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私の My favorite books 本棚



● Today's Art by Tarō Okamoto (Kobunsha)

I picked this book up when I was wondering how people in the art world decide what has value and if it was something anyone could actually understand in the first place. Very early on, it said that "everyone should be free to judge art based on their own capacity." It left quite the impression. I read this for the first time 20 years ago. All I knew about the author was that he had exploded in popularity back in the day, but as I read, I grew to understand why his career trajectory went the way it did. While my talents have never really manifested in the artistic fields, I have been able to pursue research that interests me, work on Kappa-kun on my YouTube channel, and other hobbies while recognizing that their "value" isn't something for me to decide. This has let me work on these projects with a certain ease of mind, so I would say that this book has made quite a large impact on my life.

● Patterns in Nature by Philip Ball (University of Chicago Press)

When I was looking for insight into how to design protein molecules, I skimmed over quite a few books on design, but none of them really captured my interest. For my situation, I followed the adage, "nature is the best teacher" and came across this book. This book introduces the reader to an array of patterns that appear in various scales in the natural world. I found myself staring at the beautiful images and patterns at the store, and ended up buying the book on the spot. While the book didn't directly lead to my research's success, I personally enjoyed imagining what it would be like to create some of the patterns it talked about. It's relatively short, but there are captions and explanations for the different designs. Even now, on days when I'm tired, I will page through this to relax.

● Osama no Restaurant, Script by Kōki Mitani (Fuji TV)

"If there is no kindness in your (the owner's) heart, even if your restaurant is called 'first-class', it'll never be more than third-rate." (translated from Japanese) This quote left a strong impression on me. Right before this scene, the characters are discussing what "first-class" means and if there can even be some type of universal standard. This train of thought made me think hard about how arrogant it is to try to rate humans on some sort of universal standard. Whether it's about trying to learn how to become a better leader or just the basic idea that even when you think an issue is trivial, it could mean the world to someone else, this show demonstrates how important it is to be considerate of others and their backgrounds. No matter how many times I watch this series, I am so moved.

● Molybdenum and Tungsten Enzymes, Russ Hille, Carola Shulzke, Martin L. Kirke, eds. (Royal Society of Chemistry)

I felt like I needed to include at least one specialized book to look good. I started my research on evolution and the elements because I had been involved in research on life and elemental science since I was a graduate student and wanted to produce my own theories. This book gives a thorough summary of how molybdenum is used in living organisms and how tungsten, which is rarely used by regular organisms, can be used. I think that a reader needs to be somewhat familiar with how respiration works, but I was able to get a much clearer understanding of how electrons transfer during anaerobic respiration. I was especially moved by the inherent beauty of living systems when reading about how elaborately coenzymes are laid out and set up to form pathways for electron transfers.

● Fukoku Kyohei: An Introduction to Geopolitical Economy by Takeshi Nakano (Toyo Keizai)

The title translates roughly to "Rich Nations and Strong Militaries," which makes it seem a bit extreme, but it's an incredibly serious analysis of history and economics. It's not what would be called an "economics" book in a traditional sense, but rather it tackles the very ideas of "nations," "taxes," and "money." I found it especially interesting that while current mainstream economics argues from the commodity money theory, in which money has value, the author argues from the credit money theory, in which money is a type of debt. Looking at things from the credit money theory, I was forced to think about whether our current understanding of monetary value is inherently flawed despite being easy to understand. I think this is a topic, and which theory best explains reality, is something that young people should consider since they will be the ones living in the future.