

# Empires Of Light By Jill Jonnes

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*The Wizard of Menlo Park* - Randall E. Stross  
2007-03-13

Thomas Edison's greatest invention? His own fame. At the height of his fame Thomas Alva Edison was hailed as "the Napoleon of invention" and blazed in the public imagination as a virtual demigod. Starting with the first public demonstrations of the phonograph in 1878 and extending through the development of incandescent light and the first motion picture cameras, Edison's name became emblematic of all the wonder and promise of the emerging age of technological marvels. But as Randall Stross makes clear in this critical biography of the man who is arguably the most globally famous of all Americans, Thomas Edison's greatest invention may have been his own celebrity. Edison was certainly a technical genius, but Stross excavates the man from layers of myth-making and separates his true achievements from his almost equally colossal failures. How much credit should Edison receive for the various inventions that have popularly been attributed to him—and how many of them resulted from both the inspiration and the perspiration of his rivals and even his own assistants? This bold reassessment of Edison's life and career answers this and many other important questions while telling the story of how he came upon his most famous inventions as a young man

and spent the remainder of his long life trying to conjure similar success. We also meet his partners and competitors, presidents and entertainers, his close friend Henry Ford, the wives who competed with his work for his attention, and the children who tried to thrive in his shadow—all providing a fuller view of Edison's life and times than has ever been offered before. *The Wizard of Menlo Park* reveals not only how Edison worked, but how he managed his own fame, becoming the first great celebrity of the modern age.

*Urban Forests* - Jill Jonnes 2016-09-27

"Far-ranging and deeply researched, *Urban Forests* reveals the beauty and significance of the trees around us." —Elizabeth Kolbert, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sixth Extinction* "Jonnes extols the many contributions that trees make to city life and celebrates the men and women who stood up for America's city trees over the past two centuries. . . . An authoritative account." —Gerard Helferich, *The Wall Street Journal* "We all know that trees can make streets look prettier. But in her new book *Urban Forests*, Jill Jonnes explains how they make them safer as well." —Sara Begley, *Time Magazine* A celebration of urban trees and the Americans—presidents, plant explorers, visionaries, citizen activists, scientists, nurserymen, and tree nerds—whose arboreal passions have shaped and

ornamented the nation's cities, from Jefferson's day to the present. As nature's largest and longest-lived creations, trees play an extraordinarily important role in our cities; they are living landmarks that define space, cool the air, soothe our psyches, and connect us to nature and our past. Today, four-fifths of Americans live in or near urban areas, surrounded by millions of trees of hundreds of different species. Despite their ubiquity and familiarity, most of us take trees for granted and know little of their fascinating natural history or remarkable civic virtues. Jill Jonnes's *Urban Forests* tells the captivating stories of the founding mothers and fathers of urban forestry, in addition to those arboreal advocates presently using the latest technologies to illuminate the value of trees to public health and to our urban infrastructure. The book examines such questions as the character of American urban forests and the effect that tree-rich landscaping might have on commerce, crime, and human well-being. For amateur botanists, urbanists, environmentalists, and policymakers, *Urban Forests* will be a revelation of one of the greatest, most productive, and most beautiful of our natural resources.

*Eiffel's Tower for Young People* - Jill Jonnes  
2019-05-28

*Eiffel's Tower for Young People* is a vivid, lively pageant of people and cultures meeting—and competing—on the world stage at the dawn of the modern era. The 1889 World's Fair was a worldwide event showcasing the cutting-edge cultural and technological accomplishments of the world's most powerful nations on the verge of a new century. France, with its long history of sophistication and cultivation and a new republican government, presented the Eiffel Tower, the world's tallest structure, crafted from eighteen thousand pieces of wrought iron and 2.5 million rivets, as a symbol of national pride and engineering superiority. The United States, with its brash, can-do spirit, full of pride in its frontier and its ingenuity, presented the rollicking Wild West

show of Buffalo Bill Cody and Annie Oakley, and the marvelous new phonograph of Thomas Edison. With historical photos throughout, outsized personalities, squabbling artists, and a sprinkling of royalty, this dramatic history opens a window to a piece of the past that, in its passions and politics, is an unforgettable portrait of a unique moment in history.

**Tesla: Inventor of the Modern** - Richard Munson  
2018-05-22

Tesla's inventions transformed our world, and his visions have continued to inspire great minds for generations. Nikola Tesla invented the radio, robots, and remote control. His electric induction motors run our appliances and factories, yet he has been largely overlooked by history. In *Tesla*, Richard Munson presents a comprehensive portrait of this farsighted and underappreciated mastermind. When his first breakthrough—alternating current, the basis of the electric grid—pitted him against Thomas Edison's direct-current empire, Tesla's superior technology prevailed. Unfortunately, he had little business sense and could not capitalize on this success. His most advanced ideas went unrecognized for decades: forty years in the case of the radio patent, longer still for his ideas on laser beam technology. Although penniless during his later years, he never stopped imagining. In the early 1900s, he designed plans for cell phones, the Internet, death-ray weapons, and interstellar communications. His ideas have lived on to shape the modern economy. Who was this genius? Drawing on letters, technical notebooks, and other primary sources, Munson pieces together the magnificently bizarre personal life and mental habits of the enigmatic inventor. Born during a lightning storm at midnight, Tesla died alone in a New York City hotel. He was an acute germaphobe who never shook hands and required nine napkins when he sat down to dinner. Strikingly handsome and impeccably dressed, he spoke eight languages and could recite entire books from memory. Yet Tesla's most famous inventions were not the

product of fastidiousness or linear thought but of a mind fueled by both the humanities and sciences: he conceived the induction motor while walking through a park and reciting Goethe's Faust. Tesla worked tirelessly to offer electric power to the world, to introduce automatons that would reduce life's drudgery, and to develop machines that might one day abolish war. His story is a reminder that technology can transcend the marketplace and that profit is not the only motivation for invention. This clear, authoritative, and highly readable biography takes account of all phases of Tesla's remarkable life.

**The Mercury 13** - Martha Ackmann 2004-07-13

For readers of The Astronaut Wives Club, *The Mercury 13* reveals the little-known true story of the remarkable women who trained for NASA space flight. In 1961, just as NASA launched its first man into space, a group of women underwent secret testing in the hopes of becoming America's first female astronauts. They passed the same battery of tests at the legendary Lovelace Foundation as did the Mercury 7 astronauts, but they were summarily dismissed by the boys' club at NASA and on Capitol Hill. The USSR sent its first woman into space in 1963; the United States did not follow suit for another twenty years. For the first time, Martha Ackmann tells the story of the dramatic events surrounding these thirteen remarkable women, all crackerjack pilots and patriots who sometimes sacrificed jobs and marriages for a chance to participate in America's space race against the Soviet Union. In addition to talking extensively to these women, Ackmann interviewed Chuck Yeager, John Glenn, Scott Carpenter, and others at NASA and in the White House with firsthand knowledge of the program, and includes here never-before-seen photographs of the Mercury 13 passing their Lovelace tests. Despite the crushing disappointment of watching their dreams being derailed, the Mercury 13 went on to extraordinary achievement in their lives: Jerrie Cobb, who began flying when she was so small she had to sit on pillows to see out of the cockpit,

dedicated her life to flying solo missions to the Amazon rain forest; Wally Funk, who talked her way into the Lovelace trials, went on to become one of the first female FAA investigators; Janey Hart, mother of eight and, at age forty, the oldest astronaut candidate, had the political savvy to steer the women through congressional hearings and later helped found the National Organization for Women. A provocative tribute to these extraordinary women, *The Mercury 13* is an unforgettable story of determination, resilience, and inextinguishable hope.

**The Company** - John Micklethwait 2005-01-11

Chosen by *BusinessWeek* as One of the Top Ten Business Books of the Year With apologies to Hegel, Marx, and Lenin, the basic unit of modern society is neither the state, nor the commune, nor the party; it is the company. From this bold premise, John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge chart the rise of one of history's great catalysts for good and evil. In a "fast-paced and well-written" work (*Forbes*), the authors reveal how innovations such as limitations on liability have permitted companies to rival religions and even states in importance, governing the flow of wealth and controlling human affairs—all while being largely exempt from the rules that govern our lives. *The Company* is that rare, remarkable book that fills a major gap we scarcely knew existed. With it, we are better able to make sense of the past four centuries, as well as the events of today.

**The Alchemy of Air** - Thomas Hager 2009-08-18

A sweeping history of tragic genius, cutting-edge science, and the Haber-Bosch discovery that changed billions of lives—including your own. At the dawn of the twentieth century, humanity was facing global disaster: Mass starvation was about to become a reality. A call went out to the world's scientists to find a solution. This is the story of the two men who found it: brilliant, self-important Fritz Haber and reclusive, alcoholic Carl Bosch. Together they discovered a way to make bread out of air, built city-sized factories, and saved millions of

lives. But their epochal triumph came at a price we are still paying. The Haber-Bosch process was also used to make the gunpowder and explosives that killed millions during the two world wars. Both men were vilified during their lives; both, disillusioned and disgraced, died tragically. The *Alchemy of Air* is the extraordinary, previously untold story of a discovery that changed the way we grow food and the way we make war—and that promises to continue shaping our lives in fundamental and dramatic ways.

**Empires of the Sky** - Alexander Rose 2020-04-28  
The Golden Age of Aviation is brought to life in this story of the giant Zeppelin airships that once roamed the sky—a story that ended with the fiery destruction of the Hindenburg. “Genius . . . a definitive tale of an incredible time when mere mortals learned to fly.”—Keith O’Brien, *The New York Times* At the dawn of the twentieth century, when human flight was still considered an impossibility, Germany’s Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin vied with the Wright Brothers to build the world’s first successful flying machine. As the Wrights labored to invent the airplane, Zeppelin fathered the remarkable airship, sparking a bitter rivalry between the two types of aircraft and their innovators that would last for decades, in the quest to control one of humanity’s most inspiring achievements. And it was the airship—not the airplane—that led the way. In the glittery 1920s, the count’s brilliant protégé, Hugo Eckener, achieved undreamed-of feats of daring and skill, including the extraordinary Round-the-World voyage of the Graf Zeppelin. At a time when America’s airplanes—rickety deathtraps held together by glue, screws, and luck—could barely make it from New York to Washington, D.C., Eckener’s airships serenely traversed oceans without a single crash, fatality, or injury. What Charles Lindbergh almost died doing—crossing the Atlantic in 1927—Eckener had effortlessly accomplished three years before the Spirit of St. Louis even took off. Even as the Nazis sought to

exploit Zeppelins for their own nefarious purposes, Eckener built his masterwork, the behemoth Hindenburg—a marvel of design and engineering. Determined to forge an airline empire under the new flagship, Eckener met his match in Juan Trippe, the ruthlessly ambitious king of Pan American Airways, who believed his fleet of next-generation planes would vanquish Eckener’s coming airship armada. It was a fight only one man—and one technology—could win. Countering each other’s moves on the global chessboard, each seeking to wrest the advantage from his rival, the struggle for mastery of the air was a clash not only of technologies but of business, diplomacy, politics, personalities, and the two men’s vastly different dreams of the future. *Empires of the Sky* is the sweeping, untold tale of the duel that transfixed the world and helped create our modern age.

*Eiffel’s Tower* - Jill Jonnes 2009-04-30  
The story of the world-famous monument and the extraordinary world’s fair that introduced it, by the author of *Conquering Gotham* and *Urban Forests* In this first general history of the Eiffel Tower in English, Jill Jonnes-acclaimed author of *Conquering Gotham*-offers an eye-opening look not only at the construction of one of the modern world’s most iconic structures, but also the epochal event that surrounded its arrival as a wonder of the world. In this marvelously entertaining portrait of Belle Époque France, fear and loathing over Eiffel’s brash design share the spotlight with the celebrities that made the 1889 Exposition Universelle an event to remember—including Buffalo Bill and his sharpshooter Annie Oakley, Thomas Edison, and artists Whistler, Gauguin, and van Gogh. Eiffel’s Tower is a richly textured portrait of an era at the dawn of modernity, reveling in the limitless promise of the future.

**The Bounty** - Caroline Alexander 2004-05-25  
Has history been wrong for 200 years? Read the startling truth about the mutiny on the *Bounty*, its characters, causes, and aftermath. Television rights are now in development with Ridley Scott’s Scott

Free Productions. More than two centuries after Master's Mate Fletcher Christian led a mutiny against Lieutenant William Bligh on a small, armed transport vessel called *Bounty*, the true story of this enthralling adventure has become obscured by the legend. Combining vivid characterization and deft storytelling, Caroline Alexander shatters the centuries-old myths surrounding this story. She brilliantly shows how, in a desperate attempt to save one man from the gallows and another from ignominy, two powerful families came together and began to create the version of history we know today. The true story of the mutiny on the *Bounty* is an epic of duty and heroism, pride and power, and the assassination of a brave man's honor at the dawn of the Romantic age.

**AC/DC** - Tom McNichol 2011-01-06

*AC/DC* tells the little-known story of how Thomas Edison wrongly bet in the fierce war between supporters of alternating current and direct current. The savagery of this electrical battle can hardly be imagined today. The showdown between AC and DC began as a rather straightforward conflict between technical standards, a battle of competing methods to deliver essentially the same product, electricity. But the skirmish soon metastasized into something bigger and darker. In the *AC/DC* battle, the worst aspects of human nature somehow got caught up in the wires; a silent, deadly flow of arrogance, vanity, and cruelty. Following the path of least resistance, the war of currents soon settled around that most primal of human emotions: fear. *AC/DC* serves as an object lesson in bad business strategy and poor decision making. Edison's inability to see his mistake was a key factor in his loss of control over the "operating system" for his future inventions?not to mention the company he founded, General Electric.

*The Code* - Margaret O'Mara 2020-07-07

One of New York Magazine's best books on Silicon Valley! The true, behind-the-scenes history of the people who built Silicon Valley and shaped Big Tech in America Long before Margaret O'Mara

became one of our most consequential historians of the American-led digital revolution, she worked in the White House of Bill Clinton and Al Gore in the earliest days of the commercial Internet. There she saw firsthand how deeply intertwined Silicon Valley was with the federal government--and always had been--and how shallow the common understanding of the secrets of the Valley's success actually was. Now, after almost five years of pioneering research, O'Mara has produced the definitive history of Silicon Valley for our time, the story of mavericks and visionaries, but also of powerful institutions creating the framework for innovation, from the Pentagon to Stanford University. It is also a story of a community that started off remarkably homogeneous and tight-knit and stayed that way, and whose belief in its own mythology has deepened into a collective hubris that has led to astonishing triumphs as well as devastating second-order effects. Deploying a wonderfully rich and diverse cast of protagonists, from the justly famous to the unjustly obscure, across four generations of explosive growth in the Valley, from the forties to the present, O'Mara has wrestled one of the most fateful developments in modern American history into magnificent narrative form. She is on the ground with all of the key tech companies, chronicling the evolution in their offerings through each successive era, and she has a profound fingertip feel for the politics of the sector and its relation to the larger cultural narrative about tech as it has evolved over the years. Perhaps most impressive, O'Mara has penetrated the inner kingdom of tech venture capital firms, the insular and still remarkably old-boy world that became the cockpit of American capitalism and the crucible for bringing technological innovation to market, or not. The transformation of big tech into the engine room of the American economy and the nexus of so many of our hopes and dreams--and, increasingly, our nightmares--can be understood, in Margaret O'Mara's masterful hands, as the story of one

California valley. As her majestic history makes clear, its fate is the fate of us all.

**The Power of Nothing to Lose** - William L. Silber  
2021-08-17

Following books by Malcolm Gladwell and Dan Ariely, noted economics professor William L. Silber explores the Hail Mary effect, from its origins in sports to its applications to history, nature, politics, and business. A quarterback like Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers gambles with a Hail Mary pass at the end of a football game when he has nothing to lose -- the risky throw might turn defeat into victory, or end in a meaningless interception. Rodgers may not realize it, but he has much in common with figures such as George Washington, Rosa Parks, Woodrow Wilson, and Adolph Hitler, all of whom changed the modern world with their risk-loving decisions. In *The Power of Nothing to Lose*, award-winning economist William Silber explores the phenomenon in politics, war, and business, where situations with a big upside and limited downside trigger gambling behavior like with a Hail Mary. Silber describes in colorful detail how the American Revolution turned on such a gamble. The famous scene of Washington crossing the Delaware on Christmas night to attack the enemy may not look like a Hail Mary, but it was. Washington said days before his risky decision, "If this fails I think the game will be pretty well up." Rosa Parks remained seated in the white section of an Alabama bus, defying local segregation laws, an act that sparked the modern civil rights movement in America. It was a life-threatening decision for her, but she said, "I was not frightened. I just made up my mind that as long as we accepted that kind of treatment it would continue, so I had nothing to lose." The risky exploits of George Washington and Rosa Parks made the world a better place, but demagogues have inflicted great damage with Hail Marys. Towards the end of World War II, Adolph Hitler ordered a desperate counterattack, the Battle of the Bulge, to stem the Allied advance into Germany. He said, "The outcome of the battle would spell

either life or death for the German nation." Hitler failed to change the war's outcome, but his desperate gamble inflicted great collateral damage, including the worst wartime atrocity on American troops in Europe. Silber shares these illuminating insights on these figures and more, from Woodrow Wilson to Donald Trump, asylum seekers to terrorists and rogue traders. Collectively they illustrate that downside protection fosters risky undertakings, that it changes the world in ways we least expect.

**Empires of Light** - Jill Jonnes 2003-08-19

The gripping history of electricity and how the fateful collision of Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse left the world utterly transformed. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, three brilliant and visionary titans of America's Gilded Age—Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse—battled bitterly as each vied to create a vast and powerful electrical empire. In *Empires of Light*, historian Jill Jonnes portrays this extraordinary trio and their riveting and ruthless world of cutting-edge science, invention, intrigue, money, death, and hard-eyed Wall Street millionaires. At the heart of the story are Thomas Alva Edison, the nation's most famous and folksy inventor, creator of the incandescent light bulb and mastermind of the world's first direct current electrical light networks; the Serbian wizard of invention Nikola Tesla, elegant, highly eccentric, a dreamer who revolutionized the generation and delivery of electricity; and the charismatic George Westinghouse, Pittsburgh inventor and tough corporate entrepreneur, an industrial idealist who in the era of gaslight imagined a world powered by cheap and plentiful electricity and worked heart and soul to create it. Edison struggled to introduce his radical new direct current (DC) technology into the hurly-burly of New York City as Tesla and Westinghouse challenged his dominance with their alternating current (AC), thus setting the stage for one of the eeriest feuds in American corporate history, the

War of the Electric Currents. The battlegrounds: Wall Street, the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, Niagara Falls, and, finally, the death chamber—Jonnes takes us on the tense walk down a prison hallway and into the sunlit room where William Kemmler, convicted ax murderer, became the first man to die in the electric chair.

*Muhammad* - Juan Cole 2018-10-09

In the midst of the dramatic seventh-century war between two empires, Muhammad was a spiritual seeker in search of community and sanctuary. Many observers stereotype Islam and its scripture as inherently extreme or violent—a narrative that has overshadowed the truth of its roots. In this masterfully told account, preeminent Middle East expert Juan Cole takes us back to Islam's—and the Prophet Muhammad's—origin story. Cole shows how Muhammad came of age in an era of unparalleled violence. The eastern Roman Empire and the Sasanian Empire of Iran fought savagely throughout the Near East and Asia Minor. Muhammad's profound distress at the carnage of his times led him to envision an alternative movement, one firmly grounded in peace. The religion Muhammad founded, Islam, spread widely during his lifetime, relying on soft power instead of military might, and sought armistices even when militarily attacked. Cole sheds light on this forgotten history, reminding us that in the Qur'an, the legacy of that spiritual message endures. A vibrant history that brings to life the fascinating and complex world of the Prophet, Muhammad is the story of how peace is the rule and not the exception for one of the world's most practiced religions.

**Conquering Gotham: A Gilded Age Epic** - Jill Jonnes 2009-05-01

As the 19th cent. ends, PA Railroad pres. Alexander Cassatt seeks some way -- other than fleets of ferries from N.J. -- to bring the PRR's millions of passengers into water-locked Gotham. By 1901 the PRR will build a monumental system of electrified tunnels under the Hudson River, Manhattan, and the East River to Long Island, capping them with

the crown jewel of PA Station. And so begins a high-stakes Gilded Age drama pitting the nation's greatest corp. against the forces of Tammany N.Y. This narrative brings to life the feats of politicking and engineering that forever changed N.Y.'s physical and psychological geography. In late 1910, PA Station, Charles McKim's great Doric temple to transportation, opens in all its magnificence. Photos. *Conquering Gotham* - Jill Jonnes 2007-04-19 "Superb. [A] first-rate narrative" (The Wall Street Journal) about the controversial construction of New York's beloved original Penn Station and its tunnels, from the author of *Eiffel's Tower* and *Urban Forests*. As bestselling books like Ron Chernow's *Titan* and David McCullough's *The Great Bridge* affirm, readers are fascinated with the grand personalities and schemes that populated New York at the close of the nineteenth century. *Conquering Gotham* re-creates the riveting struggle waged by the great Pennsylvania Railroad to build Penn Station and the monumental system of tunnels that would connect water-bound Manhattan to the rest of the continent by rail. Historian Jill Jonnes tells a ravishing tale of snarling plutocrats, engineering feats, and backroom politicking packed with the most colorful figures of Gilded Age New York. *Conquering Gotham* will be featured in an upcoming episode of PBS's *American Experience*.

*The Electric War* - Mike Winchell 2019-01-22

The spellbinding true account of the scientific competition to light the world with electricity. In the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, a burgeoning science called electricity promised to shine new light on a rousing nation. Inventive and ambitious minds were hard at work. Soon that spark was fanned, and a fiery war was under way to be the first to light—and run—the world with electricity. Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor of direct current (DC), engaged in a brutal battle with Nikola Tesla and George Westinghouse, the inventors of alternating current (AC). There would be no ties in this race—only a winner and a loser. The prize: a

nationwide monopoly in electric current.

Brimming with action, suspense, and rich historical and biographical information about these brilliant inventors, here is the rousing account of one of the world's defining scientific competitions. A Christy Ottaviano Book

Tesla vs Edison - Nigel Cawthorne 2016-03-22

Nikola Tesla today is largely unknown and overlooked among the great scientists of the modern era. While Thomas Edison, the most famous inventor in American history, gets all the glory for discovering the light bulb. But it was his one-time assistant and life-long arch nemesis, Tesla, who made the breakthrough in alternating current electricity. Edison and Tesla carried on a bitter feud for years, but it was Tesla's AC generators that illuminated the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago under artificial light. Today all homes and electrical appliances run on Tesla's AC current. 120 years ago, they were billed as the 'Twin Wizards of Electricity', here Nigel Cawthorne chronicles the life and times of the two great men to help us finally decide just who really is the Electric King- Edison or Tesla?

**The Big Roads** - Earl Swift 2011-06-09

Discover the twists and turns of one of America's great infrastructure projects with this "engrossing history of the creation of the U.S. interstate system" (Los Angeles Times). It's become a part of the landscape that we take for granted, the site of rumbling eighteen-wheelers and roadside rest stops, a familiar route for commuters and vacationing families. But during the twentieth century, the interstate highway system dramatically changed the face of our nation. These interconnected roads—over 47,000 miles of them—are man-made wonders, economic pipelines, agents of sprawl, uniquely American symbols of escape and freedom, and an unrivaled public works accomplishment. Though officially named after President Dwight D. Eisenhower, this network of roadways has origins that reach all the way back to the World War I era, and *The Big Roads*—"the first thorough history of

the expressway system" (The Washington Post)—tells the full story of how they came to be. From the speed demon who inspired a primitive web of dirt auto trails to the largely forgotten technocrats who planned the system years before Ike reached the White House to the city dwellers who resisted the concrete juggernaut when it bore down on their neighborhoods, this book reveals both the massive scale of this government engineering project, and the individual lives that have been transformed by it. A fast-paced history filled with fascinating detours, "the book is a road geek's treasure—and everyone who travels the highways ought to know these stories" (Kirkus Reviews).

**The Imagineers of War** - Sharon Weinberger 2017

Founded in 1958 in response to the launch of Sputnik, DARPA has been responsible for countless inventions and technologies that have evolved from the agency's mission- forward-thinking solutions to the Pentagon's challenges. Sharon Weinberger gives us a riveting account of DARPA's successes and failures, useful innovations and wild-eyed schemes- we see how the nuclear threat sparked investment in computer networking, which led to the Internet, as well as plans to power a missile-seeking particle beam by draining the Great Lakes...how, in Vietnam, DARPA developed technology for the world's first armed drones and was also responsible for Agent Orange... how DARPA's recent success with self-driving cars is counterbalanced with its disappointing contributions to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Weinberger has spoken to dozens of former DARPA and Pentagon officials--many of whom had never been interviewed before about their work with the agency--and synthesized countless documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. The result is a riveting history of a meeting point of science, technology, and politics.

*Edison Vs. Tesla, the Battle Over Their Last Invention* - Joel Martin 2017

"Thomas Edison closely following the alternative physics work of Albert Einstein and Max Planck,

convincing him that there was an entire reality unseen by the human eye. This led to the last and least-known of all Edison's inventions, the spirit phone. His former associate, now bitter rival, Nikola Tesla, was also developing at the same time a similar mysterious device. Edison vs. Tesla examines their quest to talk to the dead. It reveals: Edison's little-known near-death experience formed his theory that animate life forms don't die, but rather change the nature of their composition. It is this foundational belief that drove him to proceed with the spirit phone. Tesla monitored Edison's paranormal work, with both men racing to create a device that picked up the frequencies of discarnate spirits, what today is called EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomenon). Both men were way ahead of their time, delving into artificial intelligence and robotics. Although mystery and lore surround the details of the last decade of Edison's life, many skeptics have denied the existence of the mysterious spirit phone. The authors have researched both Edison's and Tesla's journals, as well as contemporary articles and interviews with the inventors to confirm that tests were actually done with this device. They also have the full cooperation of the Charles Edison fund, affording them access to rare photos and graphics to support their text. Edison vs. Tesla sheds light on this weird invention and demonstrates the rivalry that drove both men to new discoveries."-- Publisher's description.

City of Light - Lauren Belfer 2010-09-01

A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK It is 1901 and Buffalo, New York, stands at the center of the nation's attention as a place of immense wealth and sophistication. The massive hydroelectric power development at nearby Niagara Falls and the grand Pan-American Exposition promise to bring the Great Lakes "city of light" even more repute. Against this rich historical backdrop lives Louisa Barrett, the attractive, articulate headmistress of the Macaulay School for Girls. Protected by its powerful all-male board, "Miss Barrett" is treated as an equal by the men who control the life of the city. Lulled

by her unique relationship with these titans of business, Louisa feels secure in her position, until a mysterious death at the power plant triggers a sequence of events that forces her to return to a past she has struggled to conceal, and to question everything and everyone she holds dear. Both observer and participant, Louisa Barrett guides the reader through the culture and conflicts of a time and place where immigrant factory workers and nature conservationists protest violently against industrialists, where presidents broker politics, where wealthy "Negroes" fight for recognition and equality, and where women struggle to thrive in a system that allows them little freedom. Wrought with remarkable depth and intelligence, *City of Light* remains a work completely of its own era, and of ours as well. A stirring literary accomplishment, Lauren Belfer's first novel marks the debut of a fresh voice for the new millennium and heralds a major publishing event.

**American Colossus** - H. W. Brands 2011-10-04

From the two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, bestselling historian, and author of *Our First Civil War: a "first-rate" narrative history* (The New York Times) that brilliantly portrays the emergence, in a remarkably short time, of a recognizably modern America. *American Colossus* captures the decades between the Civil War and the turn of the twentieth century, when a few breathtakingly wealthy businessmen transformed the United States from an agrarian economy to a world power. From the first Pennsylvania oil gushers to the rise of Chicago skyscrapers, this spellbinding narrative shows how men like Morgan, Carnegie, and Rockefeller ushered in a new era of unbridled capitalism. In the end America achieved unimaginable wealth, but not without cost to its traditional democratic values.

The Last Days of Night - Graham Moore 2016

When electric light innovator Thomas Edison sues his only remaining rival for patent infringement, George Westinghouse hires untested Columbia Law School graduate Paul Ravath for a case fraught with

lies, betrayals, and deception.

*How the Post Office Created America* - Winifred Gallagher 2016-06-28

A masterful history of a long underappreciated institution, *How the Post Office Created America* examines the surprising role of the postal service in our nation's political, social, economic, and physical development. The founders established the post office before they had even signed the Declaration of Independence, and for a very long time, it was the U.S. government's largest and most important endeavor—indeed, it was the government for most citizens. This was no conventional mail network but the central nervous system of the new body politic, designed to bind thirteen quarrelsome colonies into the United States by delivering news about public affairs to every citizen—a radical idea that appalled Europe's great powers. America's uniquely democratic post powerfully shaped its lively, argumentative culture of uncensored ideas and opinions and made it the world's information and communications superpower with astonishing speed. Winifred Gallagher presents the history of the post office as America's own story, told from a fresh perspective over more than two centuries. The mandate to deliver the mail—then “the media”—imposed the federal footprint on vast, often contested parts of the continent and transformed a wilderness into a social landscape of post roads and villages centered on post offices. The post was the catalyst of the nation's transportation grid, from the stagecoach lines to the airlines, and the lifeline of the great migration from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It enabled America to shift from an agrarian to an industrial economy and to develop the publishing industry, the consumer culture, and the political party system. Still one of the country's two major civilian employers, the post was the first to hire women, African Americans, and other minorities for positions in public life. Starved by two world wars and the Great Depression, confronted with the country's increasingly anti-institutional mind-set, and struggling with its doubled mail volume, the

post stumbled badly in the turbulent 1960s.

Distracted by the ensuing modernization of its traditional services, however, it failed to transition from paper mail to email, which prescient observers saw as its logical next step. Now the post office is at a crossroads. Before deciding its future, Americans should understand what this grand yet overlooked institution has accomplished since 1775 and consider what it should and could contribute in the twenty-first century. Gallagher argues that now, more than ever before, the imperiled post office deserves this effort, because just as the founders anticipated, it created forward-looking, communication-oriented, idea-driven America.

*The Current War* - Adam Cline 2017-10-26

*The Current War: A Battle Story Between Two Electrical Titans, Thomas Edison And George Westinghouse* - 2nd Edition Grab this GREAT physical book now at a limited time discounted price! Here is brief intro about what you will going to find out...In the late 1880s and early 1890s, the introduction of electricity brought with it two competing systems of electric power transmission. A powerful individual backed each system. On one side was Thomas Edison, the savvy inventor and businessman. On the other side was inventor and industrialist George Westinghouse. The two of them got embroiled in a nasty confrontation as each of them fought to ensure his system would become the industry standard. In this book, Author Adam Cline gives a fascinating account of a commercial and technological feud that involved a public debate over the safety electricity, an aggressive and deceitful propaganda campaign and the introduction of the electric chair. Read on to find out what it would take to win the war of currents. Here Is What You'll Learn About... Basic idea how alternating current and direct current works Biography of Thomas Edison, George Westinghouse and Nikola Tesla Incidents before the current war Current war begins and how it gets muddy The results of the current war and who wins and loses After the current war... Much, much more! Order

your copy of this fantastic book today!

*Meet You in Hell* - Les Standiford 2006-06-13

Two founding fathers of American industry. One desire to dominate business at any price. "Masterful . . . Standiford has a way of making the 1890s resonate with a twenty-first-century audience."—USA Today "The narrative is as absorbing as that of any good novel—and as difficult to put down."—Miami Herald The author of *Last Train to Paradise* tells the riveting story of Andrew Carnegie, Henry Clay Frick, and the bloody steelworkers' strike that transformed their fabled partnership into a furious rivalry. Set against the backdrop of the Gilded Age, *Meet You in Hell* captures the majesty and danger of steel manufacturing, the rough-and-tumble of the business world, and the fraught relationship between "the world's richest man" and the ruthless coke magnate to whom he entrusted his companies. The result is an extraordinary work of popular history. Praise for *Meet You in Hell* "To the list of the signal relationships of American history . . . we can add one more: Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick . . . The tale is deftly set out by Les Standiford."—Wall Street Journal "Standiford tells the story with the skills of a novelist . . . a colloquial style that is mindful of William Manchester's great *The Glory and the Dream*."—Pittsburgh Tribune-Review "A muscular, enthralling read that takes you back to a time when two titans of industry clashed in a battle of wills and egos that had seismic ramifications not only for themselves but for anyone living in the United States, then and now."—Dennis Lehane, author of *Mystic River*

*Civilized Life in the Universe* - George Basalla  
2006-01-19

This book is a selective and fascinating history of scientific speculation about intelligent extraterrestrial life. From Plutarch to Stephen Hawking, some of the most prominent western scientists have had quite detailed perceptions and misperceptions about alien civilizations: Johannes Kepler, fresh from transforming astronomy with

his work on the shape of planetary orbits, was quite sure alien engineers on the moon were excavating circular pits to provide shelter; Christiaan Huygens, the most prominent physical scientist between Galileo and Newton, dismissed Kepler's speculations, but used the laws of probability to prove that "planetarians" on other worlds are much like humans, and had developed a sense of the visual arts; Carl Sagan sees clearly that Huygens is a biological chauvinist, but doesn't see as clearly that he, Sagan, may be a cultural/technological chauvinist when he assumes aliens have highly developed technology like ours, but better. Basalla traces the influence of one speculation on the next, showing an unbroken but twisting chain of ideas passed from one scientist to the next, and from science to popular culture. He even traces the influence of popular culture on science--Sagan always admitted how much E. R. Burroughs' Martian novels influenced his speculations about Mars. Throughout, Basalla weaves his theme that scientific belief in and search for extraterrestrial civilizations is a complex impulse, part secularized-religious, and part anthropomorphic. He questions the common modern scientific reasoning that life converges on intelligence, and intelligence converges on one science valid everywhere. He ends the book by agreeing with Stephen Hawking (usually a safe bet) that intelligence is overrated for survival in the universe, and that we are most likely alone.

George Westinghouse - William R. Huber  
2022-01-31

While most know Thomas Edison for his invention of the light bulb, his counterpart, George Westinghouse, is too often overlooked.

Westinghouse, however, became known as one of the most prolific inventors and businessmen of the Industrial Revolution. This biography reveals the man whose teachers suspected was mentally disabled and who quit college after one semester, yet founded more than 60 different companies employing 50,000 people, and received 361 U.S.

patents. He later fought the "Battle of the Currents" (AC vs. DC) with Thomas Edison and won.

Westinghouse, with his engineers, provided power and light for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. They harnessed the massive power of Niagara Falls and sent it over wires to light Buffalo and eventually the Northeast. His electric engines powered trains, and his air brakes stopped them. His scientific contributions forever changed the world.

**Sinkable** - Daniel Stone 2022-08-16

From the national bestselling author of *The Food Explorer*, a fascinating and rollicking plunge into the story of the world's most famous shipwreck, the RMS Titanic. On a frigid April night in 1912, the world's largest—and soon most famous—ocean liner struck an iceberg and slipped beneath the waves. She had scarcely disappeared before her new journey began, a seemingly limitless odyssey through the world's fixation with her every tragic detail. Plans to find and raise the Titanic began almost immediately. Yet seven decades passed before it was found. Why? And of some three million shipwrecks that litter the ocean floor, why is the world still so fascinated with this one? In *Sinkable*, Daniel Stone spins a fascinating tale of history, science, and obsession, uncovering the untold story of the Titanic not as a ship but as a shipwreck. He explores generations of eccentrics, like American Charles Smith, whose 1914 recovery plan using a synchronized armada of ships bearing electromagnets was complex, convincing, and utterly impossible; Jack Grimm, a Texas oil magnate who fruitlessly dropped a fortune to find the wreck after failing to find Noah's Ark; and the British Doug Woolley, a former pantyhose factory worker who has claimed, since the 1960s, to be the true owner of the Titanic wreckage. Along the way, *Sinkable* takes readers through the two miles of ocean water in which the Titanic sank, showing how the ship broke apart and why, and delves into the odd history of our understanding of such depths. Author Daniel Stone studies the landscape of the

seabed, which in the Titanic's day was thought to be as smooth and featureless as a bathtub. He interviews scientists to understand the decades of rust and decomposition that are slowly but surely consuming the ship. (It is expected to disappear entirely within a few decades!) He even journeys over the Atlantic, during a global pandemic, to track down the elusive Doug Woolley. And Stone turns inward, looking at his own dark obsession with both the Titanic and shipwrecks in general, and why he spends hours watching ships sink on YouTube.

Brimming with humor, curiosity and wit, *Sinkable* follows in the tradition of Susan Orlean and Bill Bryson, offering up a page-turning work of personal journalism and an immensely entertaining romp through the deep sea and the nature of obsession.

**War of the Currents** - Stephanie Sammartino McPherson 2012-11-01

In the early 1880s, only a few wealthy city dwellers enjoyed electric lighting in their homes. Everyone else had to make due with dirtier and more dangerous lighting technology, such as kerosene lanterns and gas lamps. Eager companies wanted to be among the first to supply electric power to more Americans. The early providers would set the standards—and they would reap great profits. Inventor Thomas Edison already had a leading role in the industry: he had invented the first reliable electrical light bulb. By 1882, his Edison Electric Light Company was distributing electricity using a system called direct current, or DC. But an inventor named Nikola Tesla challenged Edison. Tesla believed that an alternating current—or AC—system would be better. With an AC system, one power station could deliver electricity across many miles, compared to only about one mile for DC. Each inventor had his backers. Business tycoon George Westinghouse put his money behind Tesla and built AC power stations. Meanwhile, Edison and his DC backers said that AC was dangerous. They said that AC could easily electrocute people, so it should power the

newly invented electric chair. Edison believed this negative association would sway public opinion toward DC power. The battle over which system would become standard became known as the War of the Currents. This exciting book tells the story of that war, the people who fought it, and the ways in which both kinds of electric power changed the world.

[The Age of Edison](#) - Ernest Freeberg 2014-01-28

A sweeping history of the electric light revolution and the birth of modern America The late nineteenth century was a period of explosive technological creativity, but more than any other invention, Thomas Edison's incandescent light bulb marked the arrival of modernity, transforming its inventor into a mythic figure and avatar of an era. In *The Age of Edison*, award-winning author and historian Ernest Freeberg weaves a narrative that reaches from Coney Island and Broadway to the tiniest towns of rural America, tracing the progress of electric light through the reactions of everyone who saw it and capturing the wonder Edison's invention inspired. It is a quintessentially American story of ingenuity, ambition, and possibility in which the greater forces of progress and change are made by one of our most humble and ubiquitous objects.

**The Power Makers** - Maury Klein 2010-09-01

Maury Klein is one of America's most acclaimed historians of business and society. In *The Power Makers*, he offers an epic narrative of his greatest subject yet - the "power revolution" that transformed American life in the course of the nineteenth century. The steam engine; the incandescent bulb; the electric motor-inventions such as these replaced backbreaking toil with machine labor and changed every aspect of daily life in the span of a few generations. The cast of characters includes inventors like James Watt, Elihu Thomson, and Nikola Tesla; entrepreneurs like George Westinghouse; savvy businessmen like J.P. Morgan, Samuel Insull, and Charles Coffin of General Electric. Striding among them like a

colossus is the figure of Thomas Edison, who was creative genius and business visionary at once. With consummate skill, Klein recreates their discoveries, their stunning triumphs and frequent failures, and their unceasing, bare-knuckled battles in the marketplace. In Klein's hands, their personalities and discoveries leap off the page. *The Power Makers* is a dazzling saga of inspired invention, dogged persistence, and business competition at its most naked and cutthroat--a biography of America in its most astonishing decades.

[New York Burning](#) - Jill Lepore 2007-12-18

Pulitzer Prize Finalist and Anisfield-Wolf Award Winner In *New York Burning*, Bancroft Prize-winning historian Jill Lepore recounts these dramatic events of 1741, when ten fires blazed across Manhattan and panicked whites suspecting it to be the work a slave uprising went on a rampage. In the end, thirteen black men were burned at the stake, seventeen were hanged and more than one hundred black men and women were thrown into a dungeon beneath City Hall. Even back in the seventeenth century, the city was a rich mosaic of cultures, communities and colors, with slaves making up a full one-fifth of the population. Exploring the political and social climate of the times, Lepore dramatically shows how, in a city rife with state intrigue and terror, the threat of black rebellion united the white political pluralities in a frenzy of racial fear and violence.

**Empires of Light** - Jill Jonnes 2004-10-12

The gripping history of electricity and how the fateful collision of Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse left the world utterly transformed. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, three brilliant and visionary titans of America's Gilded Age—Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and George Westinghouse—battled bitterly as each vied to create a vast and powerful electrical empire. In *Empires of Light*, historian Jill Jonnes portrays this extraordinary trio and their riveting and ruthless world of cutting-edge science, invention, intrigue, money, death, and hard-eyed

Wall Street millionaires. At the heart of the story are Thomas Alva Edison, the nation's most famous and folksy inventor, creator of the incandescent light bulb and mastermind of the world's first direct current electrical light networks; the Serbian wizard of invention Nikola Tesla, elegant, highly eccentric, a dreamer who revolutionized the generation and delivery of electricity; and the charismatic George Westinghouse, Pittsburgh inventor and tough corporate entrepreneur, an industrial idealist who in the era of gaslight imagined a world powered by cheap and plentiful electricity and worked heart and soul to create it. Edison struggled to introduce his radical new direct current (DC) technology into the hurly-burly of New York City as Tesla and Westinghouse challenged his dominance with their alternating current (AC), thus setting the stage for one of the eeriest feuds in American corporate history, the War of the Electric Currents. The battlegrounds: Wall Street, the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, Niagara Falls, and, finally, the death chamber—Jonnes takes us on the tense walk down a prison hallway and into the sunlit room where William Kemmler, convicted ax murderer, became the first man to die in the electric chair.

**Wizard:** - Marc Seifer 2011-10-24

“The story of one of the most prolific, independent, and iconoclastic inventors of this century...fascinating.”—Scientific American Nikola Tesla (1856-1943), credited as the inspiration for radio, robots, and even radar, has been called the patron saint of modern electricity. Based on original material and previously unavailable documents, this acclaimed book is the definitive biography of the man considered by many to be the founding father of modern electrical technology. Among Tesla's creations were the channeling of alternating current, fluorescent and neon lighting, wireless telegraphy, and the giant turbines that harnessed the power of Niagara Falls. This essential biography is illustrated with sixteen pages of photographs, including the July 20, 1931, Time magazine cover

for an issue celebrating the inventor's career. “A deep and comprehensive biography of a great engineer of early electrical science--likely to become the definitive biography. Highly recommended.”--American Association for the Advancement of Science “Seifer's vivid, revelatory, exhaustively researched biography rescues pioneer inventor Nikola Tesla from cult status and restores him to his rightful place as a principal architect of the modern age.” --Publishers Weekly Starred Review “[Wizard] brings the many complex facets of [Tesla's] personal and technical life together in to a cohesive whole....I highly recommend this biography of a great technologist.” --A.A. Mullin, U.S. Army Space and Strategic Defense Command, COMPUTING REVIEWS “[Along with A Beautiful Mind] one of the five best biographies written on the brilliantly disturbed.”--WALL STREET JOURNAL “Wizard is a compelling tale presenting a teeming, vivid world of science, technology, culture and human lives.”-

*Spaceman* - Mike Massimino 2016-10-04

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Have you ever wondered what it would be like to find yourself strapped to a giant rocket that's about to go from zero to 17,500 miles per hour? Or to look back on Earth from outer space and see the surprisingly precise line between day and night? Or to stand in front of the Hubble Space Telescope, wondering if the emergency repair you're about to make will inadvertently ruin humankind's chance to unlock the universe's secrets? Mike Massimino has been there, and in *Spaceman* he puts you inside the suit, with all the zip and buoyancy of life in microgravity. Massimino's childhood space dreams were born the day Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon. Growing up in a working-class Long Island family, he catapulted himself to Columbia and then MIT, only to flunk his first doctoral exam and be rejected three times by NASA before making it through the final round of astronaut selection. Taking us through the surreal wonder and beauty of his first spacewalk, the tragedy of losing friends

in the Columbia shuttle accident, and the development of his enduring love for the Hubble Telescope—which he and his fellow astronauts were tasked with saving on his final mission—Massimino has written an ode to never giving up and the power of teamwork to make anything possible. Spaceman invites us into a rare, wonderful world where science meets the most thrilling adventure, revealing just what having “the right stuff” really means.

**A Man on the Moon** - Andrew Chaikin 2007-08-28  
"The authoritative masterpiece" (L. A. Times) on the Apollo space program and NASA's journey to the moon This acclaimed portrait of heroism and ingenuity captures a watershed moment in human history. The astronauts themselves have called it the definitive account of their missions. On the night of July 20, 1969, our world changed forever when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walked on the moon. Based on in-depth interviews with twenty-three of the twenty-four moon voyagers, as well as those who struggled to get the program moving, *A Man on the Moon* conveys every aspect of the Apollo missions with breathtaking immediacy and stunning detail. *A Man on the Moon* is also the basis for the acclaimed miniseries produced by Tom Hanks, *From the Earth to the Moon*, now airing and streaming again on HBO in

celebration of the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11.

**The Age of Wonder** - Richard Holmes 2009-07-14

The Age of Wonder is a colorful and utterly absorbing history of the men and women whose discoveries and inventions at the end of the eighteenth century gave birth to the Romantic Age of Science. When young Joseph Banks stepped onto a Tahitian beach in 1769, he hoped to discover Paradise. Inspired by the scientific ferment sweeping through Britain, the botanist had sailed with Captain Cook in search of new worlds. Other voyages of discovery—astronomical, chemical, poetical, philosophical—swiftly follow in Richard Holmes's thrilling evocation of the second scientific revolution. Through the lives of William Herschel and his sister Caroline, who forever changed the public conception of the solar system; of Humphry Davy, whose near-suicidal gas experiments revolutionized chemistry; and of the great Romantic writers, from Mary Shelley to Coleridge and Keats, who were inspired by the scientific breakthroughs of their day, Holmes brings to life the era in which we first realized both the awe-inspiring and the frightening possibilities of science—an era whose consequences are with us still. **BONUS MATERIAL:** This ebook edition includes an excerpt from Richard Holmes's *Falling Upwards*.