a sudden epiphany or light bulb moment, but something much more leisurely, an idea taking shape piece by piece over time. It was what I like to call a 'slow hunch'—the anti-'light bulb moment,' the idea that comes into focus over decades, not seconds." From that thesis, Johnson follows six important ideas and how they came to affect our world in remarkable and unforeseen ways. His stories, like Bernstein's, are little known or unknown to most readers and captivate while teaching. While most of us think of the printing press (see Elizabeth Eisenstein's classic work, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*) as being largely responsible for the political and cultural transformation of Europe, Johnson uses the development of the printing press as a catalyst for a different development: better lenses for reading, which led to many other innovations, such as telescopes and microscopes (and our knowledge

of the skies and cells, at opposite ends of the lenses), all the way to modern day technologies. Johnson himself, as raconteur, shows up on camera in a new PBS series to tell his stories and lead us on a wonderful and immersive journey. Start with this book, and then go to the series—Steven Johnson is a delight.

### [Robot Ethics: The Ethical and Social Implications of Robotics](#)

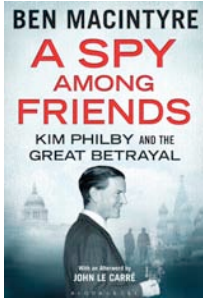
Patrick Lin & Keith Abney, editors



Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times technology journalist and Highlands alumnus John Markoff recently wrote: “AI and Robotics are going to have the impact on the world in the next decade that computers and the Internet have had in the last three decades.” The emerging future of artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics could have enormous implications for societies, economies, culture, and security. Oxford University economist Carl Benedikt Frey tells us that we may be witness to significant disruptions in labor markets and to the creation of new economic centers leading the way in these technologies. In Japan there is great attention being given to robotic caregivers and companions in homes. There is also significant attention being paid to robotic agents augmenting or supplanting soldiers in a new kind of conflict. Whatever the changes, they will be surprising and potentially transformational. *“As robots become more autonomous, the notion of computer-controlled machines facing ethical decisions is moving out of the realm of science fiction and into the real world” (The Economist).* Patrick Lin and Keith Abney have provided us with a set of first principles design questions in their edited volume, **Robot Ethics**, questions we ought to be asking ourselves as we head into this new world. Featuring exceptional and thoughtful essays by some of the world’s leading ethicists and roboticists, these essays ask probing questions such as: “Is there any kind of robot that should never be created; What are the boundaries between humans and robots; What is the role of lethality in autonomous systems; Should we allow active autonomous agents tasked with making life-and-death decisions on the battlefield?” This is a timely and important set of essays.

### [A Spy Among Friends: Kim Philby and the Great Betrayal](#)

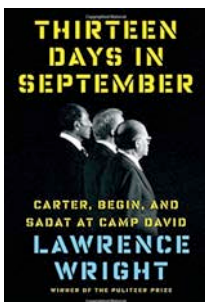
by Ben MacIntyre



Kim Philby is perhaps the best known and least understood spy of the twentieth century. In the exciting and almost fiction-like ***A Spy Among Friends: Kim Philby and the Great Betrayal***, author Ben MacIntyre takes us inside the formative experiences of Philby, an aristocratic young man of privilege, graduate of Cambridge, and son of a well-connected Foreign Service officer at the upper levels of Britain's class system. Philby, as did many of his peers, joined the old boys club that populated diplomacy and intelligence. Despite his romance with Communism at Cambridge, which was "sniffed at" by his father as a young man's experimenting with silliness, Philby found his way to selective postings of significance, including the MI6 officer in Washington. Philby used this perch to meet routinely with senior CIA leaders and provide unparalleled intelligence back to Moscow. His career was one of delicate balancing of his beliefs, his friendships, and his efforts to combat Communism all the while supporting it. MacIntyre takes us into the heart of the matter: what was the betrayal and why did Philby do it? In addition to passing information harmful to Britain and the US, the naming of activists and agents who lost their lives to Soviet forces following the end of the Second World War, there is the duplicity to the system that created and nurtured him. But why? Was he a true believer, or was he a narcissist who sought out the one way he could to go beyond the advantages he was given to put himself above the system and his peers? In the end, he escaped to Moscow before being outed. And therein, MacIntyre suggests, we come full circle. His old school chum and staunch protector at MI6, Nicholas Elliott, confronted him and learned the truth; but Elliott likely left the door open for Philby to escape to Moscow, because it seems, Britain would not stand yet another scandal and trial, and after all, he was "one of us".

### [Thirteen Days in September: Carter, Begin, and Sadat at Camp David](#)

by Lawrence Wright

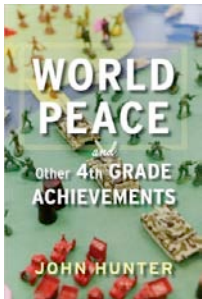




Earlier this year, Lawrence Wright, a Highlands alumnus and Pulitzer Prize-winner for his non-fiction book, *The Looming Tower*, alerted us his new play, "Camp David". This wonderful biographical drama of the 1978 Camp David conference examined the principals that together delivered a peace settlement between Israel and Egypt. It was an excellent piece of theater, with opening night attended by the man who brokered the deal--President Jimmy Carter (as well as a quiet force in the Camp David success, Rosalynn Carter). But Wright took it further, producing a richly detailed book, ***Thirteen Days in September: Carter, Begin, and Sadat at Camp David***, that laid out the storyline in much greater context underlying all of the personal interactions. Front and center are President and Rosalynn Carter, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, with support from Moshe Dayan, Zbigniew Brzezinski and others. Wright captures the personalities of each and how their character traits played a role in moving forward, or not moving at all. He finds in the simplest details, the essence of trust and mistrust in the air, and the courage of men risking everything in this daring two-week conversation and negotiation; he is a great writer who, in all his work, seems to capture the heroic in people.

### [World Peace & Other Fourth Grade Achievements](#)

by John Hunter



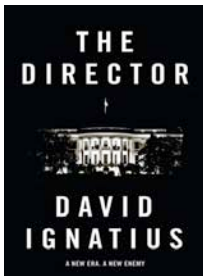
Melanie Greenberg, the CEO of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, was a featured reviewer on our reading list last year. In working with Chip Hauss and designer Ann Pendleton-Jullian (also a guest reviewer last year) on a reframing of the concept of peacebuilding, together they discussed "world building", design, and games as key components helping them to arrive at a new framework. Along came elementary school teacher John Hunter with the story of his own journey, *World Peace and Other 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Achievements* to describe his teaching *and* learning experience with his fourth grade classes over the course of more than two decades. Hunter found an innovative way to teach the many core subjects that his students had to master while involving them in a great problem solving adventure along the way, encouraging their learning, leadership, and decision making on complex real world problems. He invented a "world", a plexiglass cube of four layers from the oceans to the stars and everything in between, populated it with nations, groups, organizations, ecologies, conflicts, resources, poverty, and wealth, and appointed his fourth grade students to various roles from prime minister to general to "weather goddess", and then stood back and watched as they worked together to solve

the world's most intractable problems. What they learned and how they learned it will astound you. This is a most valuable and inspirational book.

## FICTION

### [The Director](#)

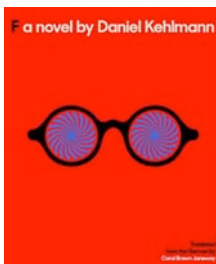
by David Ignatius



David Ignatius is a master of espionage novels whose work has been described as a “*first-rate achievement in the best tradition of Graham Greene*”. Of particular note are 1987’s *Agents of Innocence* (the fictional account of American CIA agent Robert Ames in this year’s non-fiction pick, *The Good Spy*), *Body of Lies*, and *Bloodmoney*. In 2009 Ignatius crossed into the tech realm with a prescient novel, *The Increment*, that dealt with a scheme to place a virus into Iranian nuclear labs on the way to producing a nuclear weapon. This year, with his novel ***The Director***, Ignatius ponders the idea of a hacker who walks into a consulate to inform the resident agent that the CIA had been hacked. A hacker is inside the intelligence community (this was researched and written before the Snowden affair unfolded); this is the digital version of a mole in the intelligence community, who has access to everything on the network. This is the nightmare that the new Director of the CIA faces as he settles into his job. David Ignatius continues to write about the world of intelligence and espionage, whether it is the analog world of car bombs in Beirut or the digital world of computer viruses or hackers, better than any writer on the contemporary scene. His stories, stretching from his first novel, *Agents of Innocence*, to his latest, *The Director*, take us through the shadows and mirrors to see more clearly behind the headlines.

### [F: A Novel](#)

by Daniel Kehlmann



Daniel Kehlmann, a young German author who burst onto the literary scene with the award-winning *Measuring the World*, has followed with a brilliant puzzle of a novel, *F*. It is a Rubik's Cube of a story, with each character and each circumstance twisting back onto each other. In the opening pages we meet Arthur Friedland, a failed novelist, who take his three young sons to a hypnotist's performance. Arthur says, "It doesn't work on me", though he allows, "I believe people can persuade each other of anything". From that moment onstage with the hypnotist, nothing is ever again the same for Arthur or his sons. On returning home, Arthur cleans out the joint bank account, takes his passport and disappears, not to be heard from again for decades. In the ensuing chapters we meet the three sons decades later, each in their own voice: a priest (who loses his faith), a financial wizard (who commits fraud), and an artist (who lives by forging the work of a reclusive painter). And like the Rubik's cube (which the priestly son keeps with him at all times), we find each of these different narratives curving around and back onto each other, as they wrestle with what is fate or belief in the future. Like the best works of Michael Chabon (Pulitzer Prize-winner for *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*) or David Mitchell (the Man Booker Literary Prize-winner for *Cloud Atlas*), Kehlmann delivers a fascinating series of characters in a "twisty puzzle".

### [The Martian](#)

by Andy Weir



***The Martian***, by Andy Weir, is part Tom Clancy and part NASA tech manual. *The Martian* is a fast-paced, terrifically entertaining novel about an astronaut, presumed dead, who is stranded alone on Mars and must survive without hope of rescue for many months. The fun's in the details - everything from how to tell Earth he's still alive to how to stay that way with insufficient food and oxygen. You'll be dusting off your chemistry text by the third chapter to play along at home.

### [The Peripheral](#)

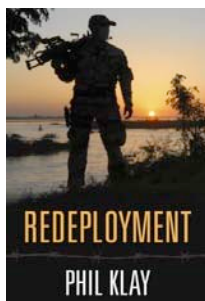
by William Gibson



William Gibson has always been a step or three ahead, identifying “nodes” of the future and weaving them into a compelling narrative of where we might be headed, and in retrospect, being remarkably close (*Neuromancer*, *Idoru*, *Pattern Recognition*, *Zero History*). He is famously quoted: “The future is already here—it’s just not evenly distributed”. With his latest work of fiction, ***The Peripheral***, Gibson takes us to a story of two futures, one set thirty years out, and the other farther beyond. These are connected, colliding worlds traversed by hacked-together time travel. Beginning with a murder that appears too real to be a simulation, this event draws us into a world that is mesmerizing and inexplicable. A must for all Gibson fans; if you have not had the pleasure of wading into Gibson’s world, *The Peripheral* is a great entry node (or peripheral, in his lexicon).

### **[Redeployment](#)**

by Phil Klay



***Redeployment*** is a gut wrenching collection of short stories by first-time author Phil Klay, a Marine veteran of Iraq. While these vivid and often heartbreaking stories are categorized as fiction, each told from the perspective of a different voice, Klay pulls the reader into both very real and surreal worlds. He exposes us to both the mundane and frequently terrifying and heartbreaking worlds of these Marines at home and in battle. These are powerful stories—not for the squeamish—told eloquently and in the mostly profane style of young Marines surrounded by death and stress. Klay writes:

*“Somebody said combat is 99 percent sheer boredom and 1 percent pure terror. They weren’t an MP in Iraq. On the roads I was scared all the time. Maybe not pure terror. That’s for when the IED actually goes off. But a kind of low-grade terror that mixes with the boredom. So it’s 50 percent boredom and 49 percent normal terror,*

*which is a general feeling that you might die at any second and that everybody in this country wants to kill you”.*

Sure to be a major award-winning book on many year-end lists, *Redeployment* is destined to be a classic of war literature.