Charlotte Lee

A Vast Machine: Computer Models, Climate Data, and the Politics of Global Warming By Paul Edwards (2010) Sometimes the right book comes across one's radar at just the right time. In the course of researching how scientists

reuse or contribute "small data" in relationship to infrastructural, scientific, and computing resources, my students and I were struggling with understanding the unique assemblage of data, theory, and algorithms that make up climate science models. I am now part way through this engaging historical account of how climate science produces knowledge, particularly computer models and climate data. The "vast machine" discussed here is the global infrastructure of climate science that involves science expertise,

technological systems, political influence, economic interests, and mass media. After a somewhat fragmented introduction where the author is very careful to sketch out what the book is not attempting to do—an interesting demonstration of the politics of this work itself—the book hits its stride.

Gurus, Hired Guns, and Warm Bodies: Itinerant Experts in a Knowledge Economy By Stephen Barley and Gideon Kunda (2006) I just finished reading this slightly older, but still relevant, book with some of my Ph.D. and B.S. students. Recently we have been doing a lot of studies

of work practice that were necessarily interview-heavy, with relatively less collection and reportage of field observations. My students wanted to get a feel for how a book-length treatment of this kind of data would feel, so I picked out this one about technical contractors in, for the most part, Silicon Valley—a place I called home around the time this data was collected. Barley and Kunda slowly and methodically lay out deceptively simple points one after another and nest them so that the reader hardly notices that s/he has picked up a sophisticated model of contractors' work practices.

Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage By Alfred Lansing (1999) The *Endurance* was the name of Ernest Shackleton's ship that got crushed in the Antarctic ice, leaving Shackleton and his party of 28 stranded. *Endurance* is also a completely appropriate name for the story about what the Shackleton party went through from 1914 to 1916. This is an

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almost unbelievable tale of survival in incredibly harsh conditions but it is also an amazing tale of camaraderie, ingenuity, and adventure. A great read that reminded me of the power of companionship and also gave me new things to be grateful for, like not getting eaten by a passing killer whale or not having to take turns with my workmates to use one of a few remaining damp, moldy sleeping bags to stay warm.

Hamburger:
A Global History
By Andrew Smith (2008)
I love food. I love tasting it, photographing it, and even reading about it. I picked up this book on one of my favorites, the simple hamburger, as a test case for *The Edible Series*, a series of slim volumes with each one discussing the history of a particular food or drink. I have new respect for the historical importance of the meeting of Salisbury Steak, factory workers, and food trucks (yes, they were there!) for giving rise to the modern

hamburger. Next up? Perhaps reading the volumes on cheese and gin.

The Ocean at the End of the Lane By Neil Gaiman (2014)

What I love about Neil Gaiman is that he uses his grown-up self to celebrate his inner child. The main character of this book resembles what Gaiman has said that he himself was like as a boy: a bookworm, a misfit, but loved and loving, trusting of his friends, and with a hunger and appreciation for the fantastic. This tale is diverting for those who like fantasy books. Though it reads a bit like a children's story, be forewarned: It's slightly dark.

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