

By [Blink Staff](#)

Image: The books we loved this year.

The holiday break is nearly here, and the Blink team is excited for some restorative time away from the studio. Quiet days and long flights make for some great reading time.

First, some general advice: “I don't usually recommend reading UX or research books, especially over the holidays,” says Mira Rao, research director in our San Francisco studio. “Instead, get cozy and read whatever excites and activates you. Read about fairy tales and magic, about ancient history, about art and poetry. I've found the most exciting ideas and inspiration comes from places that are not connected too closely to your work. And anyway it's the holidays. It's time to get refreshed and take a mental break.” Whether you take Mira's advice or use the downtime to catch up on thought leadership, here are some books we recommend.

Here are some books — UX-related, fiction, and otherwise — recommended by Blink

*I'm listening to the book **Ruined by Design** by Mike Monteiro and it's making me think a lot about ethical concerns in design. It kind of feels like he's yelling at me the whole time, though, so it might be a better read than a listen.” — **Claudia Haon, UX Designer in Seattle***

*"[Stories of Your Life and Others](#) by Ted Chiang. It's not really UX-related, but a great little collection of sci-fi short stories that make you think. They are each a fast read so you can get through the book pretty quick." — **Tristan Plank, Interaction Designer in Denver***

*"I recommend [Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products](#) by Nir Eyal." — **Martin Garcia, ResOps Specialist in Seattle***

*"My favorites this year were tied between **Sapiens** and [Where the Crawdad's Sing](#). Both look at human beings in an interesting light that I hadn't experienced before. I love a book that allows you to step into someone else's world! Sapiens brought me back to the beginning of the human species and how they lived. Where the Crawdads Sing brought you into the mind of a girl from a different time and place in the South. Both were captivating in different ways!" — **Kristina Knaus, HR Director in Monterey***

*"[Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy](#) — it's one of the most descriptive and funny books I have ever read." — **Avery, Lead Moderator Consultant in Seattle***

*"If you're into YA fantasy, [Children of Blood and Bone](#) by Tomi Adeyemi is a great adventure in a vivid world heavily inspired by Yoruba culture and religion. I'm excited to dive into the second installment, [Children of Virtue and Vengeance](#), over the Christmas break!" — **Rukiya Reed, Administrative Supervisor in Seattle***

*"I'd say [Diamond Age](#) by Neal Stephenson. This classic sci-fi novel has been an endless source of inspiration for my everyday UX-related innovations. As years go by it becomes more and more relevant, and piece by piece turns from fiction into fact." — **Quba Michalski, Director of Innovation in Seattle***

"For work-related reads, I highly recommend [The Five Dysfunctions of a Team](#). For fiction, I really enjoyed [Where the Crawdad's Sing](#)."

— **Brigitt Rains, VP of Operations in Seattle**

*"I recommend [More from Less: The Surprising Story of How We Learned to Prosper Using Fewer Resources—and What Happens Next.](#)" — **Lauren Javor, Senior UX Designer in Seattle***

*"I've got a few, including [Design For How People Think: Using Brain Science to Build Better Products](#) by John Whalen. As a brain science geek myself, I thought this was an interesting take on design strategy, written by a psychologist. [Follow This Thread: A Maze Book to Get Lost In](#) by Henry Eliot is on my top ten list for the year. A fascinating essay on mazes and labyrinths that reads like an exciting mystery and the book design makes you feel like you're navigating the twists and turns yourself! Strangest-but-most delightful book of the year award must go to [The Third Policeman](#) by Flann O'Brien. It's a sort of a murder mystery about the police, and bicycles, and a metaphysical police station. Thanks to Blinker Matt Hemeyer for the recommendation!" — **Scott Lambridis, Head of Design in San Francisco***

Happy reading and happy holidays from Blink!