

Fathom's Christmas holiday reading

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Jenny Booth



Fathom's economists are taking some time off over the holidays to relax with a good book. If you are looking for an inspiring read or some last-minute stocking fillers, from *Chip War* to *Shoe Dog*, we recommend some great books – and one film – that we're looking forward to getting stuck into.

Understanding and visualising data

***Knowledge is Beautiful* by David McCandless**

Fathom Website and Brand Director Emma Britton suggests McCandless's follow-up to *Information is Beautiful* – both use stunning data visualisations to explore our world.

***How to make the world add up*, by Tim Harford**

Junior Economist Joe Hunt was drawn to this title because he really enjoyed Harford's podcast on '50 Things That Made the Modern Economy'. "For a bit of a geek like myself who really likes that type of thing, a book on stats makes for an engaging prospect," said Joe.

***Info We Trust: How to Inspire the World with Data*, by R.J. Andrews**

How do we create new ways of looking at the world? *Info We Trust* describes a craft that puts the world into forms that are strong and true, showing how to make information that people can believe, says Economic Data Analyst Vaibhav Patil. It is lavishly illustrated with hundreds of original compositions.

***The Power of Geography: Ten Maps that Reveal the Future of Our World*, by Tim Marshall**

Fathom's PR and Marketing Director Leara Gabay loved journalist Tim Marshall's previous book, *Prisoners of Geography*, explaining how global affairs are dictated by the layout of the physical world, and can't wait to get her hands on its sequel. Marshall explores ten regions set to shape global affairs in a new age of geopolitical rivalry: Australia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UK, Greece, Turkey, the Sahel, Ethiopia, Spain and Space. He starts with an insightful look at how Russia's geographical disadvantages provide a backdrop to its invasion of Ukraine.





Building a brand

Shoe Dog: A Memoir, by Phil Knight

Kevin Loane, Head of Fathom USA, reckons there are few better people to learn from than the creator of Nike on how to build a brand and company.

Influence Empire: The Story of Tencent and China's Tech Ambition, by Lulu Chen

After reading *Red Roulette* by Desmond Shum last Christmas, Ellen Ó Fríol remained fascinated by the interconnected nature of wealth, power and supposed corruption in China. Bloomberg reporter Lulu Chen's in-depth study of Tencent, developer of WeChat, and its relationship with Xi Jinping's government, is on her wish list this year.

Competing in the new world of work, by Keith Ferrazzi

Deputy Chief Operating Officer Georgia McKenna chooses Ferrazzi's examination of methods for radical adaptability in a business world altered by COVID-19.

Empire of Pain, by Patrick Radden Keefe

Fathom Chief Operating Officer Laura Eaton is looking forward to reading Radden Keefe's exploration of the role that one family, the Sacklers, played in the opioid epidemic.

Navigating global geopolitics

Chip War: The Fight for the World's Most Critical Technology, by Chris Miller

Data Visualisation Specialist Sayonee Grover hopes to make more sense of the current state of politics, economics and technology by reading this critically acclaimed account of the decades-long battle to control the world's most critical resource: microchip technology. Often likened to the new oil, microchips are the scarce resource on which the modern world depends, and both the US and China's military, economic and geopolitical power are built.

Adam Smith's America, by Glory Liu

Deputy Editor Ella Benson Easton is keen to read how Smith was fashioned into something akin to the patron saint of free markets in the US.

Butler to the World, by Oliver Bullough

Editor Jenny Booth thinks she may enjoy Bullough's description of how the UK has helped dictators, autocrats and oppressors to secure their ill-gotten loot.

Principles for Dealing with the Changing World Order: Why Nations Succeed or Fail, by Ray Dalio

Junior Economist Sam Morris is intrigued by Dalio's attempt to detect the cause and effect behind various tumultuous economic and political periods, and to use this relationship to predict the future.

The Rise and Fall of the Neo-Liberal Order: America and the World in the New Market Era, by Gary Gerstle

Fathom Technical Director Andrea 'Zazza' Zazzarelli was drawn to Gerstle's arguments that liberal ideals have come to seem increasingly self-referential and out of touch with the grassroots, losing their hopeful or optimistic message; and that a period of introspection is badly needed so that liberalism doesn't become synonymous with elitism.

The New Silk Roads: The Present and Future of the World, by Peter Frankopan

Head of Climate Economics Brian Davidson is not sure if he will agree with Peter Frankopan's outlook for a changing world order, but reckons if this is half as good as his last book, it will be well worth the read.





Dragonfly Eyes, by Xu Bing

Fathom's Head of China Economics Joanna Davies has chosen not a book but a film: artist Xu Bing has woven together more than 10,000 hours of real-life surveillance footage from within China to create what promises to be a fascinating, albeit unnerving, view into real life inside China.

Geopolitical Alpha: An Investment Framework for Predicting the Future, by Marko Papic

At Fathom, we position ourselves at the intersection of macroeconomics, geopolitics and financial markets. Our Deputy Chief Economist Andrew Harris has chosen a book that promises to consider just that - i.e., how to navigate the geopolitical landscape to generate financial returns.

Applied Financial Macroeconomics and Investment Strategy: A Practitioner's Guide to Tactical Asset Allocation, by Robert T. McGee

Next year Fathom Economist Juan Orts plans to take a deep dive into macroeconomic strategy; this book offers a framework to translate a good macroeconomic background into concrete asset-allocation tactics.

Human and post-human economies

Our Post-Human Future, by Francis Fukuyama

Fathom Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Erik Britton is interested in Fukuyama's thoughts on biotech and human redundancy. (Hope that's not a reflection on Fathom's future hiring policy, Erik...)

The Good-Enough Life, by Avram Alpert

Senior Economist Will Hynes has chosen Alpert's persuasive argument that dividing the world into winners and losers in a race to the top of the pyramid can't work for society and the environment.

Freakonomics, by Stephen J. Dubner and Steven Levitt

Economic Data Analyst Anuja Wagh wants to familiarise herself with microeconomics, which comprises one-half of the economics profession. *Freakonomics* focuses on how people and organisations connect with one another.

Slouching towards Utopia, by Brad de Long

Fathom's Chief Economist Andrew Brigden has followed de Long on Twitter for some time, and is intrigued that he seems able to explain both the period of rapid growth beginning in the late 1800s, and why that period has now come to an end.

Misbehaving: The Making of Behavioural Economics, by Richard H. Thaler

Thaler is one of the worlds' leading behavioural economists and is behind the very famous book *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness*. Fathom Economist Linnéa Hjelm is fascinated by his mix of economics and psychology, and wants to explore how this relatively new area of economics can be applied.

Noise: A Flaw in Human Judgment, by Daniel Kahneman, Olivier Sibony and Cass R. Sunstein

Data Analyst Ingrid Standal is also fascinated by behavioural economics and has chosen Daniel Kahneman's investigation of how 'noise' affects human judgment and what we can do to address this. Kahneman explores the processes of decision-making and why some decisions are rational and predictable, while others are not predictable or 'noisy'.

Wishing our readers a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year, from all of us at Fathom!





Further reading

[Fathom book club: Raworth, Rebanks and Sheldrake](#)

[Fathom book club: Kearns, Lee and Pasquale](#)

[Fathom book club: Copeland, Kahneman and Rozelle](#)



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