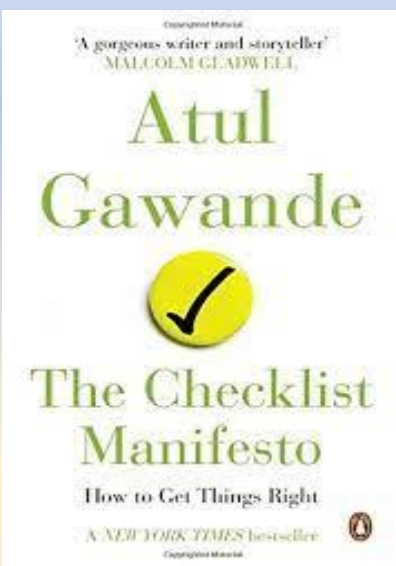
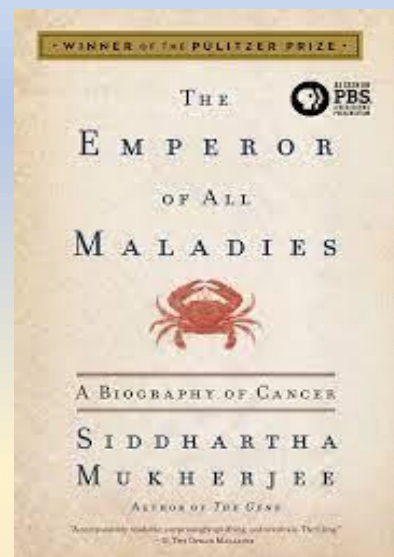


# Books I think everyone should read!



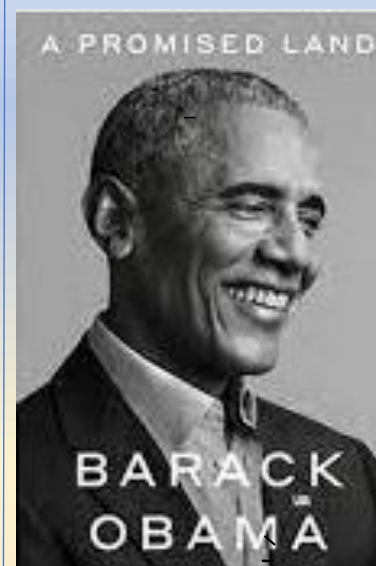
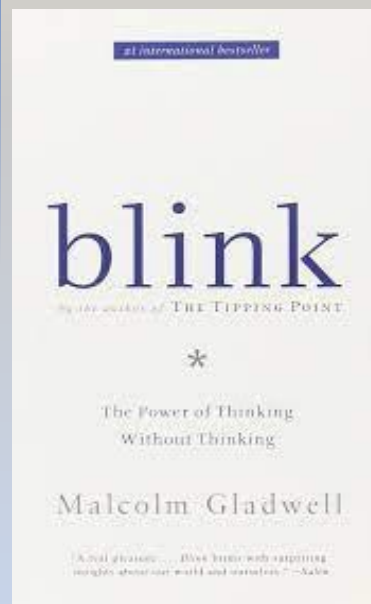
Our lives in this century are dominated by 2 things – the need for speed and the pursuit of happiness. At times, the elimination of variables would lead to a faster take on life and would actually bring us more happiness, as we lead our lives with the greatest amount of predictability. There are people that seem to have more than the designated 24 hours in their day. How do they get so much done and why can't we do the same? Maybe because in the rush of information technology, we have forgotten the humble *Checklist*. Using checklists, Dr. Atul Gawande has demonstrated in the operating field how the narrative can be controlled.

*Fake news!* We might purport to being savvy and street-smart, but have often succumbed to the cesspool of misinformation. If only someone could teach us to deconstruct data and apply it more smartly... The authors have shown us a way by isolating stray incidents in various walks of life and putting them in perspective by breaking down the data. Read this one and you shall know that only knowledge isn't enough, you should have clean, bias-free knowledge. This book is the first of the series and has a podcast by the same name, available on Spotify and Amazon Music.



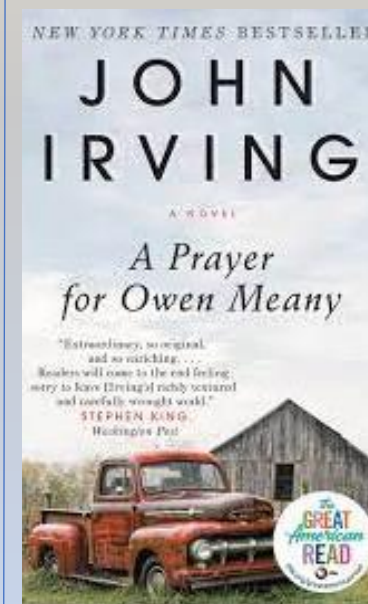
A disease that defies treatment and causes the afflicted and the entire family to suffer is certainly malignancy. This book labels it aptly as an emperor amongst diseases and offers the perspective of a cellular biologist. It acquaints the reader with the various origin stories and the various forms that the disease is likely to assume. It teaches cell biology superbly and you never feel at any point that you are reading a scientific premise. It has dealt with the various trends that the disease exhibits and how researchers must always be ahead of the game by covering all bases. It explores the newer trends in treatment of this malady by the use of vitamins, immunoglobulins and enzymatic preparations. It divests itself of all jingoism that surrounds cancer and gives the reader a definitive overview

We as a species have evolved from a single cell, and hold within ourselves the knowledge of ages. Though genetic makeup of a single cell amounts to zettabytes of data, we have stopped trusting our atavistic responses. Why has Dhoni achieved such immense measure of success, is it skill or his luck, or does he listen to his gut instincts? We often form a snap judgement of people instantaneously, little knowing why we did so. Incidents that play out later make us think back and realize, how our first impression was right. Another brilliant book by this very author is *The Tipping Point* and my favorite podcast by him is *Revisionist history*.



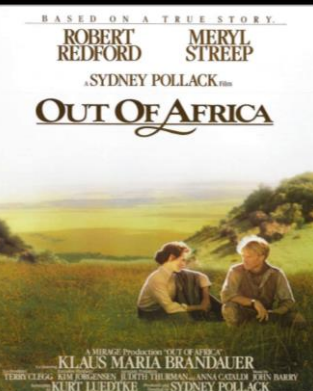
Did you ever stop to think that Obama grew up in a white household with no African American influence? His mother was white, his step-father was Asian and the grandparents who meant a lot to him were white! It wasn't until Obama joined university on mainland USA, that he was introduced to "*his kind of people*." His baptism into this world, so to say, was complete when he met Michelle and her family. Read how in spite of revamping the auto industry and thus kickstarting the American economy he is still vilified as a poor statesman. Read how disappointed he felt when his people let him down in the mid-term polls. Read of how his entire campaign was crowdfunded and was able to resist the might of first the Clintons and then the McCains.

Has a book ever made you want to go hug a loved one and made warmth radiate all over you? This American classic is one such book. It is a book along the lines of Huckleberry Finn and Mark Twain, but not quite there. Narrating the friendship of two boys who grew up in a town with a stone quarry, this book has a strong theme of unexpected strengths and subtle weaknesses, and how the selfless and selfish reside in each of us. It has its moments of silent humor and certain vividly described incidents that still make me chuckle inwardly. I had the good fortune of listening to it on Audible and the way it reeled me in, I read passages in print as well.



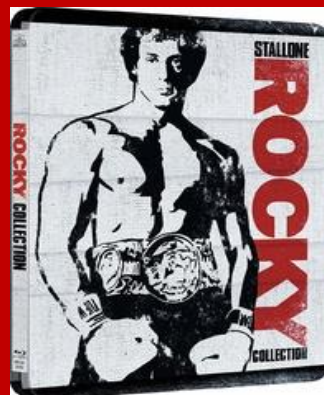
Fiction almost always imitates real life. Katharine Graham was the publisher of the Washington Post and reported the Watergate scandal in her paper. The aplomb with which she conducted herself through this exhilarating albeit trying time is a testament to her character. She was born at the end of the World War I and rode out the second war as the Jewish wife of an army man and defense consultant. Although born into a family of means, she faced the same bias that every Jew did. How she surmounted personal tragedy, to take over the family newspaper and stood firm against all manner of political pressure whilst reporting the Watergate Scandal is a tale for the ages.

# Movies that enchant and stay with you!



This is the only time we see two giants of the western cinema – Meryl Streep and Robert Redford, join forces on the screen. It has long been my contention that Robert Redford would have done much more work and far better work, if only he weren't so good looking. This movie is set in the times of the first world war and is directed by the master Sydney Pollack. It tells the tale of a couple who always have the wrong timing as far as their relationship goes. And when the stars finally align? What happens then? Watch this one if you want to know. This movie sets the bar for all romance movies, forever. The mastery with which the scenes are executed to the sweeping cinematography, to the captivating lead couple, it is just something one feels privileged to have witnessed. If good movie making is your jam, this one will delight on a lot of fronts. Similar watch would be The English Patient.

This series is a go to for anyone who loves sports movies. I love this series and for those of you who are interested, watch it on Amazon Prime, where it is currently streaming. Written by Sly Stallone and made with a passion for movies, the entire series is a must-watch. The series though labelled as a sports movie, has always seemed to me to be a series of love stories. Whatever, Rocky does, he does for his loved ones. First for his wife, then for his coach and then for his friend, so on and so forth! The shots and the music are iconic and have inspired cinephiles and sports lovers alike. Do watch these, if this is your genre and follow it up with the Creed series, in which Rocky coaches his rival/friend's son.



This is such a whacked-out movie that you have to love its guts. The performances are brilliant. The concept, the sheer scale of imagination and the flawless execution of this convoluted thinking makes this one a good watch. It might not be everybody's cup of tea, but if parallel universes and mind-boggling VFX are a thing you enjoy, please do watch this one on Sony Liv.

This one is searingly honest and addresses the issues of being let down by and letting down beloved ones, with a fine scope. What does one do when one perceives that life as we know it is over and there is nothing left to live for? One finds a reason to live on and maybe find a path that treads the lesser known. Brendan Fraser, embodies misery and sorrow and lost opportunities with consummate ease. He is a morbidly obese man who is on his way out and seeks to reconcile with his daughter whilst dealing with his mental and physical health issues. It is a story that stays with you for long. But this one is best avoided if entertainment is all you look for in cinema. It is available to watch on Sony Liv.



This is an anti-war movie derived from a book of the same name. War benefits none, is the larger picture, but what actually happens behind the lines and in the heads of the soldiers fighting the war is not so often discussed. This shows the mundane that makes up the grand. Think of it, soldiers do not fight a war to lose, they fight to defend or protect, they are not privy to the machinations that go on in higher echelons. This movie shows the simple delight of ordinary soldiers who do not actually realise what and why they are fighting. They do not think beyond the end of the war and their own petty gains. Snippets such as these make up the landscape of war and this one is worth savouring. Watch it on Netflix, if you are of the mind.

## Feel Good Movies

There are a few movies that pick one up or act as palate cleansers after a heavy watch/read. I shall just name a few from list, these are ones you could watch at any time and from any point in the film.

Tumhari Sulu – Vidya Balan at her nonchalant best

Piku – Amitabh making everyone dance to his tunes, but having no control over his own bowels. This one always puts a smile on my face, and the delight of watching Irrfan Khan in one of his last outings.

The Lunchbox – Irrfan again with a bewitching Nimrat, I still feel, years after having watched this one that they did meet up and elope to Bhutan)

Paddington 1 & 2 – Nothing like a talking bear to cheer you up and making you feel better by the scrapes he gets into

Kung Fu Panda – Watching Po awaken and realise his destiny is the best thing that could happen to you on a bad day!

The Intern – Robert de Niro as a hot gangster – Ye! Ye! But as a granddaddy doing an unpaid internship? Naaaaaa, that's what I thought till saw this one and loved it.

Marley and me – Story of an incorrigible dawg and his humans, just too awwww!

A Man called Otto – Based on Fredrik Backman's A man called Ove. I did think initially that Hanks was too sweet to bring on board the meanness that this character demanded, but he kind of grew on me, as he always does and I have already seen this one twice.



Recommendations by:

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