

The Reading Stack Behind Network State, Plus Media and Health Picks

Recommended Reading from Tech Founders

2026-03-19

The Reading Stack Behind Network State, Plus Media and Health Picks

By Recommended Reading from Tech Founders • March 19, 2026

The clearest organic recommendation today is Balaji Srinivasan’s explicit two-book explanation for where the Network State came from. The rest of the list clusters around media theory, online culture, political power, and exploratory health and cognition resources cited by Marc Andreessen, Tim Ferriss, and Kevin Rose.

Most compelling recommendation: the reading pair behind *The Network State*

Balaji Srinivasan gave the strongest direct signal in today’s batch because he did not just praise two books; he explicitly said their combination produced his *Network State* framework [1].

“sovereign individual plus changing world order equals network state”



[1]

Balaji Srinivasan: Investing in the Age of American Anarchy | The Bitcoin Magazine Podcast (61:30)

- **Title:** *The Sovereign Individual*
Content type: Book
Author/creator: Not specified in the cited material
Link/URL: None provided in the source material
Who recommended it: Balaji Srinivasan
Key takeaway: Balaji says this book is one half of the synthesis behind his *Network State* concept [1]
Why it matters: It is a rare, explicit pointer to the intellectual source code of one of his core ideas [1]
- **Title:** *Principles for Dealing with the Changing World Order*
Content type: Book
Author/creator: Ray Dalio
Link/URL: None provided in the source material
Who recommended it: Balaji Srinivasan
Key takeaway: He pairs Dalio's world-order analysis with *The Sovereign Individual* and says the combination yields *The Network State* [1]
Why it matters: Balaji frames this as the geopolitical half of the synthesis, making the recommendation unusually concrete [1]

Media, power, and internet culture

- **Title:** *Marshall McLuhan's work*
Content type: Books / media theory
Author/creator: Marshall McLuhan

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Marc Andreessen

Key takeaway: Andreessen says McLuhan's work has held up well and uses ideas like *the medium is the message* to think about how format shapes content [2]

Why it matters: This is a live framework recommendation for understanding modern media, not just a historical nod [2]

- **Title:** *The True Believer*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Not specified in the cited material

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Marc Andreessen

Key takeaway: Andreessen links it to elite-versus-mass dynamics and to the people on X who spend all day trying to understand AI, politics, and similar domains [2]

Why it matters: He is using the book as a lens for where high-attention knowledge synthesis now happens online [2]

- **Title:** *Kill All Normies*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Not specified in the cited material

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Marc Andreessen

Key takeaway: Andreessen describes it as a decade-old book about the angry internet culture that developed after the 2000s [2]

Why it matters: It gives historical context for present-day online political and cultural dynamics [2]

- **Title:** *99% Invisible* miniseries on *The Power Broker*

Content type: Podcast miniseries

Author/creator: 99% Invisible / Roman Mars and co-hosts

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Tim Ferriss

Key takeaway: Ferriss recommends the 12-part series as a way to absorb Robert Caro's Pulitzer-winning book on Robert Moses and power in New York, with Caro interviews and guests like Conan O'Brien [3]

Why it matters: Ferriss presents it as a practical route into a canonical power book that many people know but never finish [3]

Health and cognition resources

Ferriss explicitly says some of the science he follows here is still out on the edges and not yet ready for clinical application, so these are best read as exploratory resources rather than settled guidance [3].

- **Title:** *STEM-Talk* episode with Dr. Francisco Gonzalez-Lima

Content type: Podcast episode

Author/creator: STEM-Talk

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Tim Ferriss

Key takeaway: Ferriss says he uses *STEM-Talk* to find interesting scientists and highlights Gonzalez-Lima's work on neurodegenerative disease as a vascular or mitochondrial problem, including low-dose methylene blue and photobiomodulation [3]

Why it matters: This is Ferriss's clearest pointer to where he discovers edge scientific ideas he thinks may eventually prove useful [3]

- **Title:** *The End of Alzheimer's*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Dale Bredeesen

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Kevin Rose

Key takeaway: Rose says Bredeesen treats what shows up in the brain as the byproduct of upstream issues such as vascular problems, mitochondrial issues, or toxins, and he describes the protocol as diet, exercise, supplements, and light ketosis [3]

Why it matters: It is a strong example of a founder recommending a systems-style book because it changed how he frames the problem, not because of a single hack [3]

- **Title:** *The Vagus Nerve*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Kevin Tracy

Link/URL: None provided in the source material

Who recommended it: Kevin Rose

Key takeaway: Rose points to its extended chapter on Wim Hof and says breathwork can show similar effects in controlling immune response so it is not excessive [3]

Why it matters: It is a narrower but concrete pointer for readers interested in the intersection of breathwork and inflammation research [3]

Pattern worth noting

Today's strongest organic recommendations split into two groups: **media and power frameworks** for understanding institutions and online culture, and **health and cognition resources** that founders are using to explore systems-level explanations rather than single-variable answers [2, 3]

Sources

1. Balaji Srinivasan: Investing in the Age of American Anarchy | The Bitcoin Magazine Podcast
2. Inside the New Media Team with Marc Andreessen & Ben Horowitz

3. The Random Show, Couch Edition! — Supplements, Breathing and Balance Training, and Much More!