

## Peter's Annotated Bibliography (As requested by students in the fall 2020 class)

**All the -ism's: Modernism, Postmodernism, Capitalism, Socialism, Marxism, Neo-Marxism, Marxist-Humanism, Neoliberalism, Disneyfication, and etc.**

Berman, Marshall, [\*All that is Solid, Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity\*](#). New York: Penguin, 1988.  
Maybe the best book I have read in the past 15 years. Beautifully written critique of the modern condition – economic, social, urban - and the experience of the individual in modern society. Berman called himself a Marxist Humanist and he was about the human life, how we can all have more freedom and happiness, and the joy of city life. If you enjoy this, then try [\*The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society\*](#) about the evolution of individualism from the dark ages to present, or one of his books of essays.

Harvey, David, [\*A Brief History of Neoliberalism\*](#).  
Harvey is a brilliant thinker and great writer, and he is also the most cited social scientist alive today. He is a geographer and a Neo-Marxist, one of a handful of Neo-Marxists who have gone beyond Marx to study the role geography plays in capitalism (Marx was silent on geography) and how it leads to uneven economic development. He has written many books and collections of essays so look over his stuff. [\*The Condition of Postmodernity\*](#) most influenced me, as you know by now, but consider also [\*Spaces of Global Capital\*](#) and [\*Rebel Cities\*](#).

Sorkin, Michael, ed., [\*Variations on a Theme Park\*](#), New York: Hill and Wang, 1992.  
Sorkin was a brilliant critic of architecture, design, planning and urban design in New York City until he was taken by Covid this past spring. This well-curated collection of essays is over thirty years old now, but the idea is still fresh, and all the writing is compelling and edgy. This collection includes Mike Davis's essay about militarization in LA, which you have read, as well as Neil Smith's essay on gentrification of the Lower East Side of Manhattan (another Neo-Marxist interested in uneven geographic development), a good piece on fake history at South Street Seaport, and another one on Disneyworld. Fun stuff! (Dan Campo and I used to talk about this book all the time)

Villette, Michele and Catherine Vuillermot, [\*From Predators to Icons: Exposing the Myth of the Business Hero\*](#). Ithaca: Cornell University ILR Press, 2009.

This excellent book by two left-leaning/Socialist French sociologists will chill you. About how people accumulate wealth and what they do with it. I referenced and quoted it in a few places in early drafts of my book about developers and then cut much of it out because my early readers couldn't handle it. Too anti-capitalistic for many Americans. And that's why I recommend it.

### CITY BUILDING

Caro, Robert A., [\*The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York\*](#). New York: Vintage, 1979.

Still the number one best book ever written about how things get done in the city. Caro is an excellent researcher and writer and this biography of one of the most powerful and important civil servants of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a page turner, which is good, because it is 1,344 pages. So, it makes a handy doorstop too. Seriously though, THE best book ever written about the politics of city building. And once you get started, you won't be able to put it down.

Brown, Peter Hendee, [\*How Real Estate Developers Think: Design, Profits, and Community\*](#). Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. Don't take my word for it, read about it on Amazon. I wrote this because I wanted to explain how developers think – for all the other people the who must work with them, like planners who must sit across the table from them. (Developers don't need my help but those who have read it have liked it). Based on over 100 interviews with developers and their life and projects stories. As of today, over 100 reviews on amazon, almost all 5-star. This book was recently selected by *Motley Fool* as one of the [Nine Best Books on Real Estate Development](#) and it has been published in Korean and a Lithuanian edition is forthcoming. FYI: I make pennies from this and am not trying to sell it to you for personal gain. It is just that I spent seven years writing it and the more readers, the happier I'll be.

## MISCELLANY

Molotch, Harvey, [\*Where Stuff Comes From: How Toasters, Toilets, Cars, Computers, and Many Other Things Come to Be As They Are\*](#). New York: Routledge, 2005. I like everything Molotch writes, and this is the best book I know about product design, production, marketing, and why we buy, and it is entertaining too. I found it very helpful when writing my book about real estate because office space, apartments, shopping centers, and condos are all “product.” As you already know, I was deeply influenced by Molotch's Growth Machine thesis, which you have read about in [Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place](#).

Nichols, Tom, [\*The Death of Expertise: The Campaign Against Established Knowledge and Why it Matters\*](#). Oxford: Oxford University press, 2018. Smart, funny, and important. Nichols writes about a serious problem that has been growing since the 1970s – the public's ever-increasing lack of trust in technical expertise and technical experts (like us planners). This book would be utterly depressing if he weren't such a good writer and if he didn't have such a good sense of humor. You may enjoy the chapter on how people's ideas of why we go to college have changed from “getting an education” to having the right “college experience,” which these days includes an athletic facility with a lazy river.

Kay, John, [\*Oblliquity: Why Our Goals Are Best Achieved Oblliquely\*](#). New York: Penguin, 2012.

This is an up-to-date, optimistic argument along the lines of Lindblom and “Muddling Through” that is filled with great examples and is a well-written, concise, fun book to read. It will make you think about how you set goals and go about trying to achieve them.

## GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

Allison, Graham and Philip Zelikow, [\*Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis\*](#) 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Pearson, 1999.

If you like Cold War History and/or are fascinated by the Cuban Missile Crisis (the closest mankind has come to nuclear war), then read this. More important, as I discussed in class, if you are interested in understanding how to use different lenses to anticipate how actors in a process can be expected to behave, this is excellent. It made a ton of sense to me when I was working in Philadelphia City Government, where I found it 100% relevant, and it has been a permanent part of my thinking and framework ever since. Allison had a big influence on me and how I think about being effective in large bureaucracies but be aware: this book is a little denser and more academic than some of the other things I am recommending here.

## CAREER

Newport, Cal, [\*So Good They Can't Ignore You: Why Skills, Trump Passion in the Quest for Work You Love\*](#). New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2012.

The best career advice book ever. Period. Read it.

Shell, G. Richard and Mario Moussa, [\*The Art of Woo: Using Strategic Persuasion to Sell Your Ideas\*](#). New York: Penguin, 2008.

Shell is a professor at Wharton and my wife recommended this to me after hearing him speak. This is a great book on how we sell our ideas, and it includes a couple little tests that help you figure out what your personal style is. How we sell our ideas is one of the most important skills we can develop if we want to be effective in work and life and Shell does a great job illustrating this idea with historic examples. Shell has written several other excellent, practical, readable, and fun books including my favorite on the subject of negotiation, [\*Bargaining for Advantage: Negotiation Strategies for Reasonable People\*](#). After all, while most people hate negotiating, we all must do it, so why understand it in a way that helps you negotiate with confidence?