

New books & media **FREE**

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NEW BOOKS & MEDIA

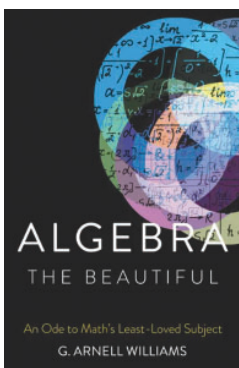
The Bomb

Rosa Ellis, host
BBC Sounds, 2022 (Season 2)

The second season of this BBC podcast focuses on the infamous atomic spy Klaus Fuchs. A communist refugee from Nazi Germany, Fuchs found refuge in the UK, where he studied under Max Born, a fellow émigré. During the war, Fuchs was sent to Los Alamos as part of the British contribution to the Manhattan Project, and while there, he passed intelligence to the Soviets. Only in 1949 was he unmasked as a spy. Although the script lapses into hyperbole all too often, *The Bomb* uses interviews with family members such as Fuchs's nephew, Klaus Fuchs-Kittowski, to present a nuanced depiction of his story. The family connections don't stop there: The podcast host, the journalist Rosa Ellis, is the grandniece of Fuchs's handler, Ursula Kuczynski.



—RD

**Algebra the Beautiful**

An Ode to Math's Least-Loved Subject

G. Arnell Williams
Basic Books, 2022. \$32.00

Algebra, a dreaded subject for many students, is the focus of this popular-science book by G. Arnell Williams, a math professor. Recognizing that many adults still struggle to understand it, Williams adopts a narrative approach aimed at nonspecialists to demystify algebra's concepts and rules. In addition to providing a thorough explanation of what algebra is and how it differs from arithmetic, he walks the reader through numerous word problems and demonstrates how to translate expressions and ideas into variables and equations. Whether that approach turns readers into algebra converts or not, they should at least gain a better appreciation for one of the most important branches of mathematics.

—CC

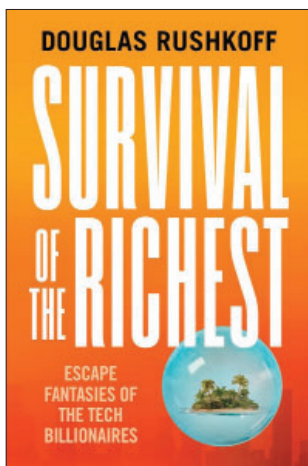
Survival of the Richest

Escape Fantasies of the Tech Billionaires

Douglas Rushkoff
W. W. Norton, 2022. \$26.95

Even as governments attempt to regulate their companies, tech billionaires continue to sail toward their next missions—be it Mars colonies, ocean communities, or launching cars into outer space. In *Survival of the Richest*, the self-proclaimed Marxist media theorist Douglas Rushkoff criticizes the cyclical nature of digital capitalism, which creates distractions and immersive realities that alienate consumers from the environmental and socioeconomic repercussions of unbridled technological development. Juxtaposing tech billionaires' extravagant plans with the toll they take on the environment and the global poor, Rushkoff calls out offshore "slave labor" and argues that governmental deregulation helped create today's tech oligarchs. Rushkoff's razor-sharp language is refreshing, and readers will most likely enjoy his brutal honesty.

—GD

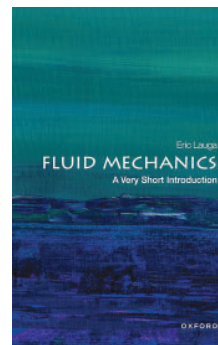
**Fluid Mechanics**

A Very Short Introduction

Eric Lauga
Oxford U. Press, 2022.
\$11.95 (paper)

Despite its ubiquity in nature, industry, and everyday life, fluid dynamics is often overlooked. So it is perhaps unsurprising that it took 27 years and more than 700 volumes before the subject was covered in Oxford University Press's long-running Very Short Introductions series. Fortunately, the resulting book was worth the wait. Authored by Eric Lauga, the lead editor of *Physical Review Fluids*, the new title covers such topics as viscosity, pipe flows, boundaries, vortices, and instabilities. A final chapter describes current areas of research in the field. Although Lauga includes more equations than one might expect of a title in the Oxford series, the book provides a great overview of the remarkable properties of fluids.

—RD

**Geopedia**

A Brief Compendium of Geologic Curiosities

Marcia Bjornerud
Princeton U. Press,
2022. \$16.95

From "Acasta gneiss" to "zircon," this pocket-sized encyclopedia comprises 74 geologic terms selected by the professor of geology Marcia Bjornerud "because they are portals into larger geologic stories." The entries represent a mix of rocks, landforms, locations, and geologic periods and phenomena, each of which serves as a springboard to launch into discussions of etymology, geological and human history, and interesting geophysical events. Aimed at general readers who want to learn more about an oft-neglected subject, *Geopedia* strives to convey, in a few short words, an understanding of how Earth works, how it has coevolved with life, and how much we have learned about it so far.

—CC PT

