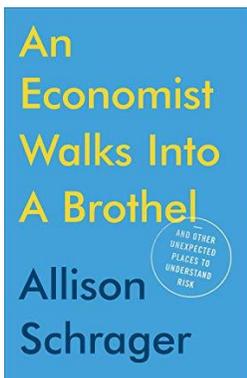


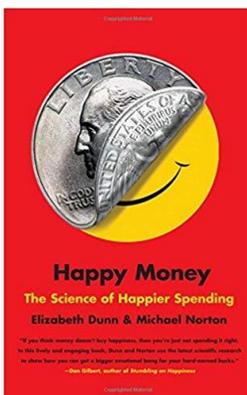
The Lost Girls of Paris

Why I enjoyed reading this book: This story takes place in and around Paris during World War II. I found the story well written and exciting and also very informative. It uses historical fiction to tell the story of how the intelligence agencies started actively recruiting and training female spies.



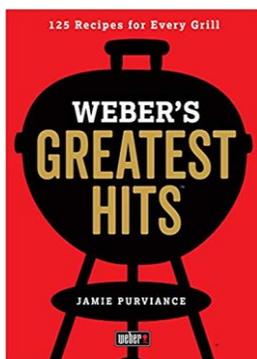
An Economist Walks Into a Brothel

Why I enjoyed reading this book: The author, who is an economist, asked prostitutes, soldiers, movie producers, gamblers, paparazzi, horse breeders and big-wave surfers how they manage risk. The answers, along with a variety of entertaining stories, were assembled along five major themes: No Risk – No Reward, I am Irrational and I Know It, Get the Biggest Bang for Your Buck, Be the Master of Your Domain, and Uncertainty Happens. This is one of the most engaging economic books I have read.



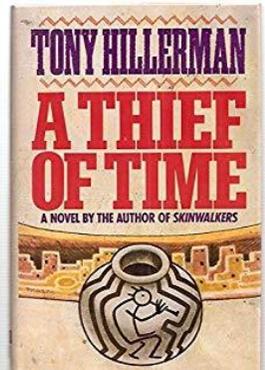
Happy Money

Why I enjoyed reading this book: The subtitle of the book is “The Science of Happier Spending” and I bought it because I wanted to learn more about why some purchases leave me happier than others. The author introduces five themes: Buy Experiences, Make it a Treat, Buy Time, Pay Now-Consume Later, and Invest in Others. I don’t agree with all of her findings but it did make me rethink how I was spending my money, and for that it was worth the price.



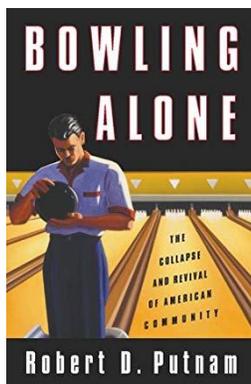
Weber's Greatest Hits Cookbook

Why I enjoyed reading this book: My wife and I went to a cooking class at a barbeque supply store and we were amazed at all the dishes the chef was able to prepare on the BBQ. Appetizers, main courses, deserts, you name it, and he grilled it to perfection. I enjoy trying new things as well as spending time outside barbequing with family, so this book seemed to call out to me.



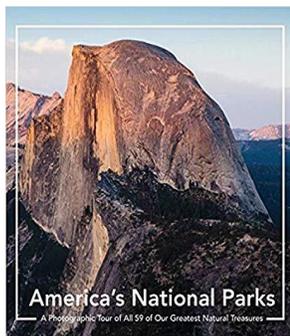
A Thief of Time

Why I enjoyed reading this book: Tony wrote over 20 mystery books and almost all of them were set in the Navajo Indian Reservation which covers parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. I have read all of these books at least once and several of them more than once. His characters have realistic strengths and weaknesses and the stories keep you engaged. I also like that I have visited many of these areas, so I can relate even better to his descriptions of the beautiful mountains, endless roads, unique culture and the vivid landscape colors.



Bowling Alone

Why I enjoyed reading this book: The author, who is a professor at Harvard, was intrigued by a report showing that although the number of Americans who bowled increased by 10% from 1980 to 1993, the percentage of people in bowling leagues declined by 40%. Yes, technically, people are not actually bowling alone, but the author does a great job of showing how someone being alone versus being part of a group can have dramatic impact on their health and happiness.



America's National Parks

Why I enjoyed reading this book: For Christmas this past year, my wife and I received a wall map of the world where you can place pins in all the places you have visited. It was nice to see all the foreign places we have been to, but it was also sad to see how little of the U.S. we have visited. So, we bought this book and have started mapping out parks and destinations to visit soon.