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patchwork of engineering marvels, byzantine legal agreements, and neighborly cooperation enables life to flourish in the desert—and the cautious consequences we face as any part of this tenuous system fails.

The Water Kingdom—Philip Pullman 2017-05-05 From the Yampu to the Yellow River, China is traversed by great waterways, which have defined its politics and ways of life for centuries. Water has been integral to China’s culture, economy, and society, and its development that it provides a window on the whole sweep of Chinese history. In The Water Kingdom, renowned writer Philip Pullman opens that window to offer an epic and powerful new way of thinking about Chinese civilization. Water, Pullman says, is the heart of the kingdom, he takes us on a journey through China’s most famous rivers, from northern China and the Yellow River, to the Yangtze and the more modern Chinese take on the future of the world’s freshwater. In this book, Pullman uses the metaphor of the river to show the complexity and energy of the world it has come to rely on the challenges, opportunities, and inspiration provided by the waterways. Drawing on stories from traders and explorers, poets and painters, bureaucrats and activists, all of whom have been influenced by an environment shaped and perverted by water, Pullman explores how the dramatic relationship of the Chinese people to water today, is the enduring metaphor for philosophical thought and artistic expression.

From the Han emperors to Mao, the ability to manage the waters — to provide irrigation and defend against floods — was a hallmark of legitimate political, often mystical, authority. In this setting, Pullman’s epic tale, the Water Kingdom, has a lot to say about China’s past and present, and the future it is shaping.

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Raw Talent
Jerry Butler The first publication of Raw Talent created an extraordinary flurry of publicity. Jerry Butler appeared on dozens of talk shows, capturing audiences with his intensity and charm. Reviews of the book lauded Butler's honesty and remarked on the double standard that permits explicit violence on film - but not explicit sex. The book sold out four printings; nonetheless, reactions within the adult film industry included heated debate and an unofficial blacklisting of Butler. The former star of X-rated films and winner of many awards, Jerry Butler wrote the book that many warned would finish him in the business that had rewarded him with money and fame. But it is characteristic of Butler that these warnings didn’t prevent him from producing this devastatingly honest appraisal of the adult film trade - and of himself. For while Butler is frankly critical of an industry that treats actors and actresses like throw-away props, and allows unprotected sex in the age of AIDS, he reserves his most candid commentary for himself. Raw Talent tells the story of Butler's erotic voyage from average child to sex star. The epilogue added to this new edition answers the question: Where will Jerry go from here'... an unvarnished first-hand view of the adult film industry... Back Stage Even though people might feel that Raw Talent shatters their fantasies, it illustrates the fakeness of porn and the carelessness of its makers. Bay News Love him or hate him, he's given us one controversial book. Adult Video News He totally lets his hair down about the business, the people in it. Anyone fascinated by sex should really get into this book. Big fun. Midwest Record Bercap first-rate page turner. The New Edition A devastatingly accurate portrait of the male American libido. New York Post

How the States Got Their Shapes
Mark Stein 2008-05-27 Why does Oklahoma have that panhandle? Did someone make a mistake? We are so familiar with the map of the United States that our state borders seem as much a part of nature as mountains and rivers. Even the oddities—the entire state of Maryland(!)—have become so engrained that our map might as well be a giant jigsaw puzzle designed by Divine Providence. But that’s where the real mystery begins. Every edge of the familiar wooden jigsaw pieces of our childhood represents a revealing moment of history and of, well, humans drawing lines in the sand. How the States Got Their Shapes is the first book to tackle why our state lines are where they are. Here are the stories behind the stories, right down to the tiny northward jog at the eastern end of Tennessee and the teeny-tiny (and little known) parts of Delaware that are not attached to Delaware but to New Jersey. How the States Got Their Shapes examines: Why West Virginia has a finger creeping up the side of Pennsylvania Why Michigan has an upper peninsula that isn’t attached to Michigan Why some Hawaiian islands are not...