



QUINLEY RISK ASSOCIATES, LLC

CLAIMS COACH BLOG

by Kevin R. Quinley, CPCU, AIC, ARM

2014 - My Top 10 Books of 2014 ...

Reflecting on 2014, I wrap up this year's Claims Coach blog series by offering my end-of-year list of favorite books I've read over the past twelve months. (As you can see, none of them directly related to claims adjusting.) Nevertheless, here they are:

- #1. A Guide to the Good Life** by William Irvine. A philosophy professor from Wright State applies the ancient philosophy of Stoicism to modern life
- #2. So Good they Can't Ignore You** by Cal Newport. Newport, a computer science professor and Georgetown University, punctures the myth that if you simply follow your passion, money and success will follow. Instead, he endorses the view that you become exceedingly good at a skill that can be monetized. Then, nurture that the point where you can set your own price and work terms.
- #3. An Altar in the World** by Barbara Brown Taylor. The former Episcopal priest who left the clergy explores the sacred in everyday life and ways to integrate faith into daily practices, transporting the practice of faith from the four walls of the church into the larger world.
- #4. Being Mortal** by Atul Gawande. I have read (and would strongly recommend) all of Gawande's books and this one discusses the fundamental problem of aging, particularly in American society. Reading it should inspire anyone to prepare a Living Will and an Advanced Directive.
- #5. Pain Don't Hurt: Fighting Inside and Outside the Ring** by Mark Miller and Shelby Jones. This is a memoir of a kick-boxer who can write as well as deliver a roundhouse punch. An absorbing read of a cage-fighter who succeeds despite being diabetic and having a heart valve implanted. An amazing tale of triumph over difficult life circumstances.
- #6. Blue Mind: the Surprising Science that Shows how being Near, in, on or under Water Can Make you Happier, Healthier, more Connected and Better** by Wallace Nichols. This book makes the case that being near water or in the water positively impacts your endorphins and quality of life. Since I live on a lake and read the book sitting beside a pool, this past summer, it was not a tough case to make.
- #7. Untamed: The Wildest Woman in America and the Fight for Cumberland Island** by Will Harlan. Hard to put down this true story of an iconoclastic woman who is a passionate environmentalist fighting to keep a relatively unspoiled island off of the Georgia Coast free from commercialization and development.



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#8. The Elements of Legal Style by Bryan Garner. Not exactly the book that you curl up with and read cover to cover, but I found this book useful in my own consulting practice as an expert witness in insurance litigation, developing written reports for disputes in Federal Court. I am not an attorney and do not play one on TV. Nevertheless, I found the precepts of this book useful in crafting reports as an expert witness.

#9. A Factory of One: Applying Lean Principles to Banish Waste and Improve Your Personal Performance by Daniel Markovitz. I love being self-employed, but one downside of being a one-person shop is that the operation is not scalable. This book explains ways to optimize your efficiency, even if you're a one-person operation.

#10. Another Great Day at Sea: Life Aboard the USS George H. W. Bush by Geoff Dyer. This is a rollicking good yarn that is a true story about daily life aboard a huge navy aircraft carrier. The authors enthusiasm about the day-to-day workings of shipboard life is contagious.

A word about my reading habits. I average reading about eighty books a year. This year, I will come in at the low sixties. In other years, I've topped one hundred. I have been for any particular number, but have tracked my reading since 1986. I always have at least two books going at the same time and rarely work on three. I find it just too much to juggle.

I try to read at least twenty pages a day in each one of the two books. This lets me finish about three books every two weeks. If it takes longer, fine. If the book fails to grab me after about fifty pages, I'm more inclined to "bail" than in years past, were I would've greeted my teeth to the bitter end.

In any event, the Claims Coach wishes you a happy holiday and a successful new year!

Q: What were YOUR favorite or most impactful books of this past year?

Kevin Quinley CPCU is the founder and Principal of Quinley Risk Associates LLC in Richmond, VA. He consults with law firms and other clients nationwide on matters related to bad faith, adjuster standard of care and ways to effectively market to insurance companies. He can be reached at (804) 796-1939 and at kevin@kevinquinley.com.