

how I built my ‘Books’ page

Bob Monsour

eleventy meetup, February 6, 2025

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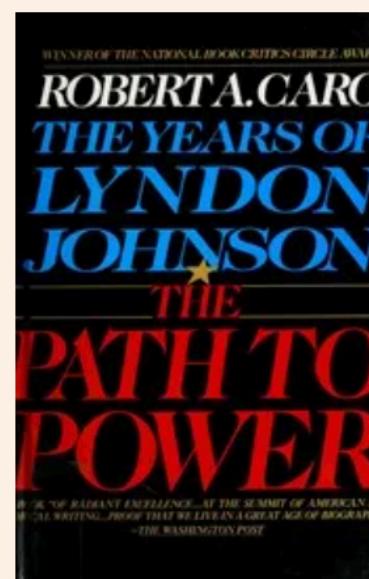
who am I?

- retired, living in Northern California
- creator of the 11ty Bundle
 - <https://11tybundle.dev>
 - a curated feed of 11ty resources
- spent a lot of years in tech of various forms

what i'll be covering

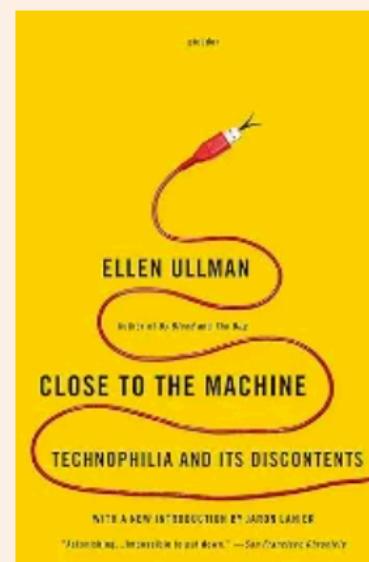
- elements of my books page
- bits of 11ty that make it work
- data & code for those bits
- how I add new books
- book pages that inspired me

Currently Reading



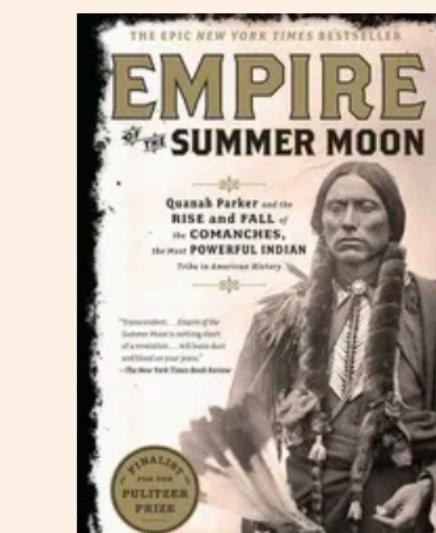
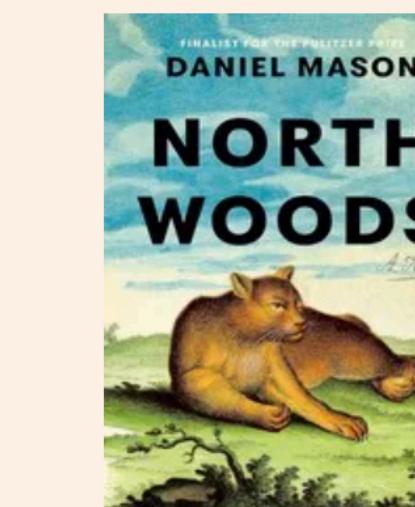
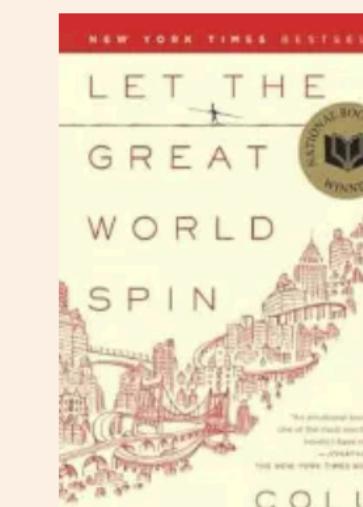
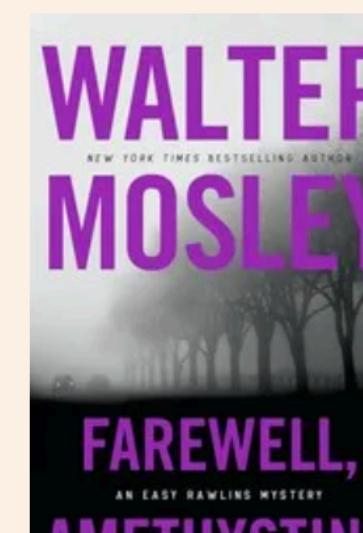
The Path to Power
by Robert A. Caro

2025



Close to the Machine
by Ellen Ullman
★★★★½

2024



the 11ty bits

- global data in the `_data` directory
 - JSON for the books
 - JS data computed over the JSON data
- a JS filter
- a nunjucks template and an include

src directory structure

```
src
├── _config
│   └── filters
│       └── bookrating.js
├── _data
│   ├── books.js
│   └── books.json
├── _includes
│   └── bookitem.njk
├── _layouts
├── assets
├── notes
├── pages
│   └── books.njk
└── posts
    └── til
```

source is available at <https://github.com/bobmonsour/bobmonsour.com>

the relevant parts

- `books.json` — all of the book data
- `books.js` — js data computed over `books.json`
- `books.njk` — the books page template
- `bookitem.njk` — include template for each book
- `bookrating.js` — filter rating number into stars

source of the book data

- export from Goodreads, no longer has an API
- exports as a CSV file
- upload the CSV to Google Sheets
- trim down the data to the essentials
- export Google Sheet data to CSV
- convert the CSV to an array of JSON objects

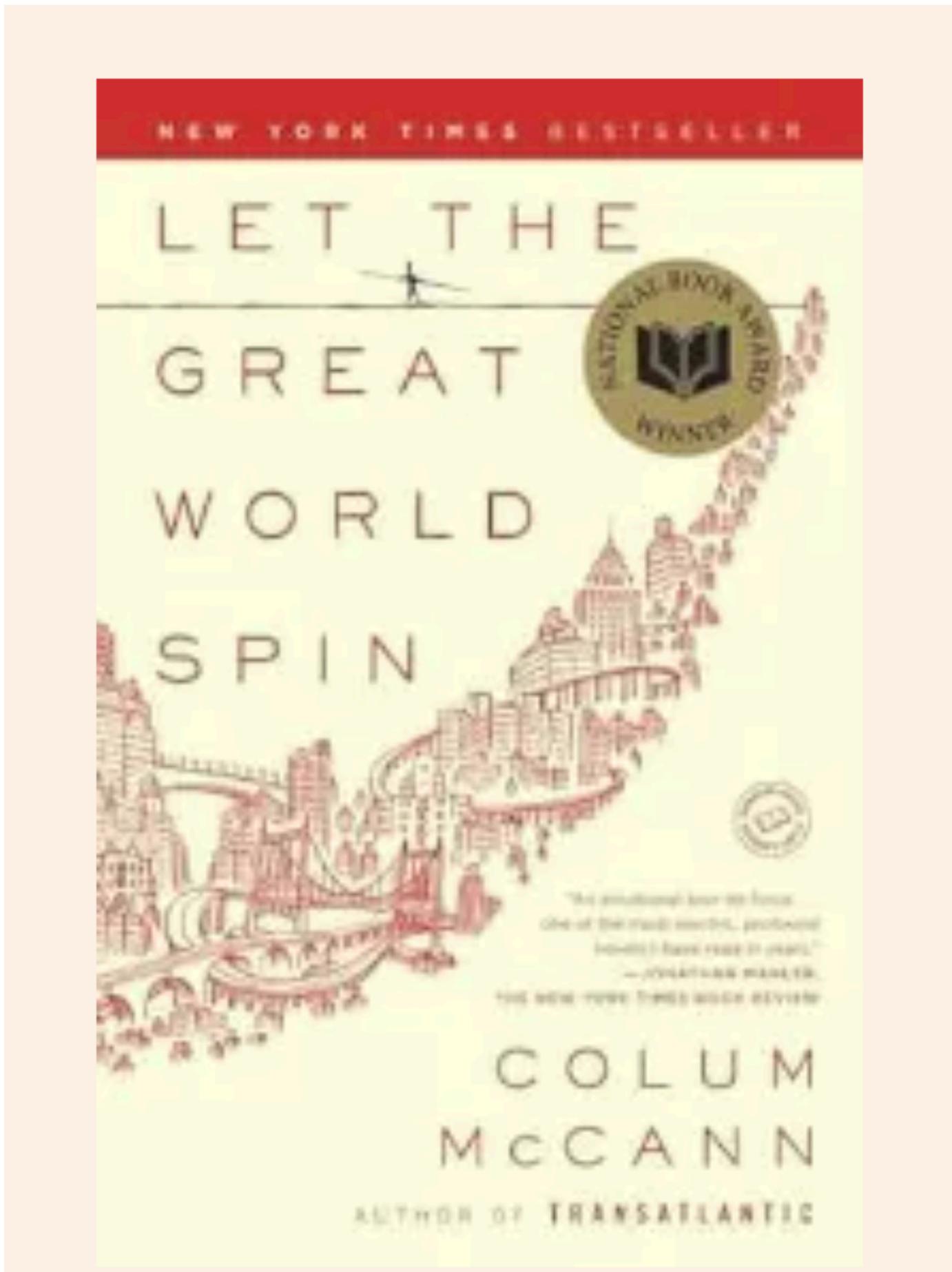
books read

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help

Share

A1 | fx Book Id

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Book Id	Title	Author	Author I-f	Additional Author	ISBN	ISBN13	My Rating	Average Rating	Publisher	Binding	Number of Pages	Year Published	Original Publication Year
2	5941033	Let the Great World Spin	Colum McCann	McCann, Colum		1400063736	9781400063734	5	3.95	Random House	Hardcover	351	2009	2009
3	383396	I am Not Sick, I Don't Need Help!: How to Be Healthy	Xavier Amador	Xavier Francisco Amador, Xavier Francisco		0967718929	9780967718927	0	4.44	Vida Pr	Paperback	168	2007	2000
4	196343469	Carla: The Conqueror: Building Adoption	Anna Maria DiDi	DiDi, Anna Maria	Tatiana Lobanov			0	4.86		Kindle Edition	39	2023	
5	71872930	North Woods	Daniel Mason	Mason, Daniel		0593597036	9780593597033	0	4.13	Random House	Hardcover	372	2023	2023
6	7648269	Empire of the Summer Moon	S.C. Gwynne	Gwynne, S.C.		1416591052	9781416591054	4	4.24	Scribner	Hardcover	371	2010	2010
7	7624086	Hellhound on His Trail: The Stalking	Hampton Sides	Sides, Hampton		0385523920	9780385523929	0	4.32	Doubleday	Hardcover	397	2010	2010
8	191746388	The Wide Wide Sea: Imperial Ambition	Hampton Sides	Sides, Hampton		0385544766	9780385544764	5	4.49	Doubleday	Hardcover	408	2024	2024
9	62120824	Road to Surrender: Three Men and a Gun	Evan Thomas	Thomas, Evan		0399589252	9780399589256	0	4.39	Random House	Hardcover	336	2023	2023
10	767171	The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich	William L. Shirer	Shirer, William L.		0671728687	9780671728687	5	4.22	Simon & Schuster	Mass Market Paperback	1147	1990	1960
11	61714633	The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny, and Betrayal	David Grann	Grann, David		0385534264	9780385534260	5	4.18	Doubleday	Hardcover	331	2023	2023
12	19494	The Spy Who Came In from the Cold	John Le Carré	Carré, John Le			9780743442534	5	4.08	Scribner	Paperback	212	2001	1963
13	12227044	Rez Life: An Indian's Journey Through Reservation Life	David Treuer	Treuer, David		0802119719	9780802119711	0	3.9	Atlantic Monthly	Hardcover	330	2012	2012
14	58210933	Trust	Hernan Diaz	Diaz, Hernan		0593420314	9780593420317	5	3.82	Riverhead Books	Hardcover	402	2022	2022
15	59109077	Horse	Geraldine Brooks	Brooks, Geraldine		0399562966	9780399562969	5	4.27	Viking	Hardcover	401	2022	2022
16	60141696	American Midnight: The Great War, 1914-1918	Adam Hochschild	Hochschild, Adam		0358455464	9780358455462	5	4.21	Mariner Books	Hardcover	422	2022	2022
17	22529381	Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Shortest Summer	Sam Quinones	Quinones, Sam		1620402505	9781620402504	5	4.23	Bloomsbury Press	Hardcover	384	2015	2015
18	53487237	A Swim in a Pond in the Rain: In Which George Saunders Wins a Prize	George Saunders	Saunders, George		1984856049	9781984856043	5	4.54	Random House	ebook	403	2021	2021
19	28747	CivilWarLand in Bad Decline	George Saunders	Saunders, George		0099595818	9780099595816	0	4.21	Vintage	Paperback	179	1997	1996
20	58890783	Either/Or	Elif Batuman	Batumyan, Elif		0525557598	9780525557593	2	4	Penguin Press	Hardcover	368	2022	2022
21	54849798	The Orphanage	Serhiy Zhadan	Zhadan, Serhiy	Reilly Costigan	0300243014	9780300243017	0	4.4	Yale University Press	Paperback	324	2021	2017
22	56898211	The Berlin Exchange	Joseph Kanon	Kanon, Joseph		1982158654	9781982158651	3	3.89	Scribner	Hardcover	320	2022	2022
23	56587388	How the World Really Works: A Short Guide to Economics	Vaclav Smil	Smil, Vaclav		0241454409	9780241454404	0	3.96	Viking	Paperback	326	2022	2022
24	57432319	The Avoidable War: The Dangers of War	Kevin Rudd	Rudd, Kevin		1541701291	9781541701298	0	4.27	PublicAffairs	Hardcover	432	2022	2022
25	38388741	In Defense of Gun Control	Hugh LaFollette	LaFollette, Hugh		019087337X	9780190873370	0	4	Oxford University Press	Paperback	252	2018	
26	18778874	The Second Amendment	Michael Waldman	Waldman, Michael		147674744X	9781476747446	0	4.03	Simon & Schuster	Hardcover	255	2014	2014
27	327051	Reasons and Persons	Derek Parfit	Parfit, Derek		019824908X	9780198249085	0	4.27	Oxford University Press	Paperback	543	1986	1984
28	25255053	The Gates of Europe: A History of the Russian Revolution	Serhii Plokhy	Plokhy, Serhii	Ralph Lister	0465050913	9780465050918	4	4.27	Basic Books	Hardcover	395	2015	2015
29	34051011	Pachinko (National Book Award Finalist)	Min Jin Lee	Lee, Min Jin			9781455563920	5	4.34	Grand Central Publishing	Kindle Edition	496	2017	2017
30	132913	Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Experiment	Eric Foner	Foner, Eric	Richard B. Morris	0060937165	9780060937164	0	4.2	Harper Perennial	Paperback	690	2002	1988
31	43205240	Working: Researching, Interviewing, Writing	Robert A. Caro	Caro, Robert A.		0525656340	9780525656340	0	4.44	Penguin Random House	Hardcover	23*	2010	2010
32	1111	The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Rise and Fall of an American City	Robert A. Caro	Caro, Robert A.		0394720245	9780394720241	5	4.5	Vintage Books	Paperback	124	Convert to table	X



Let the Great
World Spin
by Colum McCann



an array entry in books.json

```
{  
    "title": "Let the Great World Spin",  
    "author": "Colum McCann",  
    "ISBN": 9780812973990,  
    "rating": 5,  
    "yearRead": "2024/12/22",  
    "localCover": true  
}
```

getting a cover and a ‘buy’ link

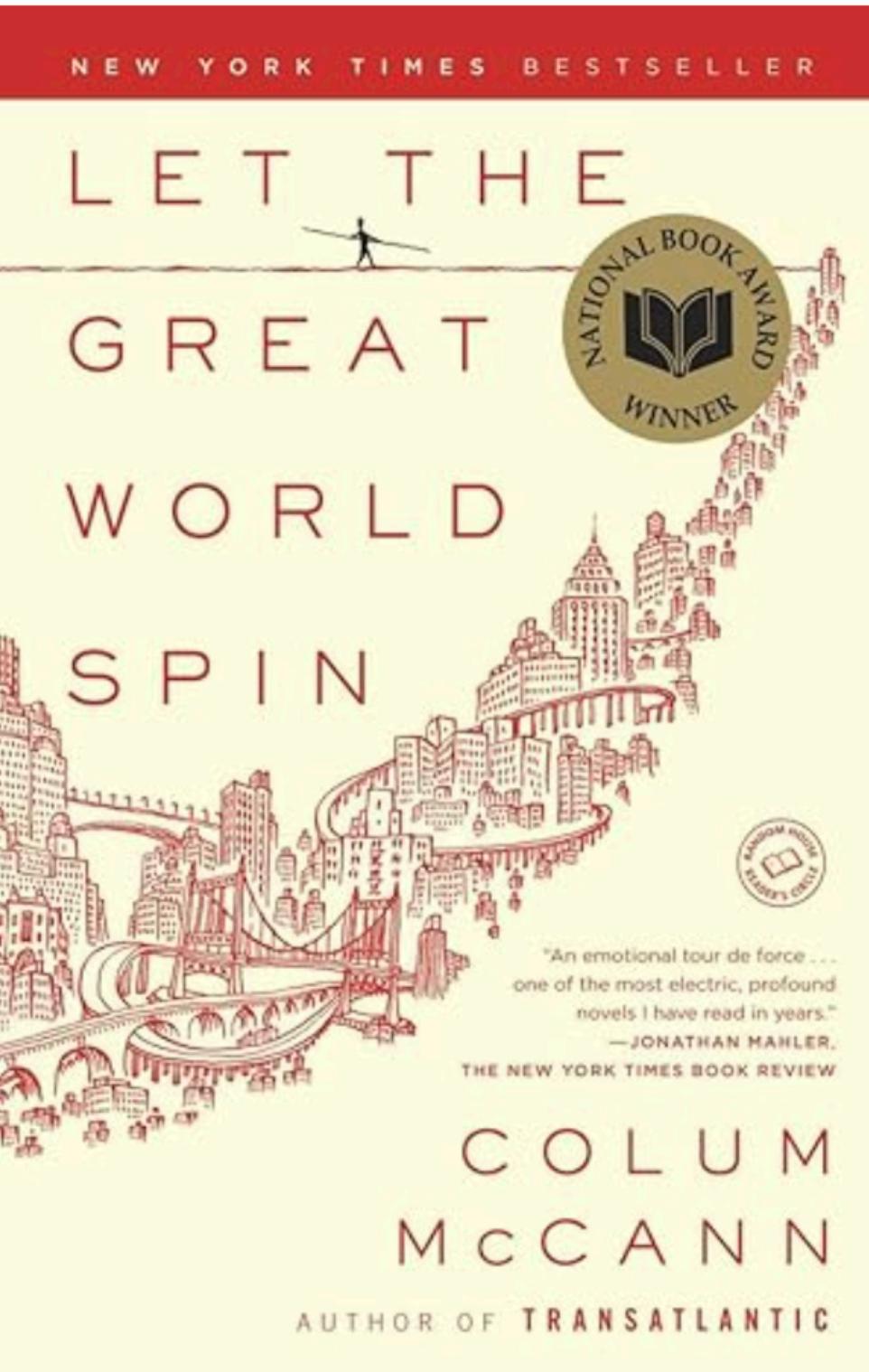
- covers from <https://openlibrary.org>
 - most, but not all
 - others manually from Amazon
- buy links from <https://bookshop.org>
 - most

fetchable covers vs local covers

```
{%- if book.localCover -%}
  
{%- else -%}
  
{%- endif -%}
```

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Colum
McCann

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Let the Great World Spin: A Novel Paperback – December 2, 2009



by [Colum McCann](#) (Author)

4.2  3,973 ratings 4.0 on Goodreads 107,331 ratings

 Editors' pick Best Literature & Fiction

[See all formats and editions](#)



National Book Award Winner, 2009

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNER • Colum McCann's beloved novel inspired by Philippe Petit's daring high-wire stunt, which is also depicted in the film *The Walk* starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt

In the dawning light of a late-summer morning, the people of lower Manhattan stand hushed, staring up in disbelief at the Twin Towers. It is August 1974, and a mysterious tightrope walker is running, dancing, leaping between the towers, suspended a quarter mile above the ground. In the streets below, a slew of ordinary lives become extraordinary in bestselling novelist Colum McCann's stunningly intricate portrait of a city and its people.

Let the Great World Spin is the critically acclaimed author's most ambitious novel yet: a dazzlingly rich vision of the pain, loveliness, mystery, and promise of New York City in the 1970s.

Corrigan, a radical young Irish monk, struggles with his own demons as he lives among the prostitutes in the
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Print length



375 pages

Language



English

Publisher



Random House Trade Paperbacks

Publication date



December 2,
2009

Dimensions



5.14 x 0.78 x
7.99 inches



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creating a ‘buy’ link

```
{%- set bookshop_base = "https://bookshop.org/a/109591/" %}  
<a href="{{ bookshop_base}}{{ book.ISBN }}>  
  {% if book.localCover %}  
      
  {% else %}  
      
  {% endif %}  
</a>
```

img alt text not included here for readability

turn a numeric rating to ★s

- ratings range from 1 to 5
- an `11ty` filter converts it to a star rating
- let's look at the code...`bookrating.js`

generating the ‘year’ nav

```
<div class="bookyears">  
  {% for year in books.years %}  
    <a href="#{{ year.year }}">{{ year.year | replace("y", "") }}</a>  
    {% if not loop.last %} / {% endif %}  
  {% endfor %}  
</div>
```

- where does `books.years` come from?
- let’s look at the code...`books.js`

3 segments of the page

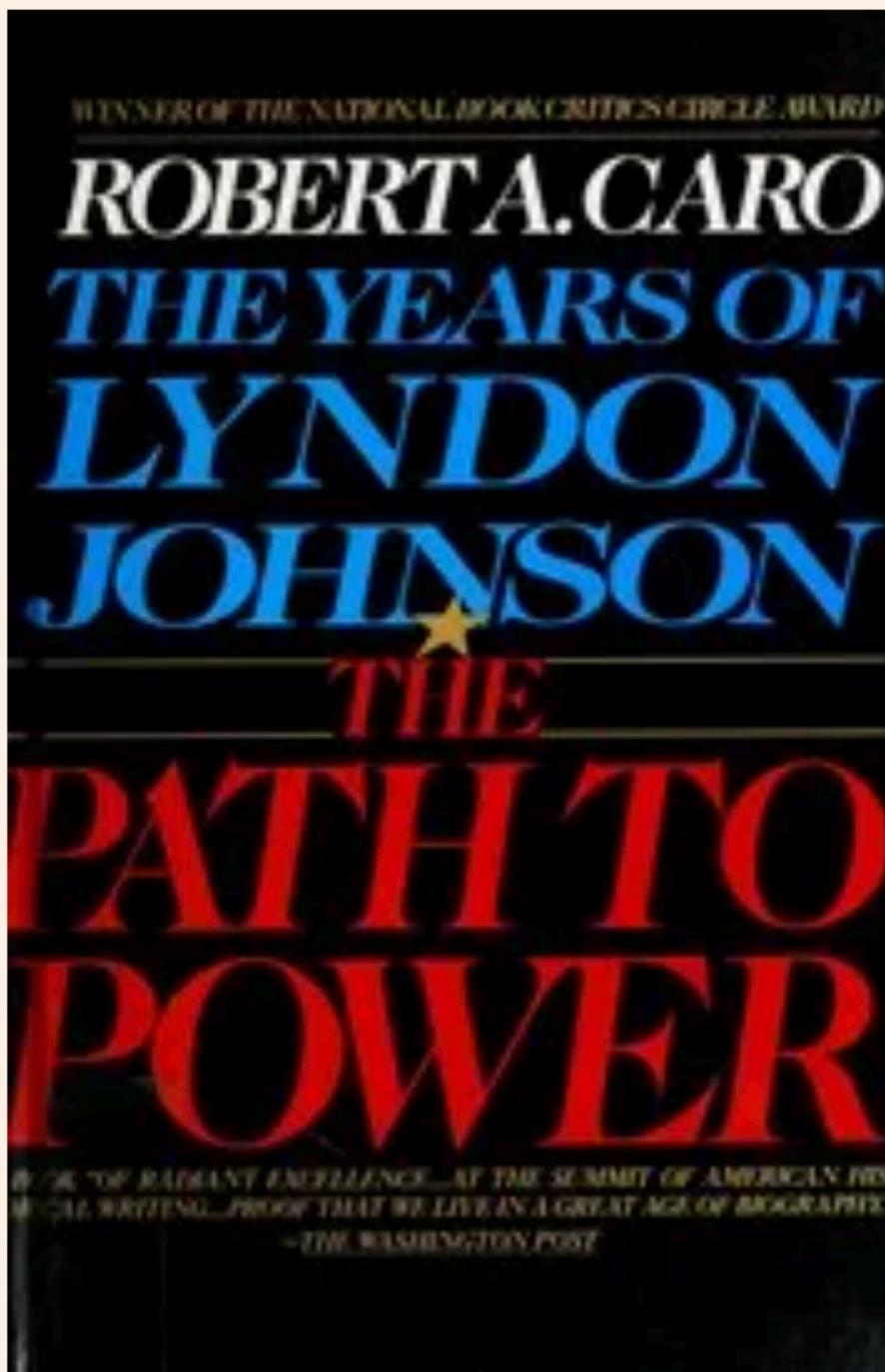
- currently reading
- the dated books
- the undated books
- each generated by JS data functions

special cases: currently & undated

```
{  
  "title": "The Path to Power",  
  "author": "Robert A. Caro",  
  "ISBN": "9780679729457",  
  "rating": "",  
  "yearRead": "currently"  
}
```

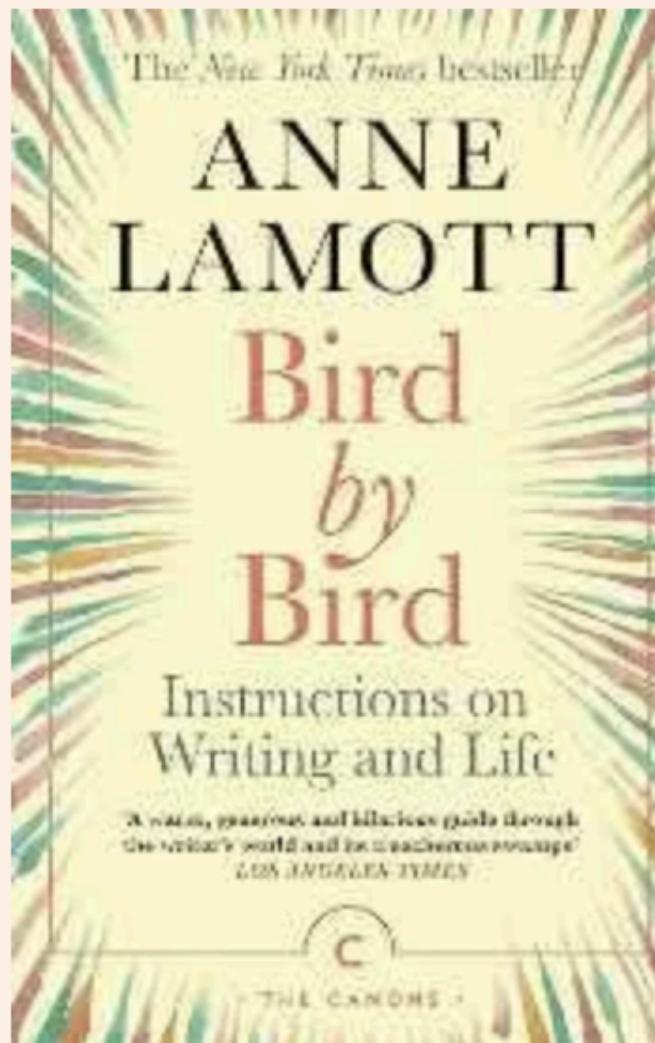
```
{  
  "title": "Bird by Bird",  
  "author": "Anne Lamott",  
  "ISBN": 9780385480017,  
  "rating": 5,  
  "yearRead": "undated",  
  "localCover": true  
}
```

Currently Reading



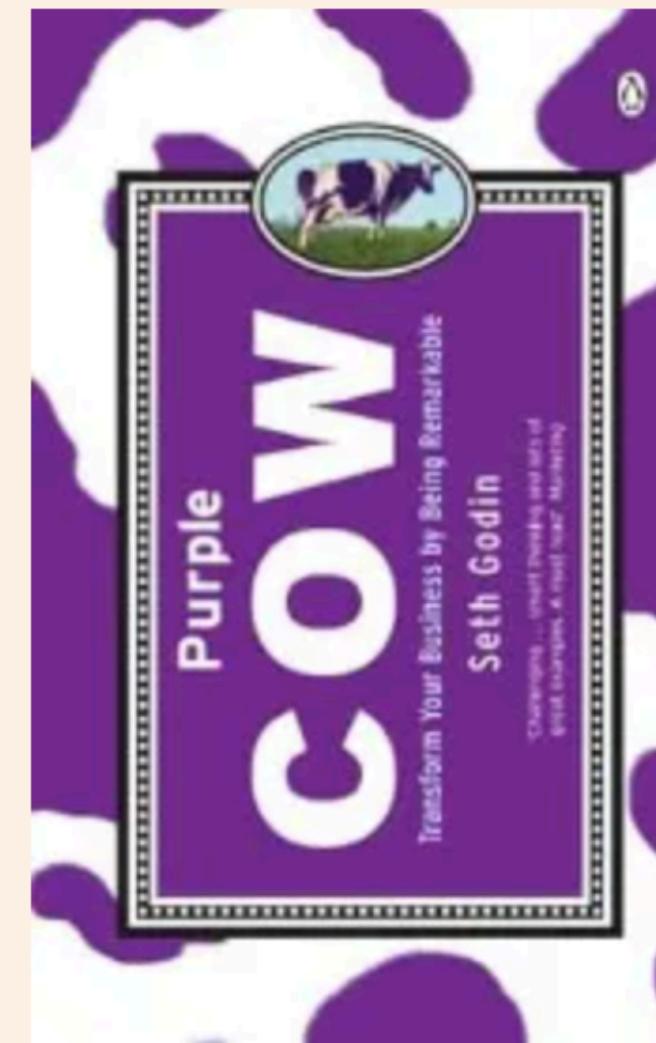
The Path to Power
by Robert A. Caro

Undated: don't know when I read these



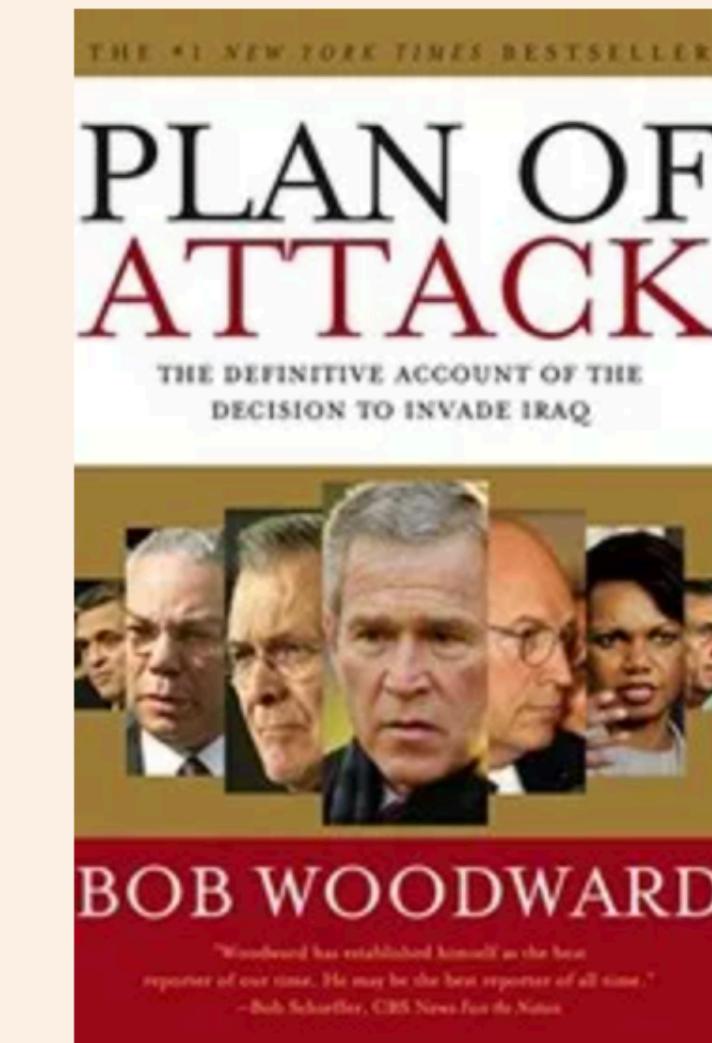
Bird by Bird

by Anne Lamott



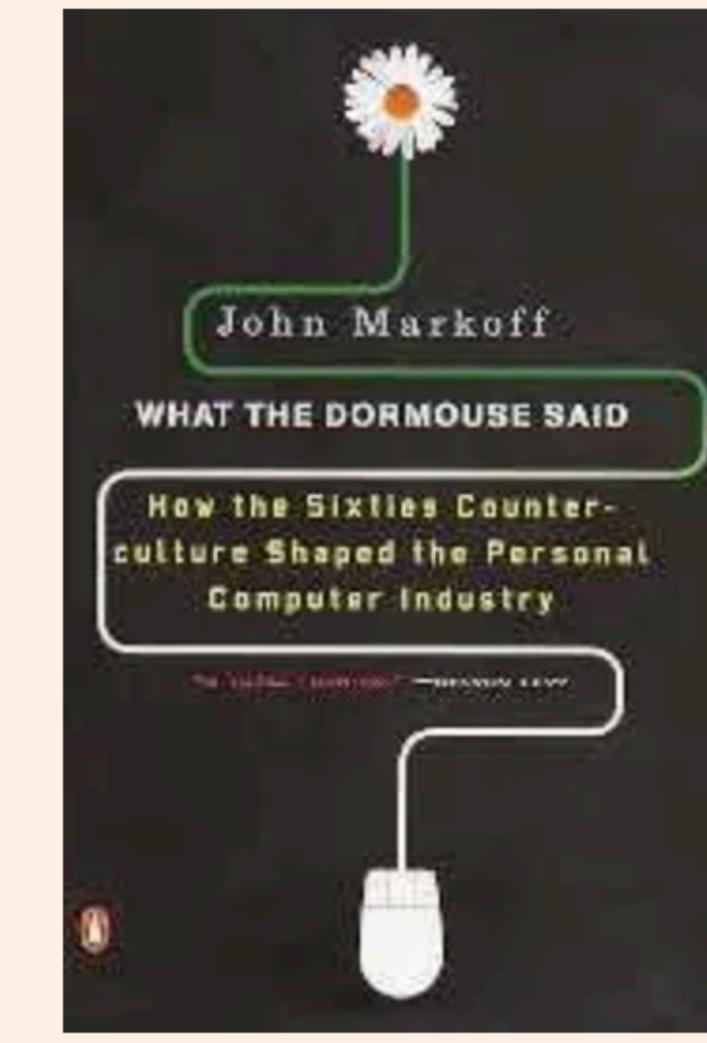
Purple Cow

by Seth Godin



Plan of Attack

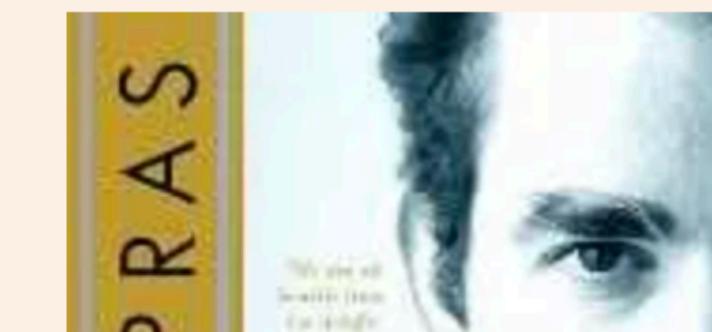
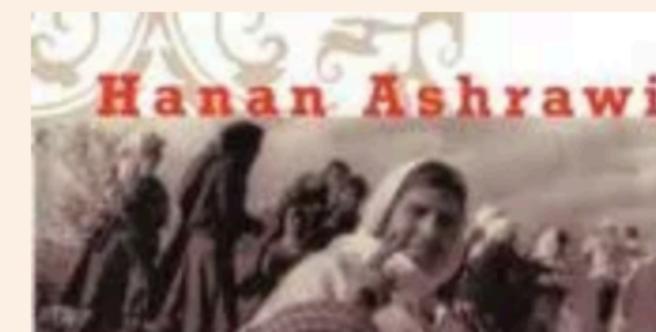
by Bob Woodward



What the

Dormouse Said

by John Markoff



let's look at the code for each

- currently reading
- dated books
- undated books

...books.js & books.njk

how I add new books

- a VS Code snippet
- let's take a look

book pages that inspired me

- Chazz Basuta and how he built it
- Cory Dransfeldt and how he built it
- Dan Jewett
- Melanie Richards and how she built it
- Sean Voisen

these are included at the end of my blog post on this topic

what we covered

- elements of my books page
- bits of 11ty that make it work
- data & code for those bits
- how I add new books
- book pages that inspired me



thank you for watching



QUESTIONS???

- slides will be available
- i'll share a post once the video is posted