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Bill Gates: 5 Amazing Books I Read in 2017



By **Bill Gates**
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IDEAS

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Reading is my favorite way books are the best way to explore new topics to indulge my curiosity. Although I'm lucky that I get to meet with a lot of interesting people and visit fascinating places through my work, I still think that interest you.

This year I picked up books on a bunch of diverse subjects. I really enjoyed ***Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS*** by Joby Warrick. I recommend it to anyone who wants a compelling history lesson on how ISIS managed to seize power in Iraq.

On the other end of the spectrum, I loved John Green's new novel, ***Turtles All the Way Down***, which tells the story of a young woman who tracks down a missing billionaire. It deals with serious themes like mental illness, but John's stories are always entertaining and full of great literary references.

Another good book I read recently is ***The Color of Law*** by Richard Rothstein. I've been trying to learn more about the forces preventing economic mobility in the U.S., and it helped me understand the role federal policies have played in creating racial segregation in American cities.

I've written longer reviews about some of the best books I read this year. They include a memoir by one of my favorite comedians, a heartbreaking tale of poverty in America, a deep dive into the history of energy, and not one but two stories about the Vietnam War. If you're looking to curl up by the fireplace with a great read this holiday season, you can't go wrong with one of these.

The Best We Could Do, by Thi Bui. This gorgeous graphic novel is a deeply personal memoir that explores what it means to be a parent and a refugee. The author's family fled Vietnam in 1978. After giving birth to her own child, she decides to learn more about her parents' experiences growing up in a country torn apart by foreign occupiers.

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, by Matthew Desmond. If you want a good understanding of how the issues that cause poverty are intertwined, you should read this book about the eviction crisis in Milwaukee. Desmond has written a brilliant portrait of Americans living in poverty. He gave me a better sense of what it is like to be poor in this country than anything else I have read.

Believe Me: A Memoir of Love, Death, and Jazz Chickens, by Eddie Izzard. Izzard's personal story is fascinating: he survived a difficult childhood and worked

relentlessly to overcome his lack of natural talent and become an international star. If you're a huge fan of him like I am, you'll love this book. His written voice is very similar to his stage voice, and I found myself laughing out loud several times while reading it.

The Sympathizer, by Viet Thanh Nguyen. Most of the books I've read and movies I've seen about the Vietnam War focused on the American perspective. Nguyen's award-winning novel offers much-needed insight into what it was like to be Vietnamese and caught between both sides. Despite how dark it is, ***The Sympathizer*** is a gripping story about a double agent and the trouble he gets himself into.

Energy and Civilization: A History, by Vaclav Smil. Smil is one of my favorite authors, and this is his masterpiece. He lays out how our need for energy has shaped human history – from the era of donkey-powered mills to today's quest for renewable energy. It's not the easiest book to read, but at the end you'll feel smarter and better informed about how energy innovation alters the course of civilizations.

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