



HONEYBEE CAPITAL FOUNDATION

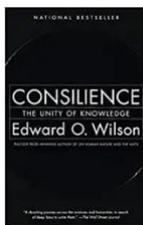
WINTER BOOK LIST 2022

Dear friends,

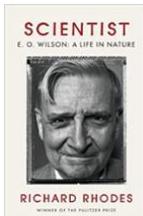
I can tell that I'm emerging from some sort of general malaise, because reading is once more a joyful pastime and an expansive exploration. Having said that, I can't help but note that many of this list's entries are bittersweet, since they are inspired by recent passing of the authors – among them, E.O. Wilson, bell hooks, Barry Lopez, Keri Hulme, and Joan Didion. May we celebrate their lives by reflecting on the gifts of their work and their enduring relevance in our world.

Here's to the new year – may it bring joy and peace to all.

BOOKS THAT HELP US TO CONSIDER



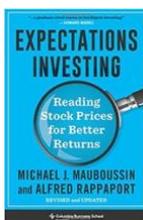
[CONSILIENCE, E.O. Wilson](#)



[SCIENTIST, Richard Rhodes](#)

The sad news of E.O. Wilson's passing coincides with the final edits for this year-end list, and so with gratitude I highlight my very favorite of Wilson's many wonderful publications: *Consilience*. This book confirmed for me the value of exploring at the edges and intersections - of academic fields, of ideas, of ecosystems - and offered scientific endorsement for the concept of looking to nature for wisdom. More than any traditional investment guru, Wilson has informed my professional focus and inspired countless others to explore with enthusiasm and commitment.

The newly released biography of Wilson, *Scientist*, has received strong reviews, and is next up on my winter reading list.



[EXPECTATIONS INVESTING, Michael Mauboussin and Al Rappaport](#)

It is rare that an investment classic stands the test of time, and even more unusual to see an update that reveals newly illuminated relevance. This book reminds us that investing is so much more interesting than speculation-oriented soundbites, and that our most perplexing questions can be approached with care and analytical acumen. I especially appreciate the authors' focus on valuation (not just multiples) and on the essential insight that understanding can be gained by working backwards to see

what expectations are already reflected in a stock price. There are also real-life learning tools linked to the publication, so that practitioners can easily link to models and methods that can be used in our own practice. For anyone who aims to make thoughtful investment decisions, this book is full of essential and foundational wisdom.



GREAT MENTAL MODELS, VOLUME 3: SYSTEMS & MATHEMATICS, Farnam Street, Rhiannon Beaubien, Rosie Leizrowice

Fans of the Farnam Street organization will instantly recognize this as the third volume in the group's series ([Volume One](#) focused on General Thinking Concepts and [Volume Two](#) on Physics, Chemistry, and Biology). All of these publications have value that goes beyond mere compilation: concepts are illustrated in relevant ways, and interconnections are clear. In this latest volume, I especially appreciate the combination of systems *and* mathematics, so that concepts like feedback loops and systems failures are considered side by side with compounding, scale, and sample sizes. [Farnam Street's](#) broader purpose - developing a library of mental models to foster better thinking and decision-making — shines through these volumes, to great effect.



THE COMPLEX ALTERNATIVE: COMPLEXITY SCIENTISTS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, David Krakauer and Geoffrey West

The community of Santa Fe Institute scientists has illuminated many aspects of the pandemic in clear, provocative, and original ways, without settling for false simplicity. This book is a real-time record of conversations and explorations that took place from early 2020 through fall of 2021, valuable both for the content itself and also as a case study of what complexity science can contribute to the urgent and emergent issues of our time.

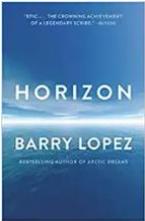


IMPACT: RESHAPING CAPITALISM TO DRIVE REAL CHANGE, Sir Ronald Cohen

Like many developing fields, sustainable investing, ESG analysis, and impact investing have created an insiders' language all their own, and the accelerating machinery of reporting and regulation threaten to squash the original intentions of practitioners. In this book, Sir Ronnie provides a helpful tour of the broader landscape, reviewing the potential for entrepreneurs, governments, investors, and citizens to accelerate positive impact within our work – not as an adjunct activity or as a luxurious benevolence, but at the heart of our endeavors. Given his own history as a venture capital and private equity leader (Cohen founded Apax partners), the perspectives here have a fluency that moves between system-level analysis and operational-level observation with ease, making the book both aspirational and practical. If you are looking for a clear-eyed view of what is emerging “beyond ESG,” this book is a useful reference.

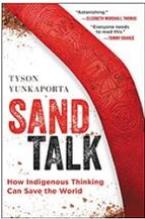
BOOKS THAT HELP US TO CONNECT

One reason I love compiling these lists is that they reveal patterns in my own life... turns out that over this past year (and more), the combination of covid + climate has pulled me toward a huge stack of books about our natural world. Some are deeply personal, some science-first, some have a strong spiritual underpinning... some a combination of all three. In a time of disconnection, these books have helped me to stay rooted.



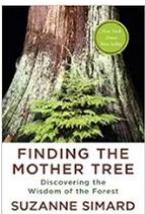
HORIZON, Barry Lopez

At its core, this book is a memoir told in place, a deep exploration of Lopez' experiences in different landscapes. But rather than being self-centered, it is place-centered, and this makes all the difference. Lopez conveys complex history in a subtle way, and does not paper over the sorrows – through all of this, his love of place shines through.



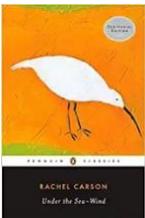
SAND TALK, Tyson Yunkaporta

This is the kind of book that makes you want to race ahead to soak up the breadth of its wisdom, and also simultaneously to slow down so that you can appreciate the depth. Tyson is an academic and member of the Apalech clan in northern Queensland, and is more interested in bringing Indigenous perspective to the current state of the world than in putting it on a romantic and separate pedestal. I find that a short paragraph cannot effectively convey that this is one of the most important and impactful books I've read in years.



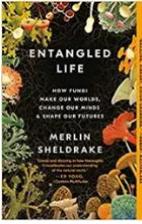
FINDING THE MOTHER TREE, Suzanne Simard

I have been eagerly following Suzanne Simard's work on forest networks since first hearing of the "wood-wide web" that she has researched for decades. This new publication is part autobiography, part history of science, part research report, and part love letter to the forest. Just as interesting as the summary of the long arc of Simard's research is the personal story that runs alongside it, with lots of twists and turns and ample evidence of the challenges of being a different kind of person asking a different kind of question. Like Carson's Sea-Wind, Simard's Mother Tree has been critiqued for personifying the forest relationships she studies. But the storytelling helps us to better grasp the science, and if we are going to create metaphors to understand the natural world, it is probably a good idea for the scientists to be part of the creation.



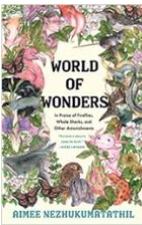
UNDER THE SEA-WIND, Rachel Carson

Many know Carson's Silent Spring, but Under the Sea-Wind is her own self-described favorite, a scientific work disguised as an oceanic novel (or vice versa), and the first of her "sea trilogy." The creatures in Carson's descriptions are imbued with life, as she describes their seasons and interactions and homes. Yes, perhaps it personifies a fish to give him a name and inner thoughts, but it also makes us love him, and it helps us to appreciate the science that's conveyed... all in all, a wonderful combination.



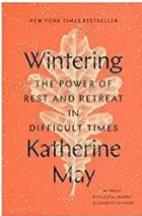
[ENTANGLED LIFE: HOW FUNGI MAKE OUR WORLDS, CHANGE OUR MINDS, AND SHAPE OUR FUTURES, Merlin Sheldrake](#)

I recently viewed a [video](#) where Merlin Sheldrake was cooking up a dish of mushrooms that had sprouted from the pages of his own book (intentionally seeded), so that he could “eat my own words.” Maybe this is all the recommendation needed for this glorious book! One of my favorite themes is, “fungi will save us all,” and this book explores some of the reasons why, from their vital roles in ecosystems to medicines to building materials. There is so much to learn from the world just under our feet, and who better to learn it from than a man named Merlin Sheldrake? This book is well-matched with the movie [Fantastic Fungi](#), from the incredible Louie Schwartzberg.



[WORLD OF WONDERS: IN PRAISE OF FIREFLIES, WHALE SHARKS, AND OTHER ASTONISHMENTS, Aimee Nezhukumatathil](#)

Aimee is a self-described nature nerd and a poet, and her relationships with the natural world shine through each of her observations. Part memoir, part naturalist essays, entirely delightful.



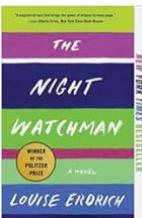
[WINTERING, Katherine May](#)

“To everything there is a season.” The great gift of May’s writing is that she reminds us that we are not required to rush through or reject the winters, the fallow times in our own lives. Seasonal cycles of all sorts offer different ways to recover, restore, and grow, and are not just interruptions in a linear life path. May offers examples from history, cultural and faith traditions, the natural world, and personal experience, all of which leave the reader feeling comforted and un-alone. One of my favorite – and most needed - reads of the past two years.

This conversation with Krista Tippett is a terrific complement to the book:

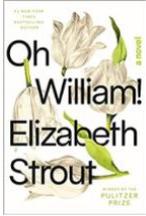
<https://onbeing.org/programs/katherine-may-how-wintering-replenishes/>

BOOKS THAT HELP US TO IMAGINE



[THE NIGHT WATCHMAN, Louise Erdrich](#)

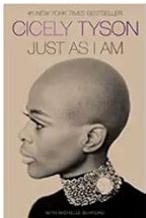
I’ve discussed this book with a few friends, and each of us had different highlights and summary comments. One of us focused on the backdrop of government action against the Chippewa Turtle Mountain people, one focused on the central character who was inspired by Erdrich’s own grandfather, one focused on a love story within, one focused on the relationship between sisters. This is the sign of a great book, that everyone could find a specific point of connection and meaning and resonance, while all also benefited from the whole.



[OH, WILLIAM! Elizabeth Strout](#)

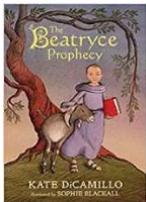
By now I feel like I know the people in Elizabeth Strout's books intimately, as if I've grown up in the same communities with them and witnessed both their inner and outer worlds. *Oh, William!* centers on the connection between Lucy Barton and her ex-husband William, and Strout conveys the subtlety and complexity and pain and humor of human relationships in a terrifically matter-of-fact way, illustrating both the smallness and grandness of life in one swoop. Like Strout's other writing, I left this book feeling like I'd visited with some especially dear and sometimes trying friends – the kind of friends that are family.

This book is the third part of a trio with [My Name is Lucy Barton](#) and [Anything is Possible](#).



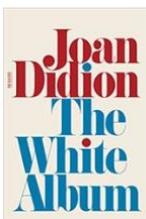
[JUST AS I AM, Cicely Tyson and Michelle Burford](#)

I had the great joy of seeing Cicely Tyson and James Earl Jones together in *The Gin Game* on Broadway in 2015, when she was 90 years old and he was 84; this sharpened my focus on Tyson's incredible talent and the arc of her career. Like any artist, the distillation of a few well-known performances is a small portion of a greater life, and I see her work in a different light since reading this book. This memoir was published just before Tyson's passing, which gives it an extra poignancy – especially if you listen to the audio version, where she narrates the introduction herself before handing off to the tremendous Viola Davis.



[THE BEATRYCE PROPHECY, Kate DiCamillo](#)

This is a kids' book, but not. My dear nephew gave it to me for Christmas and it was the perfect reading for the flight home, transporting me into a fairytale world that was familiar enough to be comforting, yet original enough to be interesting. If you need to be reminded of the clarity of courage, or the importance of steadfast companions, or the way that our stories intertwine across time and space, this is the book for you. Even better if read in a multi-generational setting with dear ones.



[THE WHITE ALBUM, Joan Didion](#)

Though I'd been a fan of more recent Didion publications, it was not until my time at divinity school that I read her earlier essays. In fact it was a search for the well-known quote, "We tell ourselves stories in order to live" that sent me to *The White Album*. This introductory passage proceeds by noting, "I am talking here about a time when I began to doubt the premises of all the stories I had ever told myself." I expect that many of us might experience a similar doubting time, when some stories need to be reinforced and others need to be revised, or even rejected. Didion's explorations might help us to navigate these questions, or at least to help us feel we are not alone.



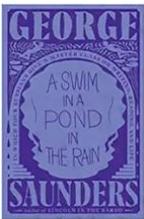
[THE BONE PEOPLE, Keri Hulme](#)

Hulme's *The Bone People* is a love story without a single grain of rom-com sugar, one that will wind through your subconscious and leave tendrils behind. My initial reading was on a magical trip to New Zealand many years ago, when the book also instilled in me a love of reading "in place" when I travel. This story was a revelation to me on first reading, and when I revisited it last year I was astonished all over again. The book itself is a story of resilience, as the manuscript was initially rejected numerous times before being accepted by Spiral, a collective of women that included Maori leadership... And then it won both the Booker Prize and Pegasus Prize.



[TRANSCENDENT KINGDOM, Yaa Gyasi](#)

Gyasi's latest novel is like a beautiful, finely finished cake. The story has an elegant and straightforward narrative structure on the surface, and also contains layers and layers of complexity within. Every few pages there is a phrase that stops me in my tracks, like, "I'd once been like that, so lonely that I craved further loneliness" or, "I saw my church, and I couldn't unsee." This is the story of a woman finding her way through science and faith and family and life and loss and love and solitude and connection - singular and universal.



[A SWIM IN A POND IN THE RAIN, George Saunders](#)

What could be better than a guided tour of some of the greatest short fiction ever written? A guided tour from a terrifically talented writer and a gifted teacher! The stories featured here, by Chekhov, Turgenev, and Gogol, are by turns delightful and mesmerizing, and Saunders' commentary allows us to see the "how" of the writing even as we are dazzled by the "what." Sometimes this kind of analysis detracts from the joy of great art, but Saunders infects us with his own fervor and expertise, leaving us both better informed and more enthusiastic readers.



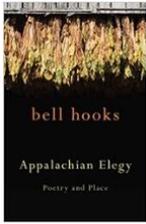
[THE MEMORY POLICE, Yoko Ogawa](#)

Oh my, this is a haunting and beautiful tale! Imagine a world where, bit by bit, things are disappeared, deleted – not just forbidden, but erased altogether, even from stories and memories. What lives on beyond the physical? Where is the edge of life? Many weeks later, this story is still curling through my thoughts and dreams.



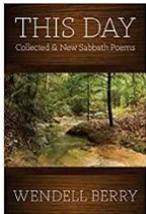
[THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN EASY JOB, Kikuo Tsumura](#)

Many of us have felt a little wander-y at times, unsure of whether we've found our life's work, or even a fitting occupation. Tsumura takes this exploration a bit further, following a seeker from one slightly spooky temp assignment to the next, highlighting the thin veneer between the mundane and the metaphysical. This book would be terrifically matched with [Convenience Store Woman](#), by Sayaka Murata, or [anything by Murakami](#).



APPALACHIAN ELEGY, bell hooks

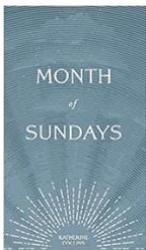
My first encounter with bell hooks' scholarship was way back in my college years, when I read *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* as part of an economics class. To this day, every time I see the word "intersectionality" I say a thank you to her, for helping my young mind to begin to expand to concepts of "and" instead of "or." More recently I've come to appreciate hooks' poetry, too – most especially her *Appalachian Elegy*, which conveys the essence of place in such a precise, powerful, and personal way. These poems make an interesting pairing with those of Wendell Berry (see below), which reference the same landscape.



THIS DAY: COLLECTED & NEW SABBATH POEMS, Wendell Berry

Perhaps all we need to know about this book is in the title – it is a collection of Wendell Berry's Sunday poems, written with the inspiration of "outdoor church" (he has often reported that he is mainly a bad-weather churchgoer, preferring to reflect outdoors whenever conditions permit). Berry notes of his writing process, "The poems come incidentally or they do not come at all. If the Muse leaves me alone, I leave her alone. To be quiet, even wordless, in a good place is a better gift than poetry."

...AND OUR OWN SMALL CONTRIBUTION!



MONTH OF SUNDAYS

by Katherine Collins with Shalon Ironroad and Christa Alexandra Designs
Month of Sundays invites us to reflect, restore, and revive, offering a pocket of calm in our buzzing, anxious world. All profits from this publication are dedicated to support of organizations that provide essential wisdom and service, addressing some of our greatest needs. Organizations supported include:

- Omega Institute ●Santa Fe Institute ●Equal Justice Initiative ●Last Mile Health●

A NOTE ON BOOKSELLERS

Alert readers may have noticed that many of our links connect you with a Very Large Online Retailer, and indeed, we appreciate that this retailer provides terrific customer service and helpful product detail. We are also loyal patrons of local booksellers, of course. In fact, one of my favorite ways to get to know a place is to seek out its bookstore. The IndieBound organization can help you find these local booksellers wherever you may be (including my personal favorite, Brookline Booksmith) – and if you are an e-loving person, they have handy online functions too.

<http://Brooklinebooksmith.com>

<http://www.indiebound.org>

STAYING IN TOUCH

If you'd like to stay in touch, we publish our short Sunday Best reflections every week. Just go to HoneybeeCapital.org and look for "subscribe" - it's a grey arrow on the right side of the screen for larger devices, and an orange banner at the bottom of the screen for smaller devices.