

TRICKSTER MAKES THIS WORLD MISCHIEF MYTH AND ART LEWIS HYDE

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Trickster, Mischief, Myth, and Art: A Conversation with Lewis Hyde

Trickster figures abound in mythology and folklore around the world. Lewis Hyde, author of "The Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art," argues that tricksters play a vital role in human society and culture.

1. What is a trickster?

Hyde defines a trickster as a "liminal" figure who exists on the boundaries of society. Tricksters are often outsiders or marginalized individuals who challenge the status quo and disrupt social norms. They are known for their cunning, deception, and shape-shifting abilities.

2. What role do tricksters play in human society?

According to Hyde, tricksters serve several important functions:

- They provide a release from the constraints of everyday life.
- They challenge authority and expose hypocrisy.
- They create chaos and disorder, which can lead to new possibilities and forms of order.

3. How do tricksters relate to art?

Hyde argues that tricksters are closely connected to art. Artists, like tricksters, are often marginalized individuals who challenge conventions and push boundaries. Art, like trickster behavior, can create chaos and disruption, but it can also lead to new insights and ways of seeing the world.

4. What is the significance of the trickster in contemporary society?

In a world characterized by rapid technological change and social upheaval, Hyde believes that tricksters are more important than ever. Tricksters can help us to question our assumptions, adapt to change, and find meaning in our lives.

5. How can we learn from tricksters?

Hyde suggests that we can learn from tricksters by adopting their qualities of playfulness, creativity, and resilience. We can also learn from their ability to see the world from different perspectives and to challenge the established order. By embracing the trickster spirit, we can become more adaptable, open-minded, and creative individuals.

Topgrading: The Key to Hiring, Coaching, and Retaining the Best People

By Bradford D. Smart

In his groundbreaking book, "Topgrading: How Leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching, and Keeping the Best People," Bradford D. Smart reveals the secrets to consistently hiring and retaining top talent. Here are five key questions and answers from the book:

1. Why is topgrading important?

Topgrading is essential because it ensures that companies hire the best people for every position. This leads to increased productivity, profitability, and innovation.

2. What is the Topgrading method?

The Topgrading method is a rigorous hiring and performance management process that consists of:

- Identifying the key performance indicators (KPIs) for a role
- Creating a detailed job description based on these KPIs
- Using a structured interview process to assess candidates' fit for the KPIs
- Providing ongoing coaching and feedback to help employees meet or exceed expectations

3. How can I use Topgrading to hire better people?

By following the Topgrading method, you can:

- Increase your hiring accuracy by 20-30%
- Reduce turnover by up to 50%
- Improve employee productivity by 15-25%

4. How can I use Topgrading to coach and develop employees?

Once you have hired top talent, you need to help them develop and reach their full potential. Topgrading provides a framework for:

- Setting clear expectations and goals
- Providing ongoing feedback and coaching
- Identifying and addressing performance issues
- Rewarding and recognizing top performers

5. What are the benefits of using Topgrading?

Companies that use Topgrading have consistently reported significant benefits, including:

- Increased revenue and profitability
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Reduced turnover and absenteeism
- Enhanced employee morale and engagement

If you are looking to build a team of high-performers, Topgrading is an essential tool. By following the Topgrading method, you can consistently hire and retain the best people and achieve your business goals.

The Sound of the Mountain by Yasunari Kawabata

1. What is the main theme of the novel?

The Sound of the Mountain delves into the complexities of love, loss, and the fleeting nature of life. It explores the themes of grief, remembrance, and the ways in which memory shapes our understanding of the past.

2. Who are the main characters and what are their struggles?

The novel centers around two elderly lovers, Shingo and Kikuko. Shingo is a widower consumed by grief after the death of his wife, while Kikuko is a lonely woman struggling to come to terms with her own mortality. Together, they navigate the challenges of aging and search for meaning in their twilight years.

3. How does language and silence play a role in the story?

Language and silence are integral to the novel. Shingo initially struggles to express his emotions, finding solace instead in the silence of the mountains. As he and Kikuko grow closer, their conversations become both meaningful and unspoken. The novel explores the power of words and the importance of finding the right words to convey deep emotions.

4. What is the significance of the mountain in the novel?

The mountain serves as a symbol of both solitude and contemplation. For Shingo, it represents a refuge from the pain of his loss. For Kikuko, it represents the challenges and beauty of life. The novel draws parallels between the mountain's ruggedness and the human experience, exploring the ways in which we navigate life's obstacles.

5. How does the novel explore the themes of aging and mortality?

The Sound of the Mountain is a poignant examination of the aging process and the inevitability of death. Through the experiences of Shingo and Kikuko, the novel invites readers to reflect on the fragility of life and the importance of cherishing the time we have. It shows us that even in the face of adversity, there is still beauty, love, and meaning to be found.

Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future

Peter Thiel's "Zero to One" is a must-read for entrepreneurs and investors seeking to create breakthrough businesses. The book argues that the most successful companies focus on creating new markets rather than competing in existing ones. Here are some key questions and answers from the book:

Q1: What is the difference between "zero to one" and "one to n"? A1: "Zero to one" refers to creating something new that doesn't yet exist, while "one to n" refers to improving or copying something that already exists.

Q2: Why is it important to create new markets? A2: New markets offer exponentially greater opportunities for growth than existing ones. By creating a new market, you can establish a dominant position and avoid competition.

Q3: How can you identify a new market? A3: Thiel recommends looking for problems that no one else is solving or creating new solutions that are fundamentally better than existing ones.

Q4: What are the characteristics of successful startups? A4: Thiel believes successful startups are those that have a unique vision, a strong team, and a clear path to profitability. They are also willing to take risks and persevere in the face of setbacks.

Q5: What is the role of technology in building a successful startup? A5: Thiel argues that technology is essential for creating new markets and disrupting established industries. However, he cautions against relying too heavily on technology and urges entrepreneurs to focus on solving real-world problems.

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