

## Against Happiness In Praise Of Melancholy

We are addicted to happiness. More than any other generation, Americans today believe in the power of positive thinking. But who says we're supposed to be happy? In *Against Happiness*, the scholar Eric G. Wilson argues that melancholia is necessary to any thriving culture, that it is the muse of great literature, painting, music, and innovation—and that it is the force underlying original insights. So enough Prozac-ing of our brains. Let's embrace our depressive side as the wellspring of creativity. It's time to throw off the shackles of positivity and relish the blues that make us human.

*The Conquest of Happiness* is Bertrand Russell's recipe for good living. First published in 1930, it pre-dates the current obsession with self-help by decades. Leading the reader step by step through the causes of unhappiness and the personal choices, compromises and sacrifices that (may) lead to the final, affirmative conclusion of *The Happy Man*

*A Guide to Meditation and Mindfulness for the Modern Day* In our never-ending search for happiness we often find ourselves looking to external things for fulfillment, thinking that happiness can be unlocked by buying a bigger house, getting the next promotion, or building a perfect family. In this profound and inspiring book, Gelong Thubten shares a practical and sustainable approach to happiness. Thubten, a Buddhist monk and meditation expert who has worked with everyone from school kids to Silicon Valley entrepreneurs and Benedict Cumberbatch, explains how meditation and mindfulness can create a direct path to happiness. *A Monk's Guide to Happiness* explores the nature of happiness and helps bust the myth that our lives and minds are too busy for meditation. The book can show you how to:

- Learn practical methods to help you choose happiness
- Develop greater compassion for yourself and others
- Learn to meditate in micro-moments during a busy day
- Discover that you are naturally 'hard-wired' for happiness

Reading *A Monk's Guide to Happiness* could revolutionize your relationship with your thoughts and emotions, and help you create a life of true happiness and contentment.

A fun, illustrated guide that takes us around the world, discovering the secrets to happiness. Author Helen Russell (*The Year of Living Danishly*) uncovers the fascinating ways that different nations search for happiness in their lives, and what they can teach us about our own quest for meaning. This charming and diverse assortment of advice, history, and philosophies includes: Sobremesa from Spain Turangawaewae from New Zealand Azart from Russia Tarab from Syria joie de vivre from Canada and many more.

In this follow-up to the international phenomenon *The Courage to Be Disliked*, discover how to reconnect with your true self, experience true happiness, and live the life you want. What if one simple choice could unlock your destiny? Already a major Japanese bestseller, this eye-opening and accessible follow-up to the "compelling" (Marc Andreessen) international phenomenon *The Courage to be Disliked* shares the powerful teachings of Alfred Adler, one of the giants of 19th-century psychology, through another illuminating dialogue between the philosopher and the young man. Three years after their first conversation, the young man finds himself disillusioned and disappointed, convinced Adler's teachings only work in theory, not in practice. But through further discussions between the philosopher and the young man, they deepen their own understandings of Adler's powerful teachings, and learn the tools needed to apply Adler's teachings to the chaos of everyday life. To be read on its own or as a companion to the bestselling first book, *The Courage to Be Happy* reveals a bold new way of thinking and living, empowering you to let go of the shackles of past trauma and the expectations of others, and to use this freedom to create the life you truly desire. Plainspoken yet profoundly moving, reading *The Courage to Be Happy* will light a torch with the power to illuminate your life and brighten the world as we know it. Discover the courage to choose happiness.

In his harrowing yet ultimately hopeful memoir, *The Mercy of Eternity*, the author turns an unsparing eye on his own continuing struggle with bipolar depression and finds, within the very illness that causes so much suffering, the resources for hope, forgiveness, and love. --from publisher description.

Happiness today is not just a possibility or an option but a requirement and a duty. To fail to be happy is to fail utterly. Happiness has become a religion--one whose smiley-faced god looks down in rebuke upon everyone who hasn't yet attained the blessed state of perpetual euphoria. How has a liberating principle of the Enlightenment--the right to pursue happiness--become the unavoidable and burdensome responsibility to be happy? How did we become unhappy about not being happy--and what might we do to escape this predicament? In *Perpetual Euphoria*, Pascal Bruckner takes up these questions with all his unconventional wit, force, and brilliance, arguing that we might be happier if we simply abandoned our mad pursuit of happiness. Gripped by the twin illusions that we are responsible for being happy or unhappy and that happiness can be produced by effort, many of us are now martyring ourselves--sacrificing our time, fortunes, health, and peace of mind--in the hope of entering an earthly paradise. Much better, Bruckner argues, would be to accept that happiness is an unbidden and fragile gift that arrives only by grace and luck. A stimulating and entertaining meditation on the unhappiness at the heart of the modern cult of happiness, *Perpetual Euphoria* is a book for everyone who has ever bristled at the command to "be happy."

Looks at the American quest for happiness and rejection of melancholy and argues that melancholia is actually essential to a thriving culture, the underlying impetus for creative thinking, and the muse of great art and innovation.

"This book is for anyone who wants to enjoy work more--whether you are an employee or a manager, a new hire or a grizzled veteran, work in a small start-up, a huge corporation or the public sector. This book will give you the theory of happiness at work, simple, effective tools that you can use to create a better work life for yourself and a happier workplace, a massive dose of energy to get you to do something about it right here and now, [and] a specific plan to help you change your job for the better, find a new job where you can shine or to make your employees happy, motivated top-performers."--Page 4 of cover.

In winter 2014, a Tibetan monk lectured the world leaders gathered at Davos on the importance of Happiness. The recent DSM-5, the manual of all diagnosable mental illnesses, for the first time included shyness and grief as treatable diseases. Happiness has

become the biggest idea of our age, a new religion dedicated to well-being. In this brilliant dissection of our times, political economist William Davies shows how this philosophy, first pronounced by Jeremy Bentham in the 1780s, has dominated the political debates that have delivered neoliberalism. From a history of business strategies of how to get the best out of employees, to the increased level of surveillance measuring every aspect of our lives; from why experts prefer to measure the chemical in the brain than ask you how you are feeling, to why Freakonomics tells us less about the way people behave than expected, *The Happiness Industry* is an essential guide to the marketization of modern life. Davies shows that the science of happiness is less a science than an extension of hyper-capitalism.

The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben has always been an original reader of texts, understanding their many rich and multiple historical, aesthetic, and political meanings and effects. In *Profanations*, Agamben has assembled for the first time some of his most pivotal essays on photography, the novel, and film. A meditation on memory and oblivion, on what is lost and what remains, *Profanations* proves yet again that Agamben is one of the most provocative writers of our times. In ten essays, Agamben rethinks approaches to a series of literary and philosophical problems: the relation between genius, ego, and theories of subjectivity; the problem of messianic time as explicated in both images and lived experience; parody as a literary paradigm; the potential of magic to provide an ethical canon. The range of topics and themes addressed here attest to the very creativity of Agamben's singular mode of thought and his persistent pursuit to grasp the act of witnessing, sometimes futile, sometimes earth-shattering — the talking cricket in *Pinocchio*; "helpers" in Kafka's novels; pictorial representations of the Last Judgment, of anonymous female faces, and of Orson Wells's infamous object of obsession *Rosebud*. "In Praise of Profanity," the central essay of this small but dense book, confronts the question of profanity as the crucial political task of the moment. An act of resistance to every form of separation, the concept of profanation — as both the "return to common usage" and "sacrifice" — reorients perceptions of how power, consumption, and use interweave to produce an urgent political modality and desire: to profane the unprofaneable. In short, Agamben provides not only a new and potent theoretical model but also a writerly style that itself forges inescapable links between literature, politics, and philosophy.

The prize-winning author of *The Memory of Love* investigates London's hidden nature and marginalized communities in this fascinating novel. London, 2014. A fox makes its way across Waterloo Bridge. The distraction causes two pedestrians to collide—Jean, an American studying the habits of urban foxes, and Attila, a Ghanaian psychiatrist. Attila has arrived in London with two tasks: to deliver a keynote speech on trauma, and to contact a friend's daughter Ama, his "niece" who hasn't called home in a while. Ama has been swept up in an immigration crackdown, and now her young son Tano is missing. Jean offers to help Attila by mobilizing her network volunteer fox spotters. Soon, rubbish men, security guards, hotel doormen, traffic wardens—mainly West African immigrants who work the myriad streets of London—come together to help. As the search for Tano continues, a deepening friendship between Attila and Jean unfolds. Attila's time in London causes him to question his own ideas about trauma, the values of the society he finds himself in, and a personal grief of his own. In this delicate tale of love and loss, of thoughtless cruelty and unexpected community, Aminatta Forna asks us to consider our co-existence with one another and all living creatures, and the true nature of happiness.

An investigation of the happiness-prosperity connection and whether economists can measure well-being.

'Required reading ... Brock Bastian expertly picks apart the fundamental idea that humans thrive when they approach pleasure and avoid pain, explaining why hardship sometimes yields richer lives that are laden with meaning, deep social connections, and unexpected bliss' Adam Alter, author of *Drunk Tank Pink* In today's culture, happiness has become the new marker of success, while hardships are viewed as personal weaknesses, or problems to be fixed. We increasingly try to eradicate pain through medication and by insulating ourselves from risk and offence, despite being the safest generation to have ever lived. Yet in his research, renowned social psychologist Brock Bastian has found that suffering and sadness are neither antithetical to happiness nor incidental to it: they are a necessary ingredient for emotional well-being. Drawing on psychology, neuroscience and internationally acclaimed findings from Bastian's own lab, *The Other Side of Happiness* encourages us to take a more fearless approach to living. The most thrilling moments of our lives are often balanced on a knife edge between pleasure and pain, whether it is finding your true love, holding your new-born for the first time, finishing a marathon or even plunging into an icy sea. This is because pain and the threat of loss quite literally increase our capacity for happiness, as Bastian reveals, making us stronger, more resilient, more connected to other people and more attuned to what truly matters. Pain even makes us more mindful, since in our darkest moments we are especially focused and aware of the world around us. Our addiction to positivity and the pursuit of pleasure is actually making us miserable. Brock Bastian shows that, without some pain, we have no real way to achieve and appreciate the kind of happiness that is true and transcendent.

Learn how to achieve the happiness you deserve "A guide to sustaining your newfound contentment." —Psychology Today "Lyubomirsky's central point is clear: a significant portion of what is called happiness . . . is up for grabs. Taking some pages out of the positive psychology playbook, she coaches readers on how to snag it." —The New York Review of Books You see here a different kind of happiness book. *The How of Happiness* is a comprehensive guide to understanding the elements of happiness based on years of groundbreaking scientific research. It is also a practical, empowering, and easy-to-follow workbook, incorporating happiness strategies, excercises in new ways of thinking, and quizzes for understanding our individuality, all in an effort to help us realize our innate potential for joy and ways to sustain it in our lives. Drawing upon years of pioneering research with thousands of men and women, *The How of Happiness* is both a powerful contribution to the field of positive psychology and a gift to people who have sought to take their happiness into their own hands.

In his twisty, gritty, profoundly moving New York Times bestselling-debut--also called "mandatory reading" and selected as an Editors' Choice by the New York Times--Adam Silvera brings to life a charged, dangerous near-future summer in the Bronx. This special 5th Anniversary Edition features an introduction by Angie Thomas, New York Times bestselling author of *The Hate You Give*; a brand-new epilogue by Adam, and more. In the months after his father's suicide, it's been tough for sixteen-year-old Aaron Soto to find happiness again--but he's still gunning for it. With the support of his girlfriend Genevieve and his overworked mom, he's slowly remembering what that might feel like. But grief and the smile-shaped scar on his wrist prevent him from forgetting completely. When Genevieve leaves for a couple of weeks, Aaron spends all his time hanging out with this new guy, Thomas. Aaron's crew notices, and they're not exactly thrilled. But Aaron can't deny the happiness Thomas brings or how Thomas makes him feel safe from himself, despite the tensions their friendship is stirring with his girlfriend and friends. Since Aaron can't stay away from Thomas or turn off his newfound feelings for him, he considers turning to the Leteo Institute's revolutionary memory-

alteration procedure to straighten himself out, even if it means forgetting who he truly is. Why does happiness have to be so hard? Bestselling author Shawn Achor shows how to unlock hidden sources of potential in ourselves and others. In a world that thrives on competition and individual achievement, we are measuring and pursuing potential all wrong. By pursuing success in isolation - pushing others away as we push ourselves too hard - we are not just limiting our potential, we are becoming more stressed and disconnected than ever. In his highly anticipated follow-up to *The Happiness Advantage*, Achor reveals a better approach. Drawing on his work in 50 countries, he shows that success and happiness are not competitive sports. Rather, they depend almost entirely on how well we connect with, relate to, and learn from each other. Just as happiness is contagious, every dimension of human potential - performance, intelligence, creativity, leadership ability and health - is influenced by those around us. So when we help others become better, we reach new levels of potential, as well. Rather than fighting over scraps of the pie, we can expand the pie instead. *Small Potential* is the limited success we can attain alone. *BIG Potential* is what we can achieve together. Here, Achor offers five strategies - the SEEDS of Big Potential--for lifting the ceiling on what we can achieve while returning happiness and meaning to our lives. The dramatic shifts in how we approach work today demand an equally dramatic shift in our approach to success. *Big Potential* offers a new path to thriving in the modern world.

Shoot straight from the hip. Tell it like it is. Keep it real. We love these commands, especially in America, because they invoke what we love to believe: that there is an authentic self to which we can be true. But while we mock Tricky Dick and Slick Willie, we are inventing identities on Facebook, paying thousands for plastic surgeries, tuning into news that simply verifies our opinions. This is frontier forthrightness gone dreamy: reality bites, after all, and faith-based initiatives trump reality-based ones, and becoming disillusioned is a downer. In his new book, part memoir, part cultural analysis, *Keep It Fake: Inventing an Authentic Life*, Eric G. Wilson clarifies this confusion. He draws on neuroscience, psychology, sociology, philosophy, art, film, literature, and his own life to explore the possibility that there's no such thing as unwavering reality. Whether our left brains are shaping the raw data of our right into fabulous stories, or we are so saturated by society's conventions that we're always acting out prefab scripts, we can't help but be phony. But are some fakes more real than others? Are certain lies true? In lively prose—honest, provocative, erudite, witty, wide-ranging (as likely to riff on Bill Murray as to contemplate Plato)—*Keep It Fake* answers these questions, uncovering bracing truths about what it means to be human and helping us turn our necessary lying into artful living.

Why is it easier to ruminate over hurt feelings than it is to bask in the warmth of being appreciated? Because your brain evolved to learn quickly from bad experiences but slowly from the good ones. You can change this. *Hardwiring Happiness* lays out a simple method that uses the hidden power of everyday experiences to build new neural structures full of happiness, love, confidence, and peace. Dr. Hanson's four steps build strengths into your brain—balancing its ancient negativity bias—making contentment and a powerful sense of resilience the new normal. In mere minutes each day, we can transform our brains into refuges and power centers of calm and happiness.

Why can't we look away? Whether we admit it or not, we're fascinated by evil. Dark fantasies, morbid curiosities, Schadenfreude: As conventional wisdom has it, these are the symptoms of our wicked side, and we succumb to them at our own peril. But we're still compelled to look whenever we pass a grisly accident on the highway, and there's no slaking our thirst for gory entertainments like horror movies and police procedurals. What makes these spectacles so irresistible? In *Everyone Loves a Good Train Wreck*, the scholar Eric G. Wilson sets out to discover the source of our attraction to the caustic, drawing on the findings of biologists, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, philosophers, theologians, and artists. A professor of English literature and a lifelong student of the macabre, Wilson believes there's something nourishing in darkness. "To repress death is to lose the feeling of life," he writes. "A closeness to death discloses our most fertile energies." His examples are legion, and startling in their diversity. Citing everything from elephant graveyards and Susan Sontag's *On Photography* to the Tiger Woods sex scandal and Steel Magnolias, Wilson finds heartening truths wherever he confronts death. In *Everyone Loves a Good Train Wreck*, the perverse is never far from the sublime. The result is a powerful and delightfully provocative defense of what it means to be human—for better and for worse. A collection of homilies, speeches, and "messages of the day" that brings together Pope Francis's wisdom on finding happiness in the here and now. For Pope Francis, the appreciation of our everyday lives is a spiritual undertaking. Joy is a divine attribute, and creating joy around us an essential part of faith. Every homily and speech in this book delivers, in warm, engaging language accessible to believers and nonbelievers alike, a key lesson, instructing readers on finding love and happiness in a chaotic world. Along the way, Pope Francis discusses the sanctity of women's rights, talks about how the love of sports can bring out our best qualities, and explains why fighting discrimination is the essence of loving thy neighbor. He shares personal stories and anecdotes from his life, provides comforting messages of hope, and discusses the ways flawed families can make you a better person. The core ideas of Francis's papacy—mercy, support for marginalized people, and diplomacy—shine through. *Praise for Happiness in This Life* "Though the title of the book mentions happiness, this collection of thoughts addresses something much deeper—joy. Bringing together excerpts from Pope Francis's sermons, speeches, prayers, and addresses, these pieces address a range of themes, from mercy and humility to simplicity and family. . . . Readers will be encouraged to clear away the cacophony of modern society and embrace the simplicity of joy. A book as loving and encouraging as the man himself seems to be."—Booklist "With this wide-ranging collection of writings, homilies, and addresses, the current pontiff dispels any notion that religious practice is dour and antiquated. . . . It brings together the pope's most affecting passages to inspire Catholics (and those of other faiths) to lift up those around them."—Publishers Weekly "Reminiscent of the gentle encouragement of the Dalai Lama . . . Family-centered and practical—especially on difficult matters of familial contention—these homilies are, on the whole, gentle encouragements to do the right thing. . . . [This] collection offers clear insight into the pope's doctrinal concerns."—Kirkus Reviews

From the Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist George F. Will, his ninth collection of reflections on our culture, examining the many ways in which expertise, reason, and manners are continually under attack in our institutions, courts, political arenas, and social venues. George F. Will has been one of this country's leading columnists since 1974. He won the Pulitzer Prize for it in 1977. The Wall Street Journal once called him "perhaps the most powerful journalist in America." In this new collection, he examines a remarkably unsettling thirteen years in our nation's experience, from 2008 to 2020. Included are a number of columns about court cases, mostly from the Supreme Court, that illuminate why the composition of the federal judiciary has become such a contentious subject. Other topics addressed include the American Revolutionary War, historical figures from Frederick Douglass to JFK, as well as a scathing assessment of how State of the Union Addresses are delivered in the modern day. Mr. Will also offers his perspective on American socialists, anti-capitalist conservatives, drug policy, the criminal justice system, climatology, the Coronavirus, the First Amendment, parenting, meritocracy and education, China, fascism, authoritarianism, Frank Sinatra, Bob Dylan, The Beach Boys, and the morality of enjoying football. *American Happiness and Discontents: The Unruly Torrent, 2008-2020* is a collection packed with wisdom and leavened by humor from one of the preeminent columnists and intellectuals of our time.

This volume draws together the work of a diverse range of thinkers and researchers to address the question of happiness critically, using a wide variety of theoretical and empirical methodologies. Broadening the discussion beyond what might be considered highly individual and insular conceptualizations of happiness, often based on purely positivist approaches to the subject, authors raise questions about the nature of individual and collective anxieties that might underpin the current emphasis on happiness and the ideological or governmental ends that may be served by the framing of happiness in psychology and economics. With attention to how individuals understand and pursue happiness in their daily lives, *Critical Happiness Studies* highlights different theoretical paradigms that demonstrate the role of power in producing specific conceptualizations of happiness and, consequently, how they frame individual self-understanding or subjectivities and (re)shape political problems. The collection makes available critical, theoretical, and methodological resources for addressing a powerful set of cultural, political, and scientific discourses that have loomed large since the closing decade of the 20th century. A call for the establishment of a body of work in critical happiness studies, this book will appeal to scholars across the social sciences and humanities interested in the age-old problem of happiness.

An instant New York Times bestseller *Two spiritual giants. Five days. One timeless question. Nobel Peace Prize Laureates His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu have survived more than fifty years of exile and the soul-crushing violence of oppression. Despite their hardships—or, as they would say, because of them—they are two of the most joyful people on the planet. In April 2015, Archbishop Tutu traveled to the Dalai Lama's home in Dharamsala, India, to celebrate His Holiness's eightieth birthday and to create what they hoped would be a gift for others. They looked back on their long lives to answer a single burning question: How do we find joy in the face of life's inevitable suffering? They traded intimate stories, teased each other continually, and shared their spiritual practices. By the end of a week filled with laughter and punctuated with tears, these two global heroes had stared into the abyss and despair of our time and revealed how to live a life brimming with joy. This book offers us a rare opportunity to experience their astonishing and unprecedented week together, from the first embrace to the final good-bye. We get to listen as they explore the Nature of True Joy and confront each of the Obstacles of Joy—from fear, stress, and anger to grief, illness, and death. They then offer us the Eight Pillars of Joy, which provide the foundation for lasting happiness. Throughout, they include stories, wisdom, and science. Finally, they share their daily Joy Practices that anchor their own emotional and spiritual lives. The Archbishop has never claimed sainthood, and the Dalai Lama considers himself a simple monk. In this unique collaboration, they offer us the reflection of real lives filled with pain and turmoil in the midst of which they have been able to discover a level of peace, of courage, and of joy to which we can all aspire in our own lives.*

"Happiness is a spiritual path. The more you learn about true happiness, the more you discover the truth of who you are, what is important, and what your life is for." *Be Happy!* is the follow-up to Robert Holden's best-selling *Happiness NOW!* In this book, Robert gives you a front-row seat on his 8-week happiness program—famously tested by independent scientists for the BBC-TV documentary called *How to Be Happy*. Step-by-step he introduces you to a set of proven techniques, principles, meditations, and insights that will help you be happy now! Key lessons include: *Follow Your Joy* — stop chasing happiness and start enjoying your life as it happens, *The Happiness Contract* — undo mental and emotional blocks to happiness and success, *The Receiving Meditation* — increase your natural capacity for happiness and abundance, *The Forgiveness Practice* — give up all hopes for a better past and be happy now, and *The Gift of Happiness* — use the power of happiness to bless your life and benefit others. "This happiness training not only changes the way you feel; it actually changes the way your brain functions."— Professor Davidson, Wisconsin-Madison University BBC's *How to Be Happy* TV documentary

Drawing on what hard science says about the factors that breed happiness in childhood and beyond, here are 10 simple principles for fostering the skills and habits that will set the stage for optimism, emotional health, and confidence for kids.

Happiness is an everyday term in our lives, and most of us strive to be happy. But defining happiness can be difficult. In this *Very Short Introduction*, Dan Haybron considers the true nature of happiness. By examining what it is, assessing its importance in our lives, and how we can (and should) pursue it, he considers the current thinking on happiness, from psychology to philosophy. Illustrating the diverse routes to happiness, Haybron reflects on contemporary ideas about the pursuit of a good life and considers the influence of social context on our satisfaction and well-being. **ABOUT THE SERIES:** The *Very Short Introductions* series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

An accessible and clear-eyed handbook that offers fundamental tips, tools, and sanity-saving ideas to guide you through the seasons and help you better manage the mood-altering pressures of everyday life—"Try it. I took my blood pressure before and after. It dropped" (The New York Times). In the form of weekly journal entries over the course of a year, bestselling author,

journalist, and mental health activist Rachel Kelly shares the fifty-two strategies that have helped her cope with depression and anxiety and maintain a calm, happy lifestyle. *Walking on Sunshine* requires no complicated program or an overhaul of your current way of life. These are simple shortcuts to lighter, more conscious living—tangible rituals you can use to care for your body and mind. In the pages of this engaging book, you'll find breathing techniques, poetry, prayer, philosophical nuggets, and meditations, all of them gentle suggestions designed to bring more ease and equanimity into your daily life. Written in the candid, conversational style of a good friend and accompanied by delightful cartoon illustrations, *Walking on Sunshine* is a constant, supportive companion that will see you through your ups and downs.

Doing well with money isn't necessarily about what you know. It's about how you behave. And behavior is hard to teach, even to really smart people. Money—investing, personal finance, and business decisions—is typically taught as a math-based field, where data and formulas tell us exactly what to do. But in the real world people don't make financial decisions on a spreadsheet. They make them at the dinner table, or in a meeting room, where personal history, your own unique view of the world, ego, pride, marketing, and odd incentives are scrambled together. In *The Psychology of Money*, award-winning author Morgan Housel shares 19 short stories exploring the strange ways people think about money and teaches you how to make better sense of one of life's most important topics.

A smart and funny book by a prominent Harvard psychologist, which uses groundbreaking research and (often hilarious) anecdotes to show us why we're so lousy at predicting what will make us happy – and what we can do about it. Most of us spend our lives steering ourselves toward the best of all possible futures, only to find that tomorrow rarely turns out as we had expected. Why? As Harvard psychologist Daniel Gilbert explains, when people try to imagine what the future will hold, they make some basic and consistent mistakes. Just as memory plays tricks on us when we try to look backward in time, so does imagination play tricks when we try to look forward. Using cutting-edge research, much of it original, Gilbert shakes, cajoles, persuades, tricks and jokes us into accepting the fact that happiness is not really what or where we thought it was. Among the unexpected questions he poses: Why are conjoined twins no less happy than the general population? When you go out to eat, is it better to order your favourite dish every time, or to try something new? If Ingrid Bergman hadn't gotten on the plane at the end of *Casablanca*, would she and Bogey have been better off? Smart, witty, accessible and laugh-out-loud funny, *Stumbling on Happiness* brilliantly describes all that science has to tell us about the uniquely human ability to envision the future, and how likely we are to enjoy it when we get there.

Happiness is big business. Books, consultants, psychologists, organizations, and even governments tout happiness secrets that are backed by scientific findings. The problem is that all of this science is done by and for cis white men. And some of the most vocal of these happiness experts were announcing that women could become happier by espousing "traditional" values and eschewing feminism. Skeptical of this hypothesis, Ariel Gore took a deep dive into the optimism industrial complex, reading the history, combing the research, attending the conferences, interviewing the thought leaders, and exploring her own and her friends' personal experiences and desires. *Fuck Happiness* is a nuanced, thoughtful examination of what happiness means and to whom, how it's played a role in defining modern gender roles and power structures, and how we can all have a more empowered relationship with the pursuit of joy in our lives.

The economic downturn has forced nearly everyone into a life of limited means, but author Laura Lee was broke before it was cool. She won't tell anyone to clip coupons or forego their morning latte—in fact, she won't give any guidance on how to be saved from a dark financial destiny. Instead she provides readers with a psychological how-to full of fun tidbits. *Broke is Beautiful* is an insightful compendium of history, inspiration, facts, and humor that all celebrate the lack of money as a gateway to more serenity, self-awareness, and yes, even security. In the tradition of Alain de Botton's *How Proust Can Change Your Life* and Eric Wilson's *Against Happiness: In Praise of Melancholy*, here is an unconventional take on a subject that is relevant to us all. It is quirky comfort for the (literally) poor soul: offering historical and geographic perspective, ponderings on consumerism and credit scores, and even recipes for ramen noodles.

The Declaration of Independence states that all people are endowed with certain unalienable rights, and that among these is the pursuit of happiness. But is happiness equally available to everyone in America today? How about elsewhere in the world? Carol Graham draws on cutting-edge research linking income inequality with well-being to show how the widening prosperity gap has led to rising inequality in people's beliefs, hopes, and aspirations. For the United States and other developed countries, the high costs of being poor are most evident not in material deprivation but rather in stress, insecurity, and lack of hope. The result is an optimism gap between rich and poor that, if left unchecked, could lead to an increasingly divided society. Graham reveals how people who do not believe in their own futures are unlikely to invest in them, and how the consequences can range from job instability and poor education to greater mortality rates, failed marriages, and higher rates of incarceration. She describes how the optimism gap is reflected in the very words people use--the wealthy use words that reflect knowledge acquisition and healthy behaviors, while the words of the poor reflect desperation, short-term outlooks, and patchwork solutions. She also explains why the least optimistic people in America are poor whites, not poor blacks or Hispanics. *Happiness for All?* highlights the importance of well-being measures in identifying and monitoring trends in life satisfaction and optimism--and misery and despair--and demonstrates how hope and happiness can lead to improved economic outcomes.

Americans are addicted to happiness. When we're not popping pills, we leaf through scientific studies that take for granted our quest for happiness, or read self-help books by everyone from armchair philosophers and clinical psychologists to the Dalai Lama on how to achieve a trouble-free life: *Stumbling on Happiness*; *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*; *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living*. The titles themselves draw a stark portrait of the war on melancholy. More than any other generation, Americans of today believe in the transformative power of positive thinking. But who says we're supposed to be happy? Where does it say that in the Bible, or in the Constitution? In *Against Happiness*, the scholar Eric G. Wilson argues that melancholia is necessary to any thriving culture, that it is the muse of great literature, painting, music, and innovation—and that it is the force underlying original insights. Francisco Goya, Emily Dickinson, Marcel Proust, and Abraham Lincoln were all confirmed melancholics. So enough Prozac-ing of our brains. Let's embrace our depressive sides as the

