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London – 2020

Journalism - History - Memoir

THE DAY WATCHMAN (on submission)

A Guard's Search for Solace and Meaning in the Metropolitan Museum of Art

by Patrick Bringley

NA: CLA, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

The account of ten years spent as a guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Proposal is available

For ten years Patrick Bringley stood watch in the galleries of one of the most storied institutions in the world. In the words of one of the veteran guards who trained him: “It’s a straightforward job young man. Protect life, protect property... They will ask you for the dinosaurs. They will demand the Mona Lisa. Answer their questions in two words or hundreds, that’s up to you. The important thing is, what you mustn’t forget, we are here to remind these people” — a proud gesture indicating our working space — “these are *Masters*.” This suited Patrick just fine because what brought him to the Met in the first place is what gives THE DAY WATCHMAN its distinct and different weight. When he was 23 and just getting started at *The New Yorker* magazine, his beloved older brother was diagnosed with an ultimately fatal cancer. Grief-stricken after his death, Patrick chose to opt out, become a guard in the most beautiful place he knew, stand still awhile, and “lose himself in the belly of the whale.” As Patrick sought solace and meaning during his posts they took him “across twelve acres (and also the earth, and back to the dawn of history), from “Egypt to Congo to Korea to Rome.” Over time he found his attention migrating between those Masters and their insights about life and death (lamentation, adoration), to the community of guards who made him feel so welcome, and the patrons themselves, what he called the living museum. “These strangers had good faces. They had speaking walks. They were daughters who looked like their mothers’ pasts, fathers who looked like their sons’ futures.” He found himself inspired to share the museum and became determined to produce a monumental Guard’s Guide to the Met, an inventory of the treasures he’d discovered in his work. But as grief gave way to action he came to realize the limitations of his plan and wondered if the only way to share the museum might be to leave. Because “even in an art museum, it turns out, everything moves.” Books about work are perennial best-sellers, with titles like LAB GIRL, HEAT, HEADS IN BEDS, and WAITER RANT finding both front-list review attention and solid backlist sales. There’s never been an insider’s look at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the third-most visited museum in the world, with 125,000 members, and 7 million annual visitors. We can anticipate reader and press interest to be strong. But the book offers far more than just a vicarious and privileged look at a storied institution. It’s a heartfelt tribute to the life of his brother, Tom, the spirit looking over the book, and Patrick’s honest reckoning of loss, love, grief and life finds common courage in the collection of the Met, revealing for readers the life evident in the works of those Masters and so many more besides.

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THE PERFORMANCE OF MIRACLES (S&S)

Language, Power, and Alexander Graham Bell's Quest to Cure Deafness

By Katie Booth

NA: S&S, UK: Scribe, Translation: CLA

The groundbreaking account of the inventor of the telephone and the unintended consequences of his quest to cure deafness.

MS available November 2019; publishing January, 2021

Alexander Graham Bell's primary objective in life was to teach the deaf to speak. He believed the deaf could be happy and productive members of society so long as they would abandon sign language, impersonate speech, and learn to read lips. The son of a deaf woman, later married to another, he dedicated his life to his increasingly legendary teaching methods and to inventing technology that could help the deaf even more. Unexpectedly, from these experiments came the world-changing telephone. And, unexpectedly, the telephone would have a profound impact on the deaf, just not in the way anyone could have expected. As Booth says, "Today, the hearing still think of Alexander Graham Bell as an inventor. But in the Deaf world he is seen not as the great figure of liberation that he set out to be but, instead, as the greatest catalyst in deaf oppression. In the Deaf world, he is hated today for what he considered his most important work." The role deafness played in Bell's world-changing invention has never fully been told just as the debate as to whether sign language is good or bad for the deaf still rages today. **THE PERFORMANCE OF MIRACLES** will tell the profound and tempestuous love story between Bell and his wife Mabel, the dramatic and controversial events surrounding his invention of the telephone, focusing anew on Bell's lifelong—yet deeply flawed—pursuit of a cure for deafness, while unraveling the ways in which we perceive (and often try to fix) difference.

Katie Booth teaches writing and journalism at the University of Pittsburgh her work has appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, *The Atavist Magazine*, and many others.

FILTHY BEASTS (Avid Reader)

A memoir

By Kirkland Hamill

NA: Avid Reader, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

RUNNING WITH SCISSORS meets DON'T LET'S GO TO THE DOGS TONIGHT, this riches to rags memoir about family, fortune, love, loss, and the long road back home.

MS is available, publishing July, 2020

Kirkland Hamill was 6 years old when his wealthy family's money ran out, 8 years old when his parents got divorced, and 18 years old when he fell in love for the first time – with a straight boy from Alabama – when he realized something was terribly wrong. **FILTHY BEASTS** follows what happened after his family - wealthy

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WASPs with a Mayflower pedigree, club memberships, a mansion on Long Island, and a butler named Eugene – were transformed by the sudden loss of the family fortune they’d always expected to have. Their father was in the social register and their mother was a glamorous, witty, and charismatic Grace Kelly-esque beauty transformed by her marriage from humble origins in Bermuda to a woman who referred to those not in her social set as “no come-froms.” She raised Kirk and his two brothers (whom she lovingly called her “filthy beasts”) to want for nothing and expect everything. Until it all went to hell. In the aftermath of his parent’s divorce and their reduced circumstances, Kirk, the middle son, would dedicate himself to trying to keep the family together and his increasingly fierce, fearsome, and alcoholic mother happy. But as much as the family’s circumstances were changed, their behaviors largely stayed the same forcing Kirk to learn how to find his own way in the family and the world. At its center is the author’s relationship to a powerful and demanding mother who is the driving force in the family’s identity, pulling them together and driving them apart in equal parts.

A MOST REMARKABLE CREATURE (Knopf)

The Hidden Life and Epic Journey of the World’s Smartest Birds of Prey

By Jonathan Meiburg

NA: Knopf, UK: Bodley Head, Translation: CLA

An enthralling modern voyage of discovery to meet a rare and mysterious bird of prey that puzzled Darwin, fascinates modern-day falconers, and carries secrets of our planet’s deep past in its family history.

MS available June 2020, publishing May 2021

In 1833, a young Charles Darwin was astonished by a strange animal he met in the Falkland Islands: a set of handsome, social, and oddly crow-like falcons that were “tame and inquisitive”, “quarrelsome and passionate”, and so insatiably curious that they stole hats, compasses, and other valuables from the crew of the *Beagle*. Darwin met many unusual creatures in his five-year voyage, but no others showed an interest in studying him, and he wondered why these birds were confined to remote islands at the tip of South America, sensing a larger story. But he set this mystery aside, and never returned to it; and almost two hundred years later, Meiburg picks up where Darwin left off. These birds—now called striated caracaras—still exist, though they’re very rare; and *A Most Remarkable Creature* reveals the wild and fascinating story of their history, origins, and possible futures in a series of travels throughout South America, from the fog-bound coasts of Tierra del Fuego to the tropical forests of Guyana. Along the way, Meiburg draws us into the life and work of William Henry Hudson, the Victorian naturalist raised in Argentina but moved to London as adult from where he championed caracaras as an unsung wonder of the natural world; and takes us to falconry parks in the English countryside, where captive birds perform incredible feats of memory and problem-solving. *A Most Remarkable Creature* is a hybrid of science writing, travelogue, and biography, as generous and accessible as it is sophisticated, and much more than a book about birds: it’s a journey to uncover moments of first contact between humans and animals, science and religion, and the mismatched continents of what Europeans mistakenly called the New World. Jonathan Meiburg is a writer, ornithologist, and adventurer who’s best known as the singer of the band Shearwater. His writing has appeared in *The Believer*, *Talkhouse*, and *The Appendix*. His unique career between the sciences and the arts makes him an ideal guide for a journey that takes in the deep history and landscapes of an entire continent, from the lush forests of Guyana to the windswept Falkland Islands. He lives in central Texas.

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SPOOKED (HarperCollins)

The Trump Dossier, Black Cube, and the Rise of Private Spies

By Barry Meier

NA: Harper Collins, UK: Sceptre, Translation: CLA

A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist's revelatory look inside the burgeoning world of private spies with a focus on Glenn Simpson, Christopher Steele, Black Cube, and many others.

Partial MS/Proposal is available, publishing Summer 2020

Private spies are shaping Presidential elections, the future of Hollywood, government policies and the fortunes of companies. They are also peering into our personal lives as never before, using off-the shelf technology to listen to our phone calls, monitor our emails and decide what we see on social media. Private spying has never been cheaper and the business has never been more lucrative—just as its power to influence has never been more pervasive. SPOOKED will take readers on a journey into a booming and hidden billion-dollar industry in which information is currency and loyalties are for sale. The book will be set against a backdrop of high-profile cases and tell a story of the moment, one that is part media story, part business story, part politics story, and part espionage tale. Using his unique experience and access to sources, award-winning investigative journalist Barry Meier will transform events readers think they understand into absorbing stories that contain new and shocking revelations about the inner workings of a secret world. SPOOKED is sure to appeal to the readers who loved the recent bestsellers BAD BLOOD, RED NOTICE, and DARK EDGE.

Barry Meier is a Pulitzer Prize-winning former *New York Times* investigative reporter. He's twice won the George Polk award for Investigate Reporting and he is the author of MISSING MAN (FSG, 2016) and PAINKILLER (Rodale, 2003/Random House, 2018).

PAIN KILLER (Random House)

An Empire of Deceit and the Origins of America's Opioid Epidemic

By Barry Meier

NA: Random House, UK and Translation: CLA

Netflix is adapting into PAINKILLER, a series to air globally in 2021. Peter Berg (Friday Night Lights) will direct, Eric Newman (Narcos) and Alex Gibney (Going Clear, the Inventory) will produce. The show runners are Micah Fitzerman-Blue and Noah Harpster, who wrote the screenplay for "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood."

MS is available, updated edition published May, 2018

Between 1999 and 2017, an estimated 250,000 Americans died from overdoses involving prescription painkillers, a plague ignited by Purdue Pharma's aggressive marketing of OxyContin. Families, working class and wealthy, have been torn apart, businesses destroyed, and public officials pushed to the brink. In *Pain*

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Killer, Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* reporter Barry Meier exposes the roots of the most pressing health epidemic of the twenty-first century. Powerful narcotic painkillers, or opioids, were once used as drugs of last resort for pain sufferers. Purdue turned OxyContin into a billion-dollar blockbuster by launching an unprecedented marketing campaign claiming that the drug's long-acting formulation made it safer to use than traditional painkillers for many types of pain. That illusion was quickly shattered as drug abusers learned that crushing an Oxy could release its narcotic payload all at once. Even in its prescribed form, Oxy proved fiercely addictive. As OxyContin's use and abuse grew, Purdue concealed what it knew from regulators, doctors, and patients. Here are the people who profited from the crisis and those who paid the price, those who plotted in boardrooms and those who tried to sound alarm bells. A country doctor in rural Virginia, Art Van Zee, took on Purdue and warned officials about OxyContin abuse. An ebullient high school cheerleader, Lindsey Myers, was reduced to stealing from her parents to feed her escalating Oxy habit. A hard-charging DEA official, Laura Nagel, tried to hold Purdue executives to account. The drugmaker's owners, Raymond and Mortimer Sackler, whose names adorn museums worldwide, made enormous fortunes from the commercial success of OxyContin. In this updated edition of *Pain Killer*, Barry Meier breaks new ground in his decades-long investigation into the opioid epidemic. He takes readers inside Purdue to show how long the company withheld information about the abuse of OxyContin and gives a shocking account of the Justice Department's failure to alter the trajectory of the opioid epidemic and protect thousands of lives. Equal parts crime thriller, medical detective story, and business exposé, *Pain Killer* is a hard-hitting look at how a supposed wonder drug became the gateway drug to a national tragedy.

THE MASTER OF DECEPTION (Rare Bird)

A memoir

By John-Ivan Palmer

NA: Rare Bird, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

The story of son's search for his father amid the fabric of family, guilt, renunciation, and hidden history in the borderlands of 1950s stage show and trailer park culture.

MS is available, publishing August, 2020

In the tradition of Geoffrey Wolf's *The Duke of Deception* and Jeanette Walls' *The Glass Castle*, John-Ivan Palmer takes readers on the road with his magician father and his mother, the lovely assistant, as they travel from Elks Lodges to County Fairs, performing alongside contortionists, ventriloquists, and every manner of screwball act that passed for variety entertainment before television drove us all indoors and away from one another. From the dressing rooms across America, John learned to stay invisible among other acts while his parents performed, making friends with janitors, night watchmen, elevator operators and cooks who gave him leftover tortes and parfaits. They were as exotic to him as the Master of Deception was to them. When they were in one place long enough for John to attend to school he was instructed to follow the other kids and just sit down at a desk. Before they knew who John was, his family would be gone. But even at home (in their trailer), his father remained aloof and unknowable. "Growing up confined to the back seat had allowed me to study every wave of my father's hair, the arch of his ears, the stubble on his jaw, but nothing of what was beneath. It was only after he vanished from worldly existence that it occurred to me that whatever was beneath might be something I could know. And I would soon learn there was a reason for his silence, which in turn became a

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reason for mine as an invisible dressing room kid." The questions of Palmer's young life defined the path of his adult life, and, as he proceeded to find his own way in this world, he began to find unexpected answers about his father's and what made him who he was. John-Ivan Palmer is a widely published essayist and journalist. His writing has appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Milwaukee Journal*, *Oregon Journal*, *Minneapolis Star*, *Exquisite Corpse*, *Wisconsin Review*, *New Oregon Review*, *Film Threat*, *Fortean Times* and numerous anthologies in the US, Britain and Japan. His short fiction has been awarded a Pushcart Prize. He and his wife live in Minnesota.

WHAT I HEARD THROUGH THE WALL (37 Ink)

Observations on Race, Bodies, and Gender

By Savala Nolan Trepczynski

NA: 37 Ink, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

A memoir in essays in the vein of Roxane Gay and Tressie McMillan Cottom

MS Available, June 2020, Publishing: June 2021

Trepczynski is the daughter of a black father and a white mother and, as she says, her light complexion contrasts with her kinky hair and broad nose to embody what old folks used to call "a whole lot of yellow wasted." She started her first diet at age 3 or 4 and has been nearly skeletal and truly fat, multiple times, which is to say, she knows "things about womanhood that you can't know if your body is normal or your weight hasn't fluctuated wildly." She has lived in poverty and had an elite education, with regular access to wealth and privilege. Savala has always lived between races, between classes, and between body types, and this in-between status is what gives the essays in **WHAT I HEARD THROUGH THE WALL** their strikingly clear and refreshing point of view on the defining tension points in our culture. But as centered in themes of identity as her writing is, and as sophisticated an academic and thinker as she is, these autobiographical pieces are most defined by her storytelling style. Her writing is accessible, human, often humorous, self-aware, candid, and as full of appetites as it is anxieties. The result is an inclusive and magnetic memoir in essays that sheds light on the center from the edge, while giving voice and a counter-narrative to those on the outside. Savala Nolan Trepczynski is the executive director of the Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice at UC Berkley School of Law. The center focuses on the intersection of law and social justice with an emphasis on race and gender. As executive director she speaks publicly, leads workshops, and teaches about race, gender, subordination, privilege and power. She's the co-creator of the law school's first Race and Law concentration and she also created the law school's first racial justice fellowship.

THE DIVINE MISS MARBLE (Dutton)

A True Story of Hollywood, Tennis, and Triumph

By Robert Weintraub

NA & UK: Dutton, Translation: CLA

The story of 1930s tennis icon Alice Marble, and her life of sports, celebrity, and incredible mystery.

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MS available, publishing Summer 2020

Who was Alice Marble? In her public life, she was the biggest tennis star of the pre-war era, a household name like Joe DiMaggio and Joe Louis. She was famous for overcoming serious illness to win the biggest tournaments, including Wimbledon. She was also a fashion designer and trendsetter, a contributor to a pioneering new comic called *Wonder Woman*—and friend to the biggest names in Hollywood and society, like Carole Lombard and Clark Gable, William Randolph Hearst and Marion Davies, and members of families named Bloomingdale, Loew, and du Pont. She helped integrate tennis with her support of Althea Gibson, and even coached two young women who became stars in their own right: Billie Jean King and Sally Ride. Yet her private life provoked constant speculation while she was alive, and her own memoirs added layers of legend upon stories. According to Alice, she married a man who was killed in the skies over Europe during World War II. But who was the man she loved, and had he even existed? She was widely known for her patriotism during World War II. Had she really nearly given her life for her country as a spy, shot during a wild car chase fleeing foreign espionage agents? In *The Divine Miss Marble*, bestselling author Robert Weintraub traveled the country to uncover her fascinating story. And the more he learned about her, the more her mysteries and contradictions deepened. Alice was a powerful woman who knew her worth, demanding equal pay to men decades earlier than other female athletes; yet she was held in sway by a domineering, highly successful coach with whom she had a volatile relationship. She was renowned for her California style, and had a brilliant mind and the guts to overcome a lifetime of physical trauma. For the first time here, we come closer than ever before to the truths of this unforgettable life, and somehow it's a story even more extraordinary than everything we already know about the divine Alice Marble.

HOME BAKED (HMH)

My Mom, Marijuana, and the Stoning of San Francisco

By Alia Volz

NA: HMH, UK: Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

"I devoured this book! Sex, drugs, rock-n-roll, a savvy business woman, a social and medicinal revolution: What's not to love? This is a story Alia Volz was born to tell."
—Rebecca Skloot, bestselling author of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

Ms available, publishing April, 2020

During the '70s in San Francisco, Alia's mother ran the underground Sticky Fingers Brownies, delivering upwards of 10,000 illegal marijuana edibles per month throughout the circus-like atmosphere of a city in the throes of major change. She exchanged psychic readings with Alia's future father, and thereafter had a partner in business and life. Each was devoted to the occult, and they regularly consulted the oracles for information on the police. Decades before cannabusiness went mainstream, when marijuana was as illicit as heroin, they ingeniously hid themselves in plain sight, parading through town—and through the scenes and upheavals of the day, from Gay Liberation to the tragedy of the Peoples Temple—in bright and elaborate outfits, the goods wrapped in hand-designed packaging and tucked into Alia's stroller. But the stars were not aligned forever and, after leaving the city and a shoulda-seen-it-coming divorce, Alia and her mom returned to San Francisco in the mid-80s, this time using Sticky Fingers' distribution channels to provide medical marijuana to friends and

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former customers now suffering the depredations of AIDS. Exhilarating, laugh-out-loud funny, and heartbreaking, *Home Baked* celebrates an eccentric and remarkable extended family, taking us through love, loss, and finding home.

ALIA VOLZ is a native of San Francisco. Her writing appears in the *Best American Essays 2017*, the *New York Times*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. She was a fellow of the MacDowell Colony and the Ucross Foundation, runner-up of The Moth's GrandSLAM Championship, and has been featured on the PRX podcast *Criminal*.

THE PUZZLE SOLVER (Hachette)

A Scientist's Desperate Hunt to Cure the Illness that Stole his Son
By Tracie White and Ron Davis, Ph.D.

NA: Hachette, UK: Allen & Unwin, Translation: CLA

MS Available: June, 2020, publishing January, 2021

What many still call the yuppie flu, CFS is the least known widespread illness there is, afflicting an estimated 20 million worldwide. Its most widely known symptom is "the crash," when an expenditure of energy, however slight - in severe cases like Dafoe's just perceiving someone walking into your room - exhausts the patient so completely they struggle to breathe or even lie still. For the past five years Whitney has been confined to a dark room in his parents' home, his six foot 3 inch frame at one point down to 115 pounds. But Whitney is closer to treatment and a cure than anyone else with CFS in the world. His father Ron Davis' innovations led to the Human Genome Project and he has been called one of the world's greatest living inventors by *The Atlantic*. In only a few short years working on CFS, Davis has already confirmed that CFS is indeed a biological disease (opening up new possibilities for treatment and a potential cure), drawn new collaborations between the medical establishment and leading scientists around the world, and finally been awarded a multi-million dollar National Institute of Health Grant to fund his research. His progress has proven an inspiration to the global CFS community who see Ron Davis as its hero. THE PUZZLE SOLVER will reach beyond one family, to the millions of others around the world with CFS and other mystery chronic diseases which are underfunded, ignored and forgotten. Ultimately, it's a story of hope in the face of despair. This story was first reported by Tracie White in an award-winning article in *Stanford Medicine* read by more than 1.5 million people.

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Prescriptive – How-To

EMBRACE THE SUCK (Hachette Go)

The Navy Seal Way to an Extraordinary Life

By Brent Gleeson

NA: CLA, UK, Abner Stein, Translation: CLA

MS Available, Publishing January 2021

A raw, brutally honest, in-your-face self-help guide based on the Navy SEAL mindset to thrive on adversity

During the brutal crucible of Navy SEAL training, the instructors often tell the students to "embrace the suck." Meaning that the students should start getting comfortable being very uncomfortable and lean into the pain-- enjoy it even. Those that are successful in this transformation go on to become the most elite warriors the modern world has ever known.

As a Navy SEAL combat veteran turned business speaker and consultant, Brent Gleeson details the principles he learned as a Navy SEAL, which can empower anyone to continually expand their comfort zones and to live more fulfilling purpose-driven lives. Through candid story-telling, behavioral science research, fascinating historical references and plenty of self-deprecating humor, Gleeson shows the reader how to:

- Remove temptation and build self-discipline
- Do something that sucks every day
- Choose wisely what you suffer for
- Learn how to fail successfully
- Get off your ass and execute

Brent Gleeson is a highly sought-after business consultant, a serial entrepreneur, and a decorated Navy SEAL. He has degrees in finance and economics from Southern Methodist University, English and history from Oxford University, and a graduate business degree from the University of San Diego. After returning to civilian life, he built award-winning, multi-million dollar organizations that were repeatedly named in the Inc. 500 list of fastest growing private companies. Brent Gleeson's first book *Taking Point* was published by S&S in the US and licensed in China to Beijing Mediatime.

RELENTLESS SOLUTION FOCUS (McGraw-Hill)

The Straightforward Solution for Stress, Anxiety, and Under-Performance

By Jason Selk and Ellen Reed

NA & UK: McGraw-Hill, Translation: CLA

MS Available: June 2020, publishing January 2021

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“How about if I said what you were about to learn from this book is the secret to gaining control in your life and significantly increasing success and ability to perform under pressure? And what if I told you all that was required took only three minutes daily?” The human mind is conditioned to focus on the negative not the positive, making us more prone to be aware of our insufficiencies rather than our accomplishments, about what can go wrong instead what we’ll do right. This meaningfully interferes with our happiness and our ability to achieve our potential. Why, then, is being positive so difficult? It’s because no one has told us how. RELENTLESS SOLUTION FOCUS is a simple three-step sequence of mental trainings aids that will create profound possibilities for change in people’s lives. It shares the training and knowledge required to unlock the *true* secret of human happiness, health and success. Most people spend half their lives worrying about things that *could* go wrong and the other half allowing themselves to focus on all the things they don’t have. RELENTLESS SOLUTION FOCUS will teach readers to achieve things they never imagined; and when things do go wrong, they will know how to simply and effectively deal with them. No more nights lying in bed stressing about all of life’s potential landmines, but rather a confidence knowing that they are finally in control of their lives with the ability to deal with any problem that comes their way way.

Dr. Selk is considered to be one of the premier speakers and performance coaches in the United States. He helps numerous well- known professional and Olympic athletes as well as Fortune 500 and Fortune 100 executives and organizations develop the mental toughness necessary for high-level success. He is the author of several books including ORGANIZE TOMORROW TODAY for which Taiwanese (Sun Color) and Arabic (Jarir Bookstore) licenses were made.

Dr. Reed has worked side by side with Dr. Jason Selk for over 10 years, and she has extensive experience in mental training for consistency, accountability, and execution in business, athletics, academics, and the performing arts.