

Index

- Aaronovitch, David, 133–34
- ABBA, 60
- abuse as motivation, 188–90
- AC/DC, 83*n*
- Adams, Ryan, 72–73, 74, 86–87
- Adams, Zed, 148–50
- Adler, Renata, 235
- After Birth* (Albert), 50
- age of the universe, 112
- Albert, Elisa, 50
- “Albums of the Year” list (*SPIN*), 92*n*
- Alexie, Sherman, 42
- All in the Family* (TV show), 173
- Allman, Gregg, 85*n*
- alternative universe. *See* multiverse hypothesis
- America’s Game* (MacCambridge), 181
- Americans, The* (TV show), 162
- analytics, sports, 250–52
- “ancillary verisimilitude” of TV, 163–65
- Andy Griffith Show, The* (TV show), 165
- animals
- intelligence of, 256–57
 - personification of, 255–56
- Anna Karenina* (Tolstoy), 56
- Aphex Twin, 38*n*
- Apollo space program, 161
- April Wine, 60
- architecture, 90–92
- Aristotle, 5, 99, 100, 101, 106, 111, 149, 225
- Arkani-Hamed, Nima, 130–31
- Armstrong, Louis, 77
- art
- appreciation, changing nature of, 70, 243
 - “good job” response to, 188–89
 - shared selectively, 37–38
 - transgressive, 79–80
- artificial intelligence, 124, 227–29
- Association, The, 69
- assumptions, flawed, 93–94, 185–86
- Austen, Jane, 45
- author’s background, 195–97
- Avengers: Age of Ultron* (film), 227
- Axis: Bold as Love* (album), 60
- Bach, Johann Sebastian, 72
- Bachelor, The* (TV show), 170
- Bad Company, 60
- Bailey, F. Lee, 14
- Ballers* (TV show), 170
- Balzac, Honoré de, 33
- Bandwagonesque* (album), 92*n*
- Barney Miller* (TV show), 164
- Barr, Roseanne, 174–75
- Barrett, Deirdre, 138*n*
- Barry, Dave, 233, 234*n*
- Bartlett, Jamie, 37

Index

- bat, imagining being a, 254
- Baudelaire, Charles, 33
- Baudrillard, Jean, 28
- Baxter, Les, 78
- Beach, The* (Garland), 53
- Beatles, 60, 66–68, 75, 84, 161
- Beaver, The, 167
- Bee Gees, 79–80
- Beethoven, Ludwig van, 72
- Being Wrong* (Schulz), 10–11
- being wrong
- author's experiences, 1–2, 237–38
 - collective conscious, 2, 239
 - about the future, 252–53
 - major shifts in beliefs before 1600, 3–7, 98–102
 - socially detrimental effects of, 239
- bell curve. *See* Gaussian curve
- Bellamy, Matt, 63–64
- Benét, Stephen Vincent, 93
- Beowulf*, 45
- Bergman, Ingmar, 52
- Berlin, Isaiah, 200
- Berry, Chuck, 79, 84–86
- Beverly Hills, 90210* (TV show), 82
- bias, cultural, 25–27
- Big Bang Theory, The* (TV show), 3
- Bigelow, Kathryn, 152
- Bikini Kill, 175
- Bill of Rights, 209–12
- Billboard* Hot 100 chart, 70, 79
- “Billie Jean” (song), 78n
- bin Laden, Osama, 151–53
- Black Flag, 173
- Blair, Jayson, 154n
- Blake, William, 32
- blogging, 231–32
- Blue Velvet* (film), 166
- blues music, 81
- Boccherini, Luigi, 73
- Bonaparte, Napoleon, 58, 156
- “Boogie with Stu” (song), 60n
- Book of Lists, The* (Wallechinsky, Wallace, and Wallace), 13
- Book of Predictions, The* (Wallechinsky, Wallace, and Wallace), 13–15
- books
- Civil War literature, 22, 155
 - commercial success of, 27–28
 - diversity of authors, 25–27
 - evaluating writers, 22–28, 30–39
 - extinction of, 19–20
 - films based on, 53
 - finding deeper themes of, 47–48
 - literary canon, 32–33, 47–48
 - plot vs. tone, 21–22
- Borland, Chris, 179–80

Index

- Bostrom, Nick, 121–23, 129
- Boswell Sisters, 59
- Bowie, David, 13
- bowl games (college football), 192–93
- boxing, 187
- Boyhood* (film), 140
- Bradford, Sam, 42
- Brahms, Johannes, 73
- Breaking Bad* (TV show), 162
- Bridges to Babylon* (album), 82
- Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, The* (Díaz), 25
- Brod, Max, 35, 38
- Brody, Richard, 189
- Bryant, Kobe, 188
- Buchanan, Pat, 246–48
- Budweiser, 30
- Bunker, Edith, 173
- Burns, Ken, 155
- Bush, George W., 197–98
- Byrne, David, 68–70
- Campbell, Joseph, 74
- “Canon Fodder” (*GQ* column), 242–45
- Carey, John, 70
- Carlin, Dan, 201–5, 215
- Carlin, Lynn, 201
- Caro, Robert, 51
- Carter, Amy, 79
- Catastrophe* (TV show), 167
- Cather, Willa, 92
- Catholic Church, 117–18, 134
- ceilings in movies, visibility of, 244
- certainty, 6–7, 10
- changes in the world, dealing with, 248
- Cheers* (TV show), 44, 161n
- Chicago Daily Tribune*, 232n
- children’s involvement in sports, 190–91
- Chronicles* (Dylan), 230
- Citizen Kane* (film), 90, 244
- Citizenfour* (film), 236
- Civil War, The* (film), 155
- Civil War, US
- causes, 233–34
 - literature, 22, 155
- Classic Rock*, 63
- classical music, 72, 73
- Cleaver, Ward, 167
- climate change
- disagreement about, 239–41
 - future consequences of, 240
 - no middle-of-the-road position on, 240–41
- “clutch” scenarios in sports, 250n
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi, 52
- Cobain, Kurt, 92n
- Cole, Tom, 42
- collective conscious, 2

Index

- Colophon, The*, 92–93
- color
- The Dress (viral phenomenon), 146–47
 - Homer’s description of Aegean Sea, 147–48
 - light, influence of, 149
 - shiny/matte distinction, 148
 - subjective nature of, 147–50
- Columbus, Christopher, 41
- commercial success, 27–30, 56, 77
- communication methods, 15–16
- Community* (TV show), 172
- consensus, scientific, 112–13
- conspiracy theories, 133–34, 145
- Constitution, US, 207–12, 220–21
- consumer reviews, 7–8
- Contemporary Kafka, 35–39, 41–43
- content, too much, 10, 33
- Cooper, Alice, 144
- Cooper, Dennis, 54*n*
- Coors, 30
- Copernicus, Nicolaus, 99, 116, 117–18
- Corrections, The* (Franzen), 57
- Cosby Show, The* (TV show), 174
- cosmic rays, 125*n*
- cosmological constant, 130
- Cracked Rear View* (album), 70
- “Crazy Train” (song), 62
- criticism, 7–8, 10, 78
- Crosby, Bing, 77
- Crowe, Russell, 78*n*
- Cuban, Mark, 170
- Dark Net, The* (Bartlett), 37
- Davydov, Denis, 156
- Declaration of Independence, 212–13
- Deep Web, 37–39
- “Deflategate” scandal, 41
- DeLillo, Don, 27
- democracy, 215–16, 219
- Departed, The* (film), 71
- Dern, Laura, 166
- Derringer, Rick, 60*n*
- Descartes, René, 137, 149–50
- “Dewey Defeats Truman” headline, 232*n*
- Díaz, Junot, 25–27, 39
- DiCaprio, Leonardo, 170
- Dick, Philip K., 31
- dictatorships, 215
- dimethyltryptamine (DMT), 141–42
- dinosaurs, 97–98
- disco music, 79–80
- disrespect for past classic works, 243–45
- Do Not Sell at Any Price* (Petrusich), 81
- Domino, Fats, 79
- “Don’t Stop Believin’” (song), 71
- Doors, The, 66

Index

- Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Stevenson), 143–44
- dreaming
- content of dreams, 142–43
 - dimethyltryptamine (DMT), 141–42
 - “Dream Argument,” 137*n*
 - lucid, 137, 141
 - meaningless nature of, 138–39
 - and near-death experiences, 141–42
- Dress, The (viral phenomenon), 146–47
- dying and sleep, relationship between, 141–42
- Dylan, Bob, 74–77, 86–87, 230
- E.T.* (film), 182
- earthquakes, 258–60
- Easter Island, 161
- echolocation sonar, 254
- Ed Sullivan Show, The*, 60, 66
- Egan, Jennifer, 52
- Eggers, Dave, 52
- Ehrlich, Paul, 14
- Einstein, Albert, 4
- elections, US
- Ohio’s importance in, 196–97
 - political polarization since 9/11, 198–99
 - presidential race of 2000, 197–98, 216
 - See also* voting
- electronic dance music (EDM), 79
- Elephant Man, 78*n*
- ELO, 69
- EmDrive rocket thruster, 119–20
- Empire* (TV show), 170
- “End of History?, The” (Fukuyama), 226–27
- End of Science, The* (Horgan), 223–24, 226
- End of War, The* (Horgan), 226–27
- Entourage* (TV show), 170
- Epic of Gilgamesh, The*, 20
- equality, 212–14
- Erdrich, Louise, 42
- Esquire*, 246
- “Ethicist, The” (*New York Times Magazine* column), 255
- Evans, Sara, 171
- Exile on Main Street* (album), 70
- extraterrestrials, music for, 83–84
- Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (Foer), 47
- Eyes Wide Shut*, 36
- fact-checking, 154*n*
- false memories, 150–51
- Fargo* (TV show), 42
- Fast Times at Ridgmont High* (film), 64
- Faulkner, William, 52*n*
- Fibber McGee and Molly* (TV show), 161*n*
- Fight Club* (Palahniuk), 53
- film industry, 28–30, 90, 227, 243–45
- First Amendment rights, 211–12

Index

- flawed assumptions, 93–94, 185–86
- fleeting popularity, 23–24
- Flynn, Gillian, 53
- Foer, Jonathan Safran, 47
- Foghat, 68
- Fomenko, Anatoly, 135
- football
- college level, 191–93
 - comparative risks in other sports, 183
 - dangerous nature of, 179–80, 185
 - future of, 178–82
 - hypothetical scenario of its decline, 180
 - National Football League (NFL), 180–81, 182–83
 - safety modifications envisioned, 181
 - silos analogy, 184–85
- forces
- fundamental vs. emergent, 4
 - gravity, 3–7
- Foreigner, 68
- Fourteenth Amendment rights, 220
- fox vs. hedgehog, 199–201
- Franzen, Jonathan, 36
- Freaks and Geeks* (TV show), 172
- free speech, limitations to, 211–12
- Freed, Alan, 59
- freedom, 214
- Freud, Sigmund, 138
- Friday Night Lights* (TV show), 168
- Frost, Robert, 93
- Fukuyama, Francis, 226–27
- future, thinking about, 252–53
- Galileo, 5, 100, 117–18
- Game of Thrones* (TV show), 169
- Garcia, Jerry, 60*n*
- Garland, Alex, 53
- Gauss, Carl Friedrich, 22
- Gaussian curve, 22*n*
- Gazzaniga, Michael, 203*n*
- Gehry, Frank, 90
- genius, recognizing, 23–24, 73
- Get a Life*, (TV show), 171
- Gibbon, Edward, 207
- Gillett, Charlie, 14
- Gilligan's Island* (TV show), 165
- Gioia, Ted, 77–79
- Gladwell, Malcolm, 177–79, 181
- Glass, Stephen, 154*n*
- global politics, 15, 17
- God and the simulation hypothesis, 124–27
- Godfather* films, 71
- Golden Globe, 29
- Gone Girl* (Flynn), 53
- “good job” response to art, 188–89
- Good Times* (TV show), 173

Index

- Goodbye, Columbus* (Roth), 55
- Goodfellas* (film), 71
- Goodman, John, 174
- Gordy, Berry, 170
- Gore, Al, 197–98
- gorillas, 255–56
- GQ*, 242–43
- Grand Theft Auto (video game), 128
- Grant, Ulysses S., 206
- Grateful Dead, 69
- gravity
- Aristotle’s ideas about, 5, 101
 - author’s knowledge of, 3
 - evolution of ideas about, 3–7
 - temperature analogy, 4n
 - greatness, 51n
- Greene, Brian, 3–4, 101–8, 112–14, 124–25
- Gross, David, 104n
- Gumbel, Bryant, 185
- Gunsmoke* (TV show), 165
- Halley’s Comet, 136
- Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps, 156–57
- Harbaugh, Jim, 185
- Hard Rain* (album), 75
- Hardcore History* (podcast), 201–3
- Harrison, George, 84n
- Hateful Eight, The* (film), 44
- Haydn, Joseph, 73
- Heaven Is for Real*, 11
- Heineken, 166n
- heliocentrism, 117
- Hellman, Martin, 260
- “Helter Skelter” (song), 67
- Hemingway, Ernest, 93
- Hendrix, Jimi, 60
- “Here Comes the Sun” (song), 84
- Herman’s Head* (TV show), 171
- Hero with a Thousand Faces, The* (Campbell), 74n
- hero’s journey, 74
- Hersh, Seymour, 151–53
- Herzen, Alexander, 201
- Hidden Reality, The* (Greene), 103
- Higgs boson (“God particle”), 130–31
- Hill Street Blues* (TV show), 168
- Hill, Faith, 171n
- Hills, The* (TV show), 170
- historical figure game, 155–56
- history
- confirming, 151, 153–57, 203–5
 - revisionist, 233–35
- History: Fiction or Science?* (Fomenko), 135n
- Homeland* (TV show), 172
- Homer, 147–48
- Hootie and the Blowfish, 70
- Horgan, John, 223–27

Index

- “Hot Dog” (song), 60n
- Hotel California” (song), 69
- House of Cards* (TV show), 162
- How I Met Your Mother* (TV show), 168
- How Music Works* (Byrne), 69
- Hugo, Victor, 33
- human brain, mapping, 228–29
- Hunter, Tab, 79
- “Hurricane” (song), 75
- “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction” (song), 60n
- “I Like to Rock” (song), 60n
- “I Love Rock ‘n’ Roll” (song), 60n
- “I’ll Cry Instead” (song), 67
- “I’m Eighteen” (song), 144
- “I’m Just a Singer (in a Rock and Roll Band)” (song),
60n
- Icarus at the Edge of Time* (Greene), 3
- identity politics, 25–30
- Illig, Heribert, 134
- immortality, achieving, 228–29
- Indigo Girls, The, 5
- inequality of similar people, 212–14
- Infinite Jest* (Wallace), 48
- infinity, 103–4
- information
- collective server for brain’s contents, 228–29
 - decentralization, 40–41, 86
 - limited, 11–12
- instability of the world, 10
- intelligence
- cognitive, 256
 - emotional, 256–57
 - of octopuses, 253–54
- international relations, 15, 17
- Internet culture
- blogging, 231–32
 - conventional, 36, 86
 - Deep Web, 37–39
 - The Dress (viral phenomenon), 146–47
 - early adopters, 231
 - fluidity of history, 235–36
 - start of, 229
 - unlikely relationships, 236
 - “You’re doing it wrong” argument, 242
- iPad, 44
- It’s Garry Shandling’s Show* (TV show), 172
- Jackson, Michael, 1, 67
- James, Rayna (character), 171n
- James, Skip, 81
- Jay Z, 170
- Jefferson, George, 173
- Jefferson, Thomas, 214
- Jeffersons, The* (TV show), 173

Index

- Jenner, Caitlyn (formerly Bruce), 29
- Jesus, 135
- Jett, Joan, 60*n*
- John, Elton, 13
- “Johnny B. Goode” (song), 84
- Jonson, Ben, 94
- Joplin, Janis, 13
- Journey, 71
- Joy Division, 62
- Jung, Carl, 138
- Kael, Pauline, 186
- Kafka, Franz, 31–32, 35–36, 38–39
- Kasparov, Garry, 136
- Keeping Up with the Kardashians* (TV show), 170
- Kennedy, John F., 17, 218
- Khrushchev, Nikita, 17
- “Killing of Osama bin Laden, The” (Hersh), 151–53
- King, Stephen, 27–28
- Kingsmen, 60
- Klosterman, Chuck, background, 195–96
- Klosterman’s Razor, 17, 42–43
- Knausgaard, Karl Ove, 213
- Knight, Suge, 170
- Koko (gorilla), 255–56
- Krakauer, Jon, 52
- Kuhn, Thomas, 114–16, 224–26
- Kurzweil, Ray, 228
- L.A. Noire (video game), 128–29
- Lamar, Kendrick, 83
- language
- describing colors, 147–48
 - permanence of words, 19–21
 - TV dialogue, 166–67
 - unfamiliarity of, 57
- Large Hadron Collider (LHC), 130–31
- Laverne and Shirley* (TV show), 167
- Lear, Norman, 173
- Led Zeppelin, 60*n*
- Lennon, John, 67*n*, 86
- Lethem, Jonathan, 86–87
- Lewinsky, Monica, 44
- Lewis, Jerry Lee, 60*n*
- Lewis, Sinclair, 92
- lies and untruths, 154–57
- life after death, 11–12
- Limbaugh, Rush, 185
- Lincoln, Abraham, 96, 218
- Linklater, Richard, 139–44, 150–51
- literature, criticism of, 7–8, 10
- Little Richard, 60*n*
- Littlefeather, Sacheen, 42
- London Review of Books*, 151
- Lost* (TV show), 164
- “Louie Louie” (song), 60*n*

Index

- “Love Will Tear Us Apart” (song), 62
- lucid dreaming, 137, 141
- Lugar, Richard, 260
- M*A*S*H* (TV show), 161n
- MacCambridge, Michael, 181
- machines, and attempts to kill people, 227
- MacLachlan, Kyle, 166
- MacLaine, Shirley, 11
- Mad Lib, 34
- Mad Men* (TV show), 164–65
- Mahler, Jonathan, 152
- Man Without a Country, A* (Vonnegut), 43
- Manhattan, attack on police in, 150–51
- Mannheim Steamroller, 60
- Manson, Charles, 67
- marching music, 64–65
- marginalization, 41–42, 81
- Marley, Bob, 65
- Marlowe, Christopher, 94
- Martin, George R. R., 53n
- “Mathematics of the Past” (Kasparov), 136
- Mathog, Mike, 109n
- Matrix, The* (film), 28–30, 122n, 227
- Maugham, W. Somerset, 31
- Maupassant, Guy de, 33
- McCarthy, Cormac, 48
- McCartney, Paul, 67
- McEntire, Reba, 171n
- McGuinnis, Liam (character), 171n
- McLaughlin Group, The* (TV show), 245–47
- McLaughlin, John, 245–48
- media alienation, 47–48
- Meltzer, Richard, 61
- Melville, Herman, 7–9, 21–22, 31–32
- memory, 150–51, 230
- Mencken, H. L., 233
- merit, 89–94
- Metallica, 60
- Metamorphosis, The* (Kafka), 36
- Miami Herald, The*, 234n
- Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 93
- Mitchell, Joni, 52n
- “MMMBop” (song), 84
- Moby-Dick* (Melville), 7–10, 21–22
- modern verification process, 154–55
- Mondale, Walter, 204
- Monday Night Football*, 1
- Monkees, The, 69
- monomyth (hero’s journey), 74
- Monteverdi, Claudio, 73
- Moody Blues, 60n
- Moore, Lorrie, 33
- Moore, Michael, 197
- morality, 126–28

Index

- Moravec, Hans, 121
- Morozov, Nikolai, 135
- movies. *See* film industry
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 72
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 72, 73
- Mr. Show* (TV show), 172
- MTV, 197
- Mullin, Markwayne, 42
- multiverse hypothesis, 103–5, 119–20
- Muppets, 172
- Muse, 63
- Museum of Television and Radio, 160ⁿ
- music
- author's qualifications as a critic, 95–96
 - blues, 81
 - classical, 72, 73
 - critics' role, 78–79
 - decline in interest, 63–64
 - dominance of single artist, 64–66
 - electronic dance music (EDM), 79
 - for extraterrestrials, 83–84
 - finding the best example of a genre, 85–87
 - industry, 14ⁿ
 - marching, 64–65
 - 1920s, 77
 - punk-vs.-disco divide of the 1970s, 79–80
 - records and LPs, 19–20, 81, 83–84
 - repurposing rock songs, 62–63
 - rock, 60–61
 - rock and roll, 59
 - rock 'n' roll, 59–87
 - skiffle, 161
- My So-Called Life* (TV show), 164
- My Struggle: Book 2* (Knausgaard), 213
- My Three Sons* (TV show), 165
- myth of universal timeliness, 44–45
- Nagel, Thomas, 254
- naïve realism, 10–11, 34, 116, 239
- NASA, 83–84, 118–19
- Nashville* (TV show), 170, 171ⁿ
- National Football League (NFL), 180–81, 182–83
- Native American population, 41–42
- nature vs. nurture, 213ⁿ
- Navy SEALs, and assassination of bin Laden, 151
- near-death experiences, 141–42
- Neptune, discovery of, 109
- Never Mind the Bollocks* (album), 79–80
- Nevermind* (album), 92ⁿ
- New England Patriots, 41
- New Musical Express* (NME), 79
- New Republic, The*, 154ⁿ, 235
- New York* magazine, 217
- New York Times Magazine, The*, 22–23, 152, 255
- New York Times, The*, 25, 26, 150–51, 154ⁿ
- New Yorker, The*, 177, 189, 258

Index

- Newton, Isaac, 3–4, 5–7, 105, 108–9, 110, 149
- Newton’s Third Law, 119
- Niemitz, Hans-Ulrich, 134
- 9/11 attacks, 41, 48*n*, 199
- Nine Inch Nails, 62
- Nirvana, 70, 92*n*
- Nixon, Richard, 186
- NME*, 79
- Nobel Prize, 92
- “normal science,” 115–16
- “now,” perpetual sense of, 232
- nuclear weapons, 260–61
- numerical constants, 124–25, 130
- Nussbaum, Emily, 164
- O’Neill, Eugene, 92
- Obama, Barack, 1, 217–18
- objective ranking, 94
- Occam’s Razor, 17
- octopuses, 253–54
- Odd Clauses, The* (Wexler), 208
- Ohio, 196–97
- “On Colors” (Aristotle), 111
- On the Genealogy of Color* (Adams), 148
- One Day at Time*, (TV show), 173
- “100 Notable Books” (*The New York Times*, 2014), 25–27
- “100 Notable Books” (*The New York Times*, 2015), 26*n*
- Osbourne, Ozzy, 62
- Oswald, Lee Harvey, 17
- outdated thinking, 247
- overthinking, 39
- Page, Jimmy, 85
- Pakistan, and assassination of bin Laden, 151
- Palahniuk, Chuck, 53
- Paley Center for Media, 160*n*
- paradigm shifts in science, 114–15, 117–18, 120–21
- Paris Review, The*, 54*n*
- Parker, Sean, 170
- Particle Fever* (film), 130–31
- patriotism, 219
- People’s Almanac, The*, 13
- People’s History of the United States, A* (Zinn), 40
- persecution, cultural, 187–88
- Petrusich, Amanda, 80–82
- Phantom Time Hypothesis, 134–37
- Dark Ages, 145
- evidence against, 135–36
- “major theory,” 135
- “minor theory,” 134
- New Chronology, 135
- role of historical figures, 135
- Russia, centrality of, 136
- Physics* (Aristotle), 5
- physics, 108, 110–11, 113–14, 130–31

Index

- Picasso, Pablo, 89
- Piper, “Rowdy” Roddy, 234
- Plato, 215, 219
- Playhouse 90* (TV show), 172
- poetry, 93–94
- political polarization, 198–99
- popular, how things become, 182
- Portland, Oregon, 259, 21
- predictions
- author’s, 1–2, 182
 - making, 49
- presidencies
- color or religion as non-issue, 217–18
 - judging and ranking, 203–6, 218–19
 - Obama’s legacy, 217–18
- presidential election (2000), 197–98
- Presley, Elvis, 74–77
- pressure, responding to, 250*n*
- Pride and Prejudice* (Austen), 45
- Principia* (Newton), 5
- probability, 109–10
- proof, scientific, 120, 135–36
- public opinion
- on football, 184
 - influenced by name recognition, 90–92
 - on unfamiliar subject, 90–91
- punk music, 79–80
- Purple Rain* (album), 61
- Pynchon, Thomas, 27
- quantum mechanics, 4, 105, 107, 120
- R.E.M., 66
- radio, and incomparability to television, 160*n*
- Radiohead, 73
- Radiolab* (radio show), 190–91
- Rage Against the Machine, 197–98
- Ramones, The, 62
- Reagan, Ronald, 203–5
- Real Sports* (TV show), 185
- Real World, The* (TV show), 170
- reality TV, 169–70
- realization of a simulated world, 126–28
- “Really Big One, The” (Schulz), 258–59
- Red Badge of Courage, The* (Crane), 50
- relevance of written work, 45–47
- Republic, The* (Plato), 215
- respect for past classic works, 243–45
- Rest Is Noise, The* (Ross), 73
- retrospective insight, 14–17
- reversals of scientific opinions, 3–7, 97–98
- Revolution Was Televised, The* (Sepinwall), 164
- Revolver* (album), 67
- Rhimes, Shonda, 162*n*
- Rhodes, Dusty, 234–35
- Richards, Keith, 85

Index

- Riddle, Nelson, 78
- risks, calculating, 258–61
- Road, The* (McCarthy), 47–48
- Robinson Crusoe* (Defoe), 57
- Rock & Roll*, PBS miniseries, 85
- Rock 'n' Roll* (album), 60,
- “Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy” (song), 60n
- rock 'n' roll music, 59–87
- “Albums of the Year” list (*SPIN*), 92
 - authority of youth over age, 69
 - Chuck Berry as the epitome of, 85–86
 - limitations and demise of, 63, 68–69
 - monomyth of, 74–77
 - “Rock is dead” assertion, 61–64
 - “Southern rock,” 85n
 - style vs. substance, 75–76
 - subgenres, 60–61, 66–67
 - subjectivity of appreciation, 72–73
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, 59
- “Rock and Roll” (song), 60n
- “Rock and Roll, Hoochie Koo” (song), 60n
- “Rock Around the Clock” (song), 60n
- rock music vs. rock 'n' roll music, 60n, 82n
- Rolling Stone*, 154n
- Rolling Stones, 70, 82–83
- Romano, Ann, 173
- Romo, Tony, 1
- Roseanne* (TV show), 173–75
- Ross, Alex, 73–74
- Roth, Philip, 51, 55–56
- Rowling, J. K., 27–28
- Rubber Soul* (album), 67, 75
- Sagan, Carl, 83–84
- Santayana, George, 92
- Saturday Night Fever* (album), 79–80
- Saunders, George, 22–24
- Schubert, Franz, 73
- Schulz, Kathryn, 10–11, 49–50, 258
- Science Digest*, 16–17
- Scientific American*, 223
- scientific beliefs
- card game analogy, 112–13
 - evolving, 3–7, 97–98, 225–26
 - future revolutionary discoveries, 223–26
 - major shifts before 1600, 99–101, 108, 117–18
 - “normal science,” 115–16, 226
 - society’s feelings about, 226
 - verified by experiments, 100
- See also* paradigm shifts in science
- scientific consensus, 112–13
- Second Amendment rights, 220
- Seinfeld* (TV show), 172
- Selvin, Ben, 77
- Sepinwall, Alan, 164
- “September Gurls” (song), 95

Index

- Sex Pistols, 79–80
- shadow histories, 40–41
- Shakespeare, William, 90, 94
- Shteyngart, Gary, 47
- Silicon Valley* (TV show), 170
- Silk Road, 37
- Simmons, J. K., 188–89
- Simulacra and Simulation* (Baudrillard), 28
- simulation hypothesis, 28, 121–26
- artificial intelligence, 124
 - bar analogy, 126–28
 - “breaking the game,” 128–29
 - cosmic rays as evidence of, 125*n*
 - and God, 124–27
 - morality, 126–28
 - numerical constants, 124–25, 130
 - realization of, 126–28
 - shepherd analogy, 121
- Sinatra, Frank, 75–76
- Singularity (era), 227–29
- skepticism about widely held beliefs, 237–38
- skiffle music, 161
- sky appearing blue, explanation for, 111
- Slacker* (film), 141
- sleep and dying, relationship between, 141–42
- Sleep No More*, 36
- “Smells Like Teen Spirit” (song), 70
- Smiley, Jane, 33
- Snowden, Edward, 236
- “Something I Can Never Have” (song), 62
- Song of Ice and Fire, A* (Martin), 53*n*
- Sopranos, The* (TV show), 71
- Sorkin, Aaron, 67*n*
- Souls of All Living Creatures, The* (Virga), 256
- Sound of the City, The* (Gillett), 14
- Soundgarden, 68
- Sousa, John Philip, 64–65
- Southern rock, 85*n*
- Southern Strategy, 40
- Soviet Union, fall of, 204
- space
- and time, 113–14
 - travel, 16–17, 83–84, 118–20
- Speedboat* (Adler), 235
- SPIN*, 92*n*
- sports
- analytics, 250–52
 - children’s involvement in, 190–91
 - “clutch” scenarios, 250*n*
 - and physical risks, 183
 - statistics, 249–50
 - as televised-only events, 192–93
- Sputnik, 16
- St. Elsewhere* (TV show), 172
- Star Wars* (film), 57*n*
- statistics, sports, 249–50

Index

- Steel, Danielle, 52*n*
- Stendhal, 33
- Stevenson, Robert Louis, 143
- Storage Wars* (TV show), 170
- storytelling
- fox-vs.-hedgehog analogy, 199–201
 - through monomyths, 74
 - personal interpretation of events, 203
 - and relationship to history, 202–3
 - “utility myth,” 218–19
- Structure of Scientific Revolutions, The* (Kuhn), 114–16
- subjective vs. objective, 94, 96–97, 148–51
- Super Bowl, 179
- Super Sad True Love Story* (Shteyngart), 47
- Supreme Court, 210
- symmetry, statistical, 26–27
- Syro* (album), 38*n*
- Talking Heads, 68
- Tarantino, Quentin, 44*n*
- Tartt, Donna, 52
- Taxi* (TV show), 164
- TED talk about the multiverse, 105–6
- Teenage Fanclub, 92*n*
- teenage years, recognition of, 62*n*
- telephone usage, changes in, 15–16
- television
- first Golden Age (1940s–1960), 172
 - second Golden Age (1990s–2010s), 172
 - ancient Egypt analogy, 162–63
 - as art form, 71, 165–66
 - as entertainment only (1970s–1980s), 172–73
 - filming and staging, 168
 - incomparability to radio, 160*n*
 - “misunderstanding” plot (1970s), 167
 - natural dialogue, 166–67
 - realism, desire for, 163–65, 167–68
 - reality TV, 169–70
 - realness, achieving, 171–72
 - roman à clef programming, 170–71
 - sports viewing, 192–93, 251–52
 - viewing, changes in, 159–60
- Teller, Miles, 188–89
- Tenth of December* (Saunders), 23
- Terminator* (film franchise), 227
- “Testify” (music video), 197–98
- Three’s Company* (TV show), 70
- time
- effect of, 44–45, 56–57, 70, 205–6, 233–35
 - and space, 113–14
- Toland, Gregg, 244
- Tolstoy, Leo, 56
- “Tom Joad” (song), 230
- “Tomorrow Never Knows” (song), 67
- Tor, 38*n*
- transgender issues, 29–30

Index

- transgressive art, 79–80
- Trial, The* (Kafka), 36, 38
- True Detective* (TV show), 164
- Truman Show, The* (film), 126
- truths, accepting, 238–39
- “Tutti Frutti” (song), 60
- Twilight Zone, The* (TV show), 36, 171
- Twin Peaks* (TV show), 164
- Twitter, 86
- Tyson, Neil deGrasse, 99–103, 105, 108–12, 115–16,
 125*n*, 224–25
- U.S. News & World Report*, 206
- UC Santa Barbara, 39
- Ultimate Warrior, 234
- universe. *See* multiverse hypothesis
- University of Virginia rape story, 154*n*
- unpopular opinions, opposition to, 211–12
- UnREAL* (TV show), 170
- Uranus, orbit of, 108–9
- US government
- Bill of Rights, 209–12
 - Constitution, 207–12, 220–21
 - feelings of doom about, 206–7
 - founding of, 207
 - Supreme Court, 210
- USA Today*, 192
- “utility myth,” 218–19
- validating hypotheses, 106–7
- Van Gogh, Vincent, 90
- Van Halen, Eddie, 63–64
- Vargas-Cooper, Natasha, 243
- Velvet Underground, 69
- Verdi, Giuseppe, 73
- Verlaine, Paul, 33
- Victorians, 43
- video games
- effect on children and sports, 191
 - Grand Theft Auto, 128
 - L.A. Noire, 128–29
- violence in sports, 183–85, 187
- Virga, Vint, 256
- Vollmann, William T., 51
- Vonnegut, Kurt, 43–45
- Voodoo Histories* (Aaronovitch), 133–34
- voting, 216–17. *See also* elections, US
- Voyager* (spacecraft), 83
- Wachowski, Lana (formerly Larry), 29
- Wachowski, Lilly (formerly Andy), 29
- Wagner, Richard, 73
- Wahlberg, Mark, 170
- Waking Life* (film), 141–42
- Wall Street Journal, The*, 190–91
- Wallace, David Foster, 48

Index

- Wallechinsky, David, 13
- Wally, 167
- War Games* (film), 227
- war, 226–27
- Warhol, Andy, 90
- Washington, George, 218–19, 221
- Welles, Orson, 244
- Wexler, Jay D., 208–11
- What Good Are the Arts?* (Carey), 70
- “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?” (Nagel), 254
- Whiplash* (film), 188–89
- White, Jack, 171n
- Who, The, 62
- Williams, Hank, 70
- Williams, Robin, 255
- Witten, Edward, 224–25, 236
- World Series, 55
- World War I, 9
- wrestling, pro, 234–35
- Wright, Frank Lloyd, 90–92
- Wright, Lawrence, 52
- writers
- bloggers as, 231–32
 - changing tastes of readers, 93–94
 - cult, 53–54
 - poets, 93–94
 - pyramid analogy, 51–56
 - “quietly unrated,” 54–55
 - ranking the best, 22–28, 30–39, 49–50, 92–94
 - recognizing diverse, 25–27
 - “vocally unrated,” 52–53
 - writing that represents life, 43–47
- Y2K crisis, 1–2
- Yankees, 55
- “Yer Blues” (song), 67
- “You’re doing it wrong” argument, 242, 243, 250
- “Young Love” (song), 79
- Zero Dark Thirty* (film), 152
- Zinn, Howard, 40
- Zlotnick, Susan, 45
- Zuckerman, Mort, 246