

Reviewed June 2000:

- **Data Smog: Surviving the Information Glut**  
David Shenk  
(Harper © 1997)
- **The Social Life of Information**  
John Seely Brown  
and Paul Duguid  
(Harvard Business School Press  
© 2000)
- **Diffusion of Innovations**  
Everett Rogers  
(Free Press, 4th ed. © 1995)
- **The Tipping Point: How Little Things  
Can Make a Big Difference**  
Malcolm Gladwell  
(Little Brown & Company  
© 2000)
- **Tainted Truth**  
Cynthia Crossen  
(Touchstone Books © 1996)

Reviewed July 2001:

- **Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival  
of American Community**  
Robert Putnam  
(Simon & Schuster © 2000)
- **Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion**  
Robert B. Cialdini, Ph.D.  
(William Morrow and Co. © 1984)
- **Trust Us, We're Experts**  
Sheldon Rampton  
and John Stauber  
(Tarcher/Putnam © 2001)

- **Visual Persuasion:  
The Role of Images in Advertising**  
Paul Messaris  
(Sage Publications © 1997)

- **First Break All the Rules**  
Marcus Buckingham  
and Curt Coffman  
(Simon & Schuster  
© 2000)

Reviewed July 2002:

- **Environmental Values  
in American Culture**  
Willett Kempton,  
James S. Boster and  
Jennifer A. Hartley  
(The MIT Press © 1997)
- **The Making of a Conservative  
Environmentalist**  
Gordon K. Durnil  
(Indiana University Press © 2001)
- **One Market Under God**  
Thomas Frank  
(Anchor Books © 2001)
- **Smoke in Their Eyes: Lessons in Movement  
Leadership from the Tobacco Wars**  
Michael Pertschuk  
(Vanderbilt University Press  
© 2001)
- **The Argument Culture: Stopping America's  
War of Words**  
Deborah Tannen  
(Ballantine Books © 1999)

Thumbnail reviews and excerpts are available for all previous summer reading lists featured in free-range thinking. Just visit the newsletter archives at my website ([www.agoodmanonline.com](http://www.agoodmanonline.com)) and download the monthly editions listed at left.

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JULY 2003

## The Fourth Annual Summer Reading List

*Whether you're headed for the beach, the mountains, or just the chair next to the air conditioner, here's another batch of must-reads to help you bone up for the battles ahead.*

“ALL SUCCESSFUL businesses must have a research-and-development division,” writes Ronald Gross in his book, *Peak Learning* (Tarcher/Putnam © 1991). “Its job is to experiment: to develop the new ideas, products, and services that the organization will be offering in the future. Each of us needs to think of ourselves in this way, too. We need a time and a place to cultivate our capacities and power, which are the products and services we offer to the world.”

Hopefully, this summer will be that “time and place” for you, and with that optimistic thought in mind, I offer six communications-related books for your personal R&D division to consider. And if you've already read any of these books—or for those Evelyn Wood speed-reading types—on the back cover you'll find the titles of all books recommended going back to the first annual reading list in June 2000.

Happy reading! (And don't forget the sunscreen.)



**Social Work: Saatchi & Saatchi's Cause-Related Ideas**

(273 Publishers © 2000)



Three years ago, the international ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi assembled a traveling exhibition of its best work for good causes, and this coffee table book was the companion piece.

As such, it contains examples of print, outdoor, and broadcast campaigns the agency created for Doctors Without Borders, Greenpeace, New Zealand Red Cross, Second Harvest, UNICEF and many other worthy organizations. The book isn't cheap, but it features some of the most creative, disturbing and inspiring work you'll see anywhere.

▶ "A basic challenge that makes social communications so difficult but so rewarding if done successfully, is that the aim is to first transform the perceptions, then the attitudes of an audience on a subject they would probably prefer not to think about at all." (from the Foreword by Ed Jones)

**Media Unlimited: How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Overwhelms Our Lives**

by Todd Gitlin (Metropolitan Books © 2001)



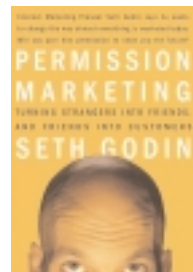
Even though two years have passed since the release of Gitlin's book, it still offers a reliable (and sobering) overview of life in the age of TMI (Too Much Information). Given that communications planning begins with

an understanding of your audience, it's worth spending time with Gitlin's book to gain a deeper sense of what every person living in our media-saturated culture contends with every day.

▶ "Immersed in the torrent of clips, blurbs, news bumpers, trailers, 'now this,' 'we'll be right back,' 'we have to take a break,' fifteen-second commercials, seven-second sound bites, headlines, pull quotes, [and] logos... where now is always about to recede into then, we don't care to make images stand still. We dwell in them, not on them."

**Permission Marketing**

by Seth Godin (Simon & Schuster © 1999)



Author, speaker, and self-proclaimed "agent of change," Godin is a little long on hype, but he's got a big idea. Actually, "permission marketing" is a stunningly simple concept that Godin shrewdly puts a name on and

puts forth at the right time—namely, that instead of trying to win attention by interrupting people (as TV commercials do), offer them something of value that will make them want to engage in a conversation with you. Sure, this "opt-in" approach can help businesses sell more stuff, but for advocates and fundraisers alike, permission marketing is a powerful idea worth exploring.

▶ "Permission Marketing has been around forever, but it takes advantage of new technology better than other forms of marketing. The Internet is the greatest direct mail medium of all time, and the low cost of frequent interaction makes it ideal for Permission Marketing."

**The Story Factor**

by Annette Simmons (Perseus Publishing © 2001)



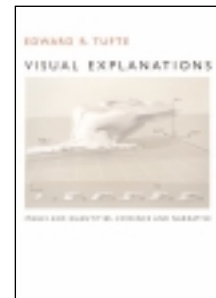
One of the better books on the purposeful uses of storytelling. Simmons is primarily interested in helping corporate types employ storytelling for greater organizational effectiveness, but the book's lessons

extend to the public interest sector as well. As the excerpt below indicates, storytelling has thought-provoking implications for advocacy in particular.

▶ "Facts don't have the power to change someone's story. Your goal is to introduce a new story that will let your facts in."

**Visual Explanations**

by Edward R. Tufte (Graphics Press © 1997)



It's a good bet that before the year is out, you're going to be standing in front of a group of people or submitting a report that includes charts, graphs, or other "visual explanations" that

help make your case. Are these elements working as hard for you as they can, or are they just eye candy or clutter that obscures your argument? Information architecture is a hot field these days, and there are plenty of gurus dispensing advice, but Ed Tufte, author and former Yale professor, is the

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widely acknowledged dean. Consider this essential text *The Elements of Style* for everything *but* the words.

▶ "In designing information, the idea is to use just noticeable differences, visual elements that make a clear difference but no more—contrasts that are definitive, effective, and minimal."

**A New Brand World**

by Scott Bedbury (Viking © 2002)



Having helped build Nike and Starbucks into two of the most recognized brands in the world, Bedbury lays out principles for effective branding that are as useful for nonprofits as they are for commercial companies. His

description of a "brand protagonist"—i.e., an organization that has the vision to define not only itself, but *the entire field it operates in*—was so provocative that it ricocheted around inside my brain for days.

▶ "The human desire to belong to a larger group is so deeply embedded in our primal tribal histories that for any brand to fill this need with its customers, particularly across a wide socioeconomic swath, is a notable victory." ■