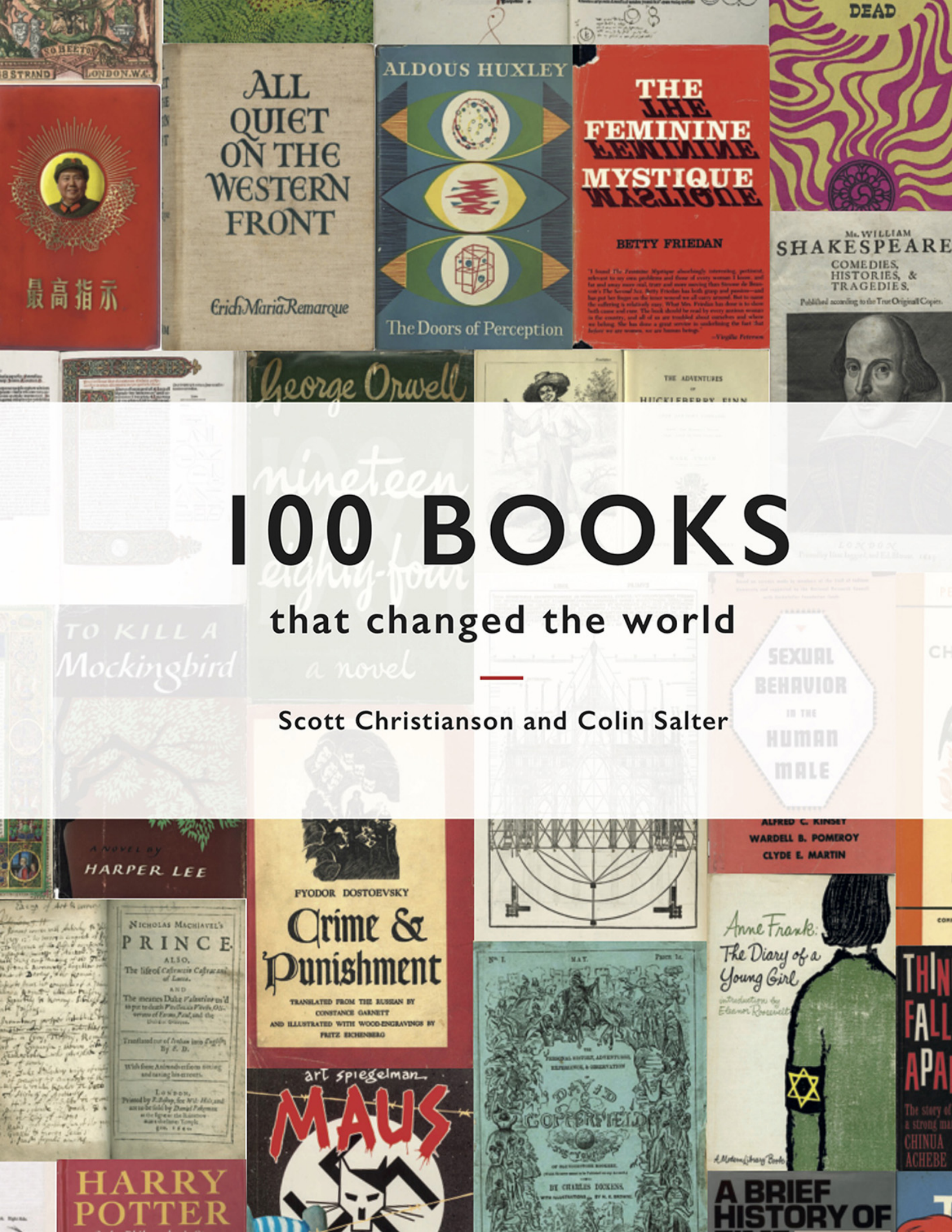
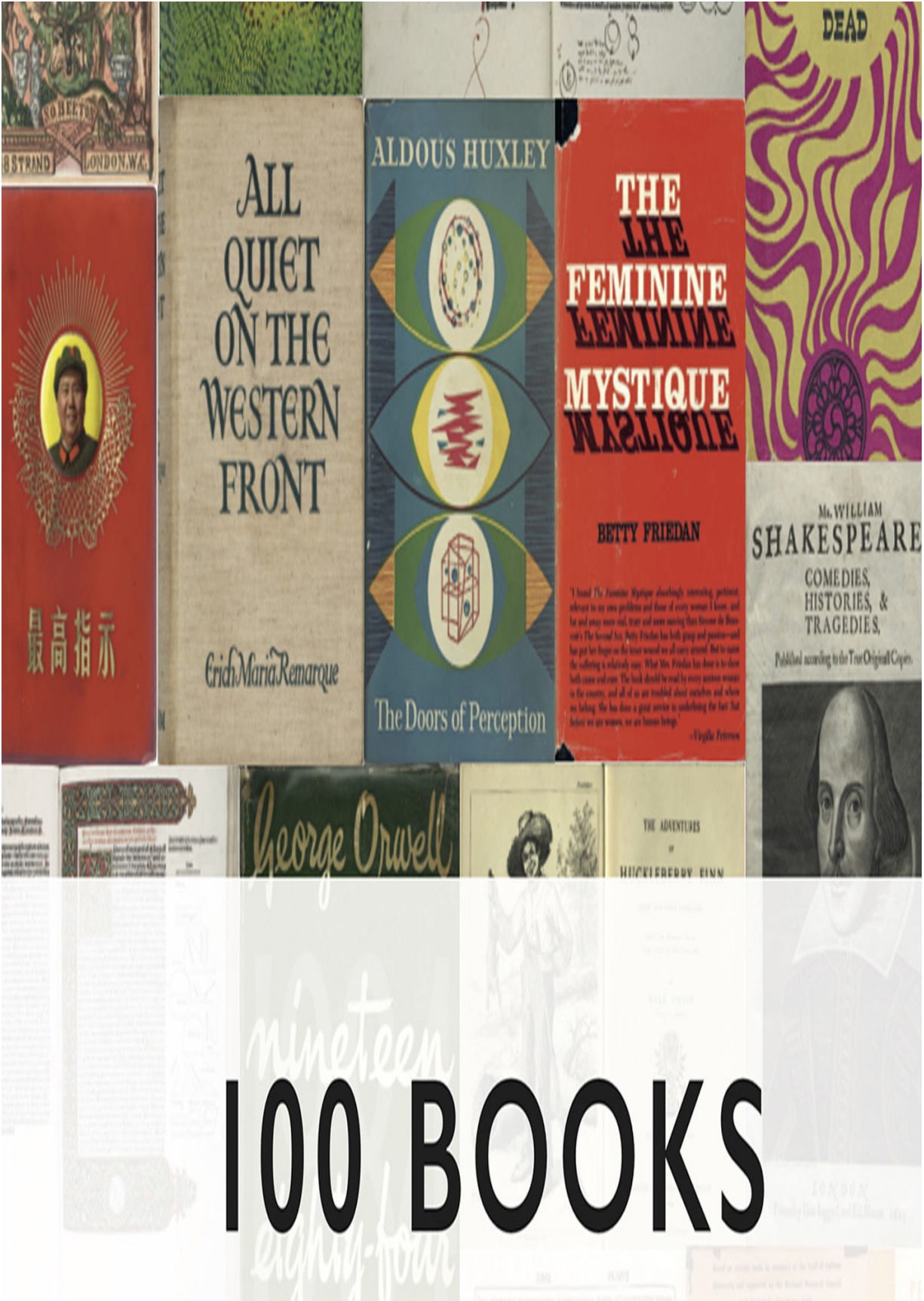


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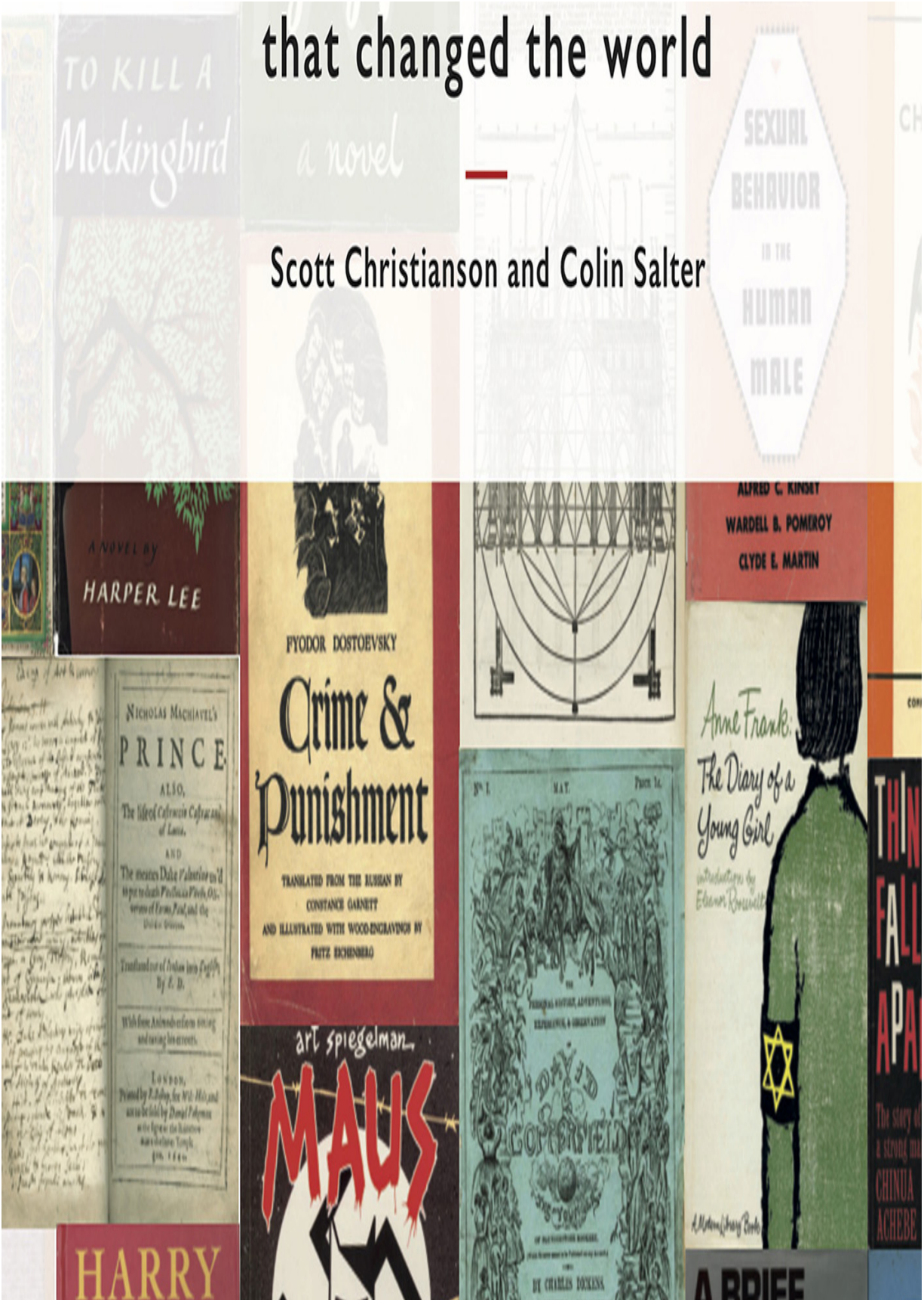
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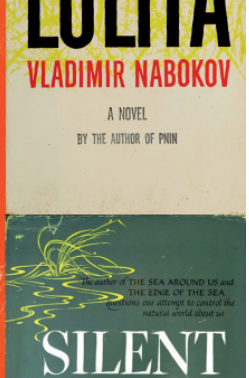
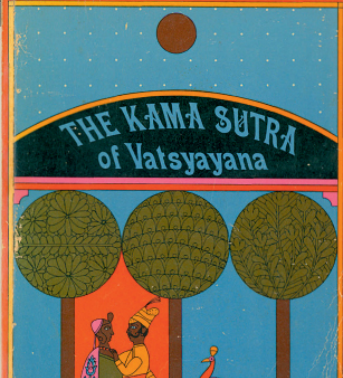
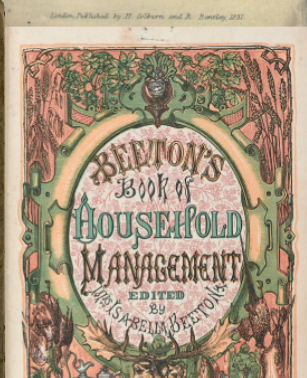
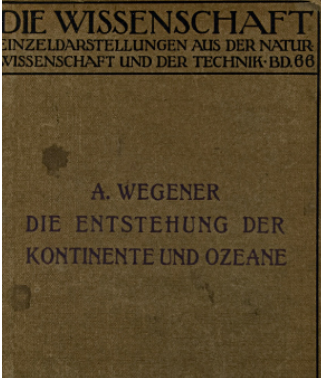
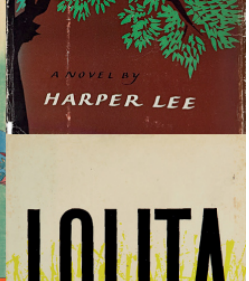
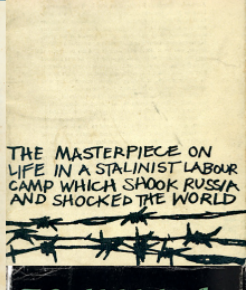
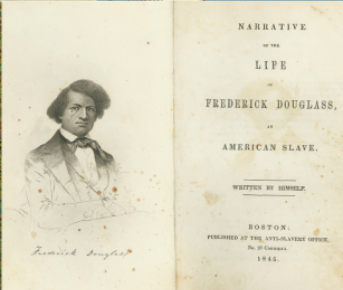
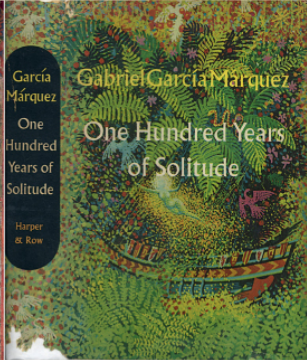
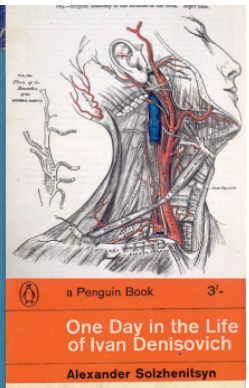
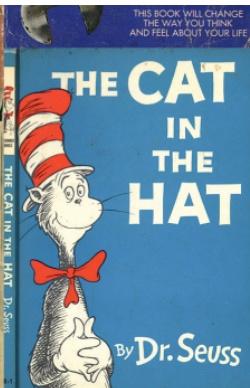
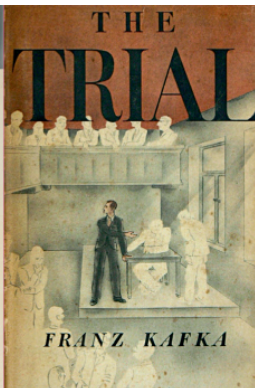
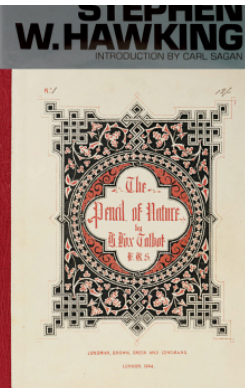
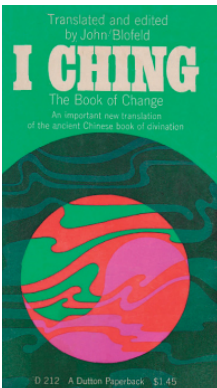
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100 BOOKS

that changed the world





100 BOOKS

that changed the world

Scott Christianson and Colin Salter

BATSFORD

This book is dedicated to
Scott Christianson (1947–2017)

Contents

	Introduction
c. 2800 BC	I Ching
c. 2100 BC	The Epic of Gilgamesh
c. 1280 BC	Torah
c. 750 BC	The Iliad and The Odyssey, Homer
620-560 BC	Aesop's Fables
c. 512 BC	The Art of War, Sun Tzu
475-221 BC	The Analects of Confucius
400 BC-AD 200	Kama Sutra, Vatsyayana
380 BC	The Republic, Plato
c. 300 BC	Elements of Geometry, Euclid
20 BC	De Architectura, Vitruvius
79	Naturalis Historia, Pliny the Elder
609-632	The Quran
800-900	Arabian Nights
c. 1021	The Tale of Genji, Murasaki Shikibu
1308-21	The Divine Comedy, Dante
1390s	The Canterbury Tales, Geoffrey Chaucer
1450s	Gutenberg Bible
1532	The Prince, Machiavelli

1543	On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres, Nicolaus Copernicus
1550	Lives of the Artists, Vasari
1557	The Prophecies, Nostradamus
1605	Don Quixote, Cervantes
1611	King James Bible
1623	Shakespeare's First Folio
1665	Micrographia, Robert Hooke
1667	Paradise Lost, John Milton
1660–69	Samuel Pepys's Diary
1687	Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica, Isaac Newton
1726	Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift
1753	Species Plantarum, Carl Linnaeus
1755	Samuel Johnson's Dictionary
1764	The Castle of Otranto, Horace Walpole
1776–88	The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Edward Gibbon
1776	The Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith
1791	Rights of Man, Thomas Paine
1792	A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Mary Wollstonecraft
1812	Grimm's Fairy Tales
1813	Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen
1818	Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
1829	Procedure for Writing Words, Music and Plainsong in Dots, Louis Braille

1836	Murray's Handbooks for Travellers
1844–46	The Pencil of Nature, William Henry Fox Talbot
1845	Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
1847	Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë
1850	David Copperfield, Charles Dickens
1851	Moby-Dick, Herman Melville
1852	Roget's Thesaurus
1854	Walden, Henry David Thoreau
1857	Madame Bovary, Gustave Flaubert
1858	Gray's Anatomy
1859	On the Origin of Species, Charles Darwin
1861	Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management
1862	Les Misérables, Victor Hugo
1869	Journey to the Center of the Earth, Jules Verne
1865	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll
1867	Crime and Punishment, Fyodor Dostoyevsky
1867	Das Kapital, Karl Marx
1869	War and Peace, Leo Tolstoy
1884	The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain
1891	The Picture of Dorian Gray, Oscar Wilde
1895	The Time Machine, H.G. Wells
1899	The Interpretation of Dreams, Sigmund Freud
1913–27	Remembrance of Things Past, Marcel Proust
1915	The Origin of Continents and Oceans, Alfred Wegener

1917	Relativity: The Special and General Theory, Albert Einstein
1922	Ulysses, James Joyce
1925	The Trial, Franz Kafka
1927	The Tibetan Book of the Dead, Walter Y. Evans- Wentz
1928	Lady Chatterley's Lover, D.H. Lawrence
1929	All Quiet on the Western Front, Erich Maria Remarque
1936	The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, John Maynard Keynes
1936	How to Win Friends and Influence People, Dale Carnegie
1946	Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care
1947	The Diary of a Young Girl, Anne Frank
1948 and 1953	Kinsey Reports
1949	1984, George Orwell
1949	The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir
1950	A Book of Mediterranean Food, Elizabeth David
1954	The Doors of Perception, Aldous Huxley
1955	Lolita, Vladimir Nabokov
1954–55	The Lord of the Rings, J.R.R. Tolkien
1957	On the Road, Jack Kerouac
1957	The Cat in the Hat, Dr. Seuss
1958	Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe
1960	To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee
1962	Silent Spring, Rachel Carson

1962	One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Alexander Solzhenitsyn
1963	The Feminine Mystique, Betty Friedan
1964	Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung
1967	One Hundred Years of Solitude, Gabriel García Márquez
1969	I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou
1972	Ways of Seeing, John Berger
1974	Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, Robert M. Pirsig
1988	A Brief History of Time, Stephen Hawking
1988	The Satanic Verses, Salman Rushdie
1991	Maus, Art Spiegelman
1997	Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, J.K. Rowling
2013	Capital in the Twenty-First Century, Thomas Piketty
2014	This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate Naomi Klein

Acknowledgements

Index



An original copy of the 1450s Gutenberg Bible – the first book to be printed using movable type. Colourful hand-painted decorations have been added to this opening page. (See [here.](#))



A nineteenth-century woodblock print by Utagawa Kunisada showing a scene from what is often hailed as the world's first novel, *The Tale of Genji* (c. 1021) by Murasaki Shikibu.

(See [here](#).)

Introduction

What's your favourite book? Why did it inspire you? Did it make you laugh? Or cry? Or gasp with wonder? Did it change your world? Now imagine trying to choose a hundred, not just from your own shelves, not just from your local library, but from the entire history of the written word.

So how do you choose? Where do you start? This book starts at the very beginning with a 4,800-year-old text, the divinatory *I Ching*, which predicts the future based on the toss of six coins. We end ninety-nine books later in the twenty-first century with another prediction, Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything*, which forecasts the end of the planet if we don't act collectively to mend our ways. On the pages in between, our list is drawn from every age, in every style and on every subject. All of them have changed their readers' worlds, and ours.

The oldest printed texts were stamped into clay while it was still wet, then baked into permanence. As handwriting developed, it became easier to copy texts out onto sheets of papyrus, vellum, or paper. But it would still take a team of monks several years to produce a single beautifully illustrated manuscript copy of the Bible. The world was truly changed with the invention of printing. The Bible was the first book to be printed with movable type, in the 1450s. Although it took Gutenberg three years to print roughly 180 copies of it, it was significantly faster than a team of monks.

SCIENCE AND MAGIC

Mass production of books not only lowered the cost but enabled the faster spread of knowledge and the exchange of ideas. In the wake of Gutenberg's invention, the first scientific volumes start to appear on our list of world-changing books. Copernicus leads the way in the modern era with *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* (1543). We've included Robert Hooke's microscopic images (*Micrographia*, 1665), Isaac Newton's mathematics (*Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, 1687) and Carl Linnaeus's classification of species (*Species Plantarum*, 1753). Each of them benefited from the exchange of ideas in books, combined with the insights of their own particular genius. Each in turn was read by others; Henry Gray's *Anatomy, Descriptive and Surgical* (1858), Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and Albert Einstein's *Relativity* (1917) were all, as Newton put it, 'standing on the shoulders of giants' who had gone before them. Books carry new knowledge forward into the future.

Printing had the same world-shrinking impact as the development of the Internet five hundred years later. Nowadays, you can share information or ask questions with friends and colleagues on the other side of the globe almost instantly. Or you can send emojis: not all text messages change the world, after all.



The publication of Copernicus's On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres in 1543 contradicted fourteen centuries of belief by stating that the Sun, not the Earth, was at the centre of the universe. (See [here](#).)



A plate from William Henry Fox Talbot's The Pencil of Nature (1844–46), the first commercially published book illustrated with photographs. (See [here](#).)

Nor do all books. But the oldest-known work of literature, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (c. 2100 BC) is here. It's a Sumerian tale of gods and men that today might be described as magic realism. Joining it

are more recent combinations of magic and reality, including *The Arabian Nights* from the ninth century and Gabriel García Márquez's 1967 novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Literature makes magic across the millennia.

INNER AND OUTER WORLDS

Storytelling makes up a large part of our list. Looking back, we admire the fiction of earlier centuries for what it reveals about the times in which it was written. Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1390s), for example, or Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), are snapshots of time and place. But for their first readers, as well as their modern ones, those ancient works of literature captured something more: the human condition. The best literature shows us the best and worst of ourselves. We are all flawed, and it is easier to see the flaws in others than in ourselves, especially if, as in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), they are transferred to completely imaginary worlds. But we all have goodness, too, embodied in fiction's heroes. Don Quixote shows us a remarkable nobility of spirit, no matter how misguided. Harry Potter, another character on a quest, is a model for the moral strength we all wish we had.

Good literature changes our inner world by helping us to understand human behaviour. Sometimes it goes further and changes the world around us. Charles Dickens's observations of Victorian poverty were instrumental in improving the conditions of the working class. Aleksander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch* (1962) was the first chink of light to be shed on the secretive cruelty of Stalin's gulags, a revelation that contributed eventually to the breakup of the Soviet Union.

Books can be exquisitely beautiful objects, but what concerns us here is their inner beauty, the power of their words, their capacity to startle us into new ways of thinking with just a few well-chosen letters. Words can be powerful in many ways: evocative, emotive,

persuasive, prescriptive, informative, misleading, lyrical, musical, incomprehensible, revealing. Words can do whatever a good author wants them to do for his or her readers.

Religious writing is perhaps the most powerful of all and therefore the most dangerous, as well as the most inspiring. The Torah, the Quran and the Bible all make it onto our list; but so too do books that show the ugliness of excessive religious zeal. Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* (1947) and Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1991) are very different but equally compelling records of the Nazi persecution of the Jews. Salman Rushdie lives under constant threat of assassination because his 1988 novel, *The Satanic Verses*, offended devout Muslims.

BIG IDEAS AND HELPING HANDS

Books of both fiction and fact can change the world. Somewhere between them, it could be argued, lies philosophy, another way of trying to explain the human condition. Each age seems to throw up its own way of interpreting how we behave, or ought to behave. Times change, and we change with them, with the help of books. Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (c. 512 BC) gives way to Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1532); Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) is challenged by John Maynard Keynes's *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936); Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* (1867) is revisited in Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013).

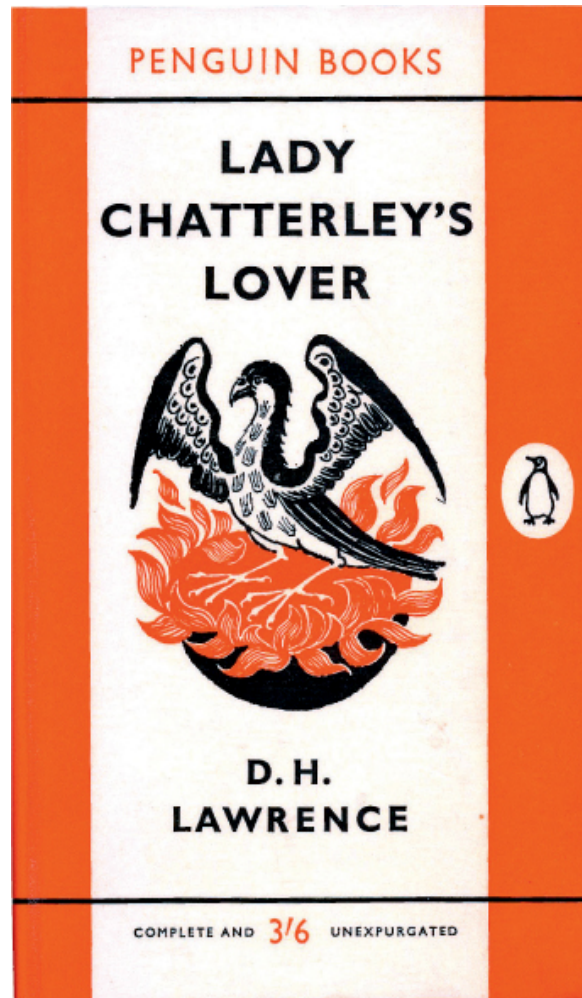
Books have been particularly instrumental in changing the attitude of men toward women, and of women towards themselves. Thomas Paine's 1791 political thesis *The Rights of Man* was followed a year later by Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, an early feminist milestone. Our selection also includes Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963).

Books don't have to contain big ideas to change their worlds. Some books just want to help you with everyday life at work and at home. So we've included the domestic bible *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management* (1861), which transformed the lives of middle-class women in the nineteenth century, as Elizabeth David's *A Book of Mediterranean Food* (1950) did in the twentieth. Dale Carnegie's business advice from 1936 still teaches us *How to Win Friends and Influence People* more than eighty years after its publication. The *Kama Sutra* (400 BC–AD 200) and the *Kinsey Reports* (1948 and 1953) on sexual behaviour are two very different approaches to the same subject, two thousand years apart.

CHANGING YOUR WORLD

Of our one hundred books, there are fifty that everyone would agree should be included. About the other fifty, almost everyone will disagree. Should Jung be in and Freud out? Should it be *David Copperfield* or *Great Expectations*? Robert M. Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* or Mark Zimmerman's *Essential Guide to Motorcycle Maintenance*? Why *The Cat in the Hat* over *Green Eggs and Ham*? Why Mao and not Lenin?

There are a lot of books out there. In the United States, every year roughly one book is published for every thousand people in the population. That's more than 300,000 new books every year. In the United Kingdom it's even more: one book for every 350 people. And in China the figure falls even further, to just over 300 people per book – that's 440,000 new books or new editions every year, in China alone. The global total is about 2.25 million new publications. Every year. We hope that *100 Books that Changed the World* is a modest but worthy addition to the world's library. If it makes you question your own choices or ours, or introduces you to a book that eventually changes your world, then our work is done.



The publication of D.H. Lawrence's unexpurgated Lady Chatterley's Lover in 1960 marked a crucial step towards the freedom of the written word and helped usher in the sexual revolution of the 1960s. (See [here](#).)

I Ching

(c. 2800 BC)

No other book in history has so much embodied the culture that produced it and influenced that culture for so long as China's ancient divination text, the *I Ching*.

The creation of the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes*, is thought to lie as far back as 2800 BC, making it the oldest text still in continuous use. Its origins remain shrouded in legend, but it is generally agreed that the diagrams date to around 2800 BC, the text to 1000 BC, and the philosophical commentaries on it to 500 BC. The diagrams are credited to Emperor Fu Hsi, who was inspired by the markings on a tortoise to create the hexagrams that formed the basis of the *I Ching*.

For centuries it was known as the *Zhou Yi*, until in 136 BC, Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty named it the first among the classics, pronouncing it the *Classic of Changes*, or *I Ching*. The *I Ching* is a book of divination, or geomancy, where objects – originally yarrow stalks – are cast on the ground and the patterns they form are interpreted through the use of hexagrams, which are given meaning and significance by reference to the book.

Although there is no verified author, the text of the *I Ching* is thought to have originated in the Western Zhou period (1046–771 BC). What started out as a method of predicting the future, of interpreting good and bad omens, was given deeper meaning by the addition of philosophical commentaries known as the 'Ten Wings'.

The most important element of the Ten Wings is the Great Commentary. This elevated the spiritual significance of the *I Ching*,

describing it as ‘a microcosm of the universe and a symbolic description of the processes of change.’ An individual who takes part in the spiritual experience of the *I Ching*, it maintained, could understand the deeper patterns of the universe.

The Ten Wings were traditionally attributed to Confucius, giving gravitas to the text and helping to maintain its importance throughout the Han and Tang dynasties.

The *I Ching* offers a unified understanding of China’s two main contending spiritual traditions – Confucianism and Taoism – both of which are rooted in it. It considers the dynamic of two opposite principles: one negative, dark and feminine (yin); one positive, bright and masculine (yang), whose interaction influences the destinies of creatures and whose harmony gives birth to other creations. The text examines the infinite range of dynamic reactions set up by the interplay of yin and yang, within the sixty-four possible six-line statements that make up the *I Ching*.

Its philosophy is said to include three basic concepts: change, ideas and judgements, which indicate whether a given action will bring good fortune or misfortune, remorse or humiliation. The *I Ching* stresses the importance of caution, humility and patience in one’s daily living. It reminds the reader that great success is often followed by difficulty, and great hardship is often necessary for subsequent achievement.

After the Xinhai Revolution deposed the last emperor in 1911 and China became a republic, the *I Ching* was no longer considered part of mainstream Chinese political philosophy. However, psychologist Carl Jung was fascinated by it and introduced an influential 1923 German translation by Richard Wilhelm. The book was taken up by the counterculture of the 1960s and has continued to influence writers through the twentieth century, including Philip K. Dick and Herman Hesse.

Tacitus [36](#)

Tale of Genji, The (Shikibu) [10](#), [42–3](#)

Tenant of Wildfell Hall, The (Brontë) [103](#)

Tenniel, John [124–25](#)

Theory of Moral Sentiments, The (Smith) [83](#)

Thermodynamics of the Atmosphere, The (Wegener) [143](#)

Things Fall Apart (Achebe) [182–83](#)

This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate (Klein) [10](#), [212–13](#)

Thoreau, Henry David [110–11](#), [186](#)

Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (Wollstonecraft) [86–87](#)

Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There (Carroll) [124](#)

Thurman, Robert [150](#)

Tibetan Book of the Dead, The (Evans-Wentz) [150–51](#)

Time Machine, The (Wells) [136–37](#)

To Kill a Mockingbird (Lee) [184–85](#)

Tolkien, J.R.R. [176–77](#)

Tolstaya, Sophia [130](#), [131](#), [169](#)

Tolstoy, Leo [130–31](#)

Torah, The [12](#), [18–19](#), [38](#)

Trial, The (Kafka) [148–49](#)

Trungpa, Chögyam [150](#)

Tucci, Giuseppe [150](#)

Twain, Mark [132–33](#)

Ulysses (Joyce) [21](#), [146–47](#)

Uses of Enchantment, The (Bettelheim) [88](#)

Vampyre, The (Polidori) [92](#)

Vasari, Giorgio [54–55](#)

Vatsyayana [13](#), [28–29](#)

Verne, Jules [122–23](#)

Vesalius, Andreas [115](#)

Vespasian, Emperor [36](#)

Vindication of the Rights of Men, A (Wollstonecraft) [86](#)

Vindication of the Rights of Woman, A (Wollstonecraft) [13](#), [86–87](#), [92](#)

Vitruvius [34–35](#)

von Holst, Theodor [95](#)

Walden (Thoreau) [110–11](#)

Wallace, Alfred Russel [116](#)

Walpole, Horace [78–79](#)

Walpole, Sir Robert [78](#)

War and Peace (Tolstoy) [130–31](#)

Ways of Seeing (Berger) [198–99](#)

Wealth of Nations, The (Smith) [13](#), [82–83](#)

Wegener, Alfred [142–43](#)

Wells, H.G. [136–37](#)

Wendell Holmes Sr., Oliver [107](#)

Whitehead, A.N. [30](#)

Wilde, Oscar [134–35](#)

Wilhelm, Richard [14](#)

Wilson, Edmund [146](#)

Winchester, Simon [108](#)

Wollstonecraft, Mary [13](#), [86–87](#), [92](#)

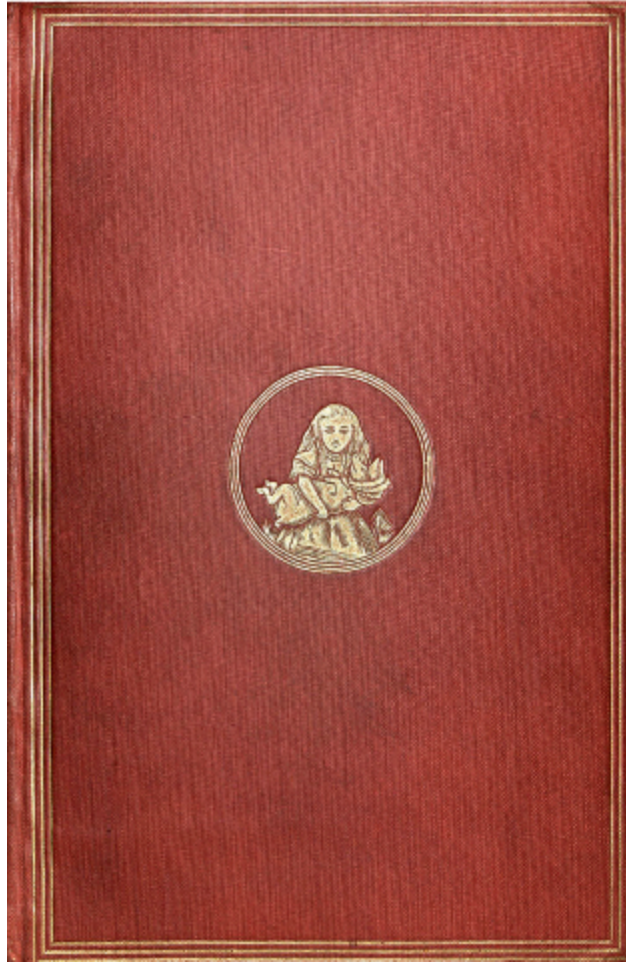
Wollstonecraft Godwin, Mary *see* Shelley, Mary

Wren, Christopher [65](#)

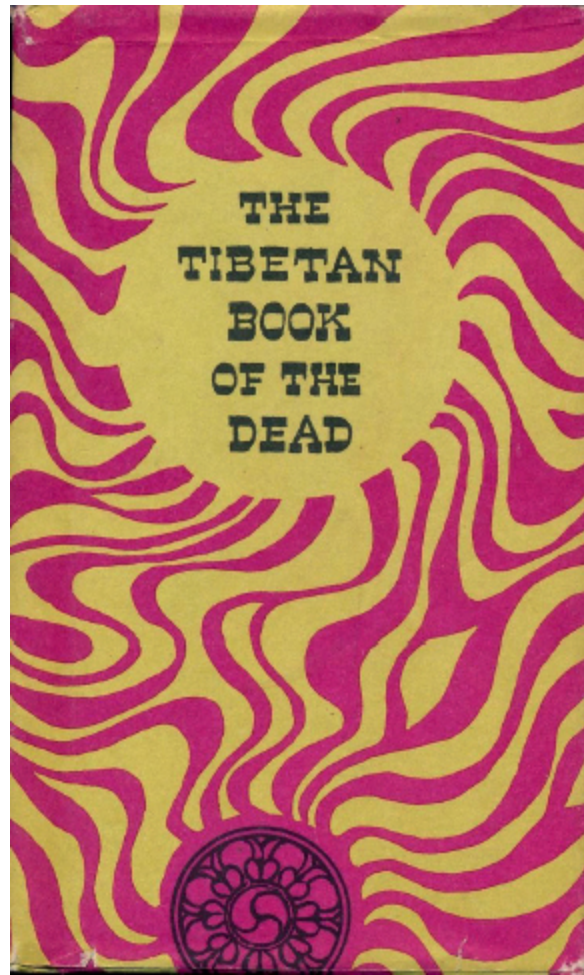
Wu, Emperor [14](#)

Wuthering Heights (Brontë) [103](#)

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (Pirsig) [13](#), [200–1](#)



*The first edition of Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, published in 1865
(see page [124](#)).*



A Peter Pauper Press hardback edition of The Tibetan Book of the Dead from 1972 (see [page 150](#)).