This book is certainly too long and the author repeats himself too often. Walter Isaakson would have been well advised to listen to Steven King who recommends cutting at least 10% of a first draft. But then again, interviewing more than a hundred people who knew Steve Jobs and talking to himself many, many times is not like writing a novel. Its an intensive and long research project. Isaakson did an excellent job in portraying an interesting human being which had deep impact on society and the evolution of our kind – for the good and the bad.

I have read up till now only two (auto)biographies. One written by physician Werner Heisenberg and the other by Charles Darwin. Both were extremely interesting close ups of genius minds who left deep footprints on humanity, but they were in no way so diverse as this book, which is about much more than Steve Jobs. It's a compulsory read

1. because it tells the **history of personal computing** and an era when at least US youth experienced an enlightenment push by ingesting large amounts of psychedelic substances. One needs to wonder if we need more of that in order to move beyond the dark ages which have descended upon us.

   - *This fusion of flower power and processor power, enlightenment and technology, was embodied in Steve Jobs as he meditated in the mornings, audited physics classes at Stanford, worked nights at Atari, and dreamed of starting his own business. "There was just something going on here," he said, looking back at the time and place. "The best music came from here – the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Joan Baez, Janis Joplin – and so did the integrated circuit, and things like the Whole Earth Catalogue." [p57]*
   - *The people who invented the twenty-first century were pot-smoking, sandal-wearing hippies from the West Coast like Steve, because they saw differently. The hierarchical systems of the East Coast, England, Germany, and Japan do not encourage this different thinking. The sixties produced an anarchic mind set that is great for imagining a world not yet in existence. [p58]*
   - *Jobs had been referring to computers as a bicycle for the mind; the ability of humans to create a bicycle allowed them to move more efficiently than even a condo, and likewise the ability to create computers would multiply the efficiency of their minds. [p115]*
   - *In astronomy, a binary system occurs when the orbits of two starts are linked because of their gravitational interaction. There have been analogous situations in history, when an era is shaped by the relationship and rivalry of two orbiting superstars: Albert Einstein and Niels Bohr in twentieth century physics, for example, or Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton in early American governance. For the first thirty years of the personal computer age, beginning in the late 1970s, the defining binary star system was composed of two high-energy university dropouts both born in 1955. [p171]*

2. because it shows to students of business administration or management science that **enlightened entrepreneurship can't be learned in school** but is a calling which requires a special character and a form of spiritual atonement. Jobs character was formed by early abandonment and he found spiritual guidance in Zen Buddhism.

- *"Steve talked to me a lot about being abandoned and the pain that caused," he said. "It made him independent. He followed the beat of a different drummer, and that came from being in a different world than he was born into." [p5]*
- *"When I realized that I was smarter than my parents, I felt tremendous shame for having thought that. I will never forget that moment." This discovery, he later told friends, along with the fact that he was adopted, made him feel apart – detached and separate – from both his family and the world. [p11]*
- *"The juice goes out of Christianity when it becomes too based on faith rather than on living like Jesus or seeing the world as Jesus saw it," he told me. "I think different religions are different doors to the same house. Sometimes I think the house exists, and sometimes I don't. It's the great mystery." [p15]*
- *His intensity, however, made it difficult for him to achieve inner peace; his Zen awareness was not accompanied by an excess of calm, peace of mind, or interpersonal mellowness. [p35]*
- *The reality distortion field was a confounding mélange of a charismatic rhetorical style, indomitable will, and eagerness to bend any fact to fit the purpose at hand. [p118]*
- *You did the impossible, because you didn't realize it was impossible. [p119]*
- *Steve had a way of motivating by looking at the bigger picture. [p123]*
- *"he would shout at a meeting, "You asshole, you never do anything right," Debi Coleman recalled. "It was like an hourly occurrence. Yet I consider myself the absolute luckiest person in the world to have worked with him." [p124]*

3. Because it explains why **impactful and lasting technology needs to intersect with the humanities** and why companies need to combine vastly different disciplines and competencies in order to be truly disruptive and able to come up with out-of-the-box solutions
   - *Jobs at times seemed to be driven by demons, while Woz seemd a naif who was toyed with by angels. [p64]*
   - *Woz designed a great machine, but it would be sitting in hobby shops today were it not for Steve Jobs. [p85]*
   - *When I went to Pixar, I became aware of a great divide. Tech companies don't understand creativity. They don't appreciate intuitive thinking … on the other hand, music companies are completely clueless about technology. [p397]*
   - *The difference in skill sets between the music folks and technologists is just huge. [p399]*

4. Because it shows the **importance of design** to wield tools which ultimately transform the individuum and society
   - *Markkula wrote his principles in a one-pager paper title "the Apple Marketing Philosophy" that stressed three points. The first was empathy, an intimate connection with the feelings of the customer: we will truly understand their needs better than any other company. The second was focus: In order to do a good job of those things that we decide to do, we must eliminate all of the unimportant opportunities. The third and equally important principle, awkwardly named, was impute. It emphasized that people form an opinion about a company or product*

> *based on the signals that it conveys. "people DO judge a book by its cover," he wrote. We may have the best product, the highest quality, the most useful software etc.; if we present them in a slipshod manner, they will be perceived as slipshod; if we present them in a creative, professional manner, we will impute the desired qualities." [p78]*

- *Like his mentors Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Herbert Bayer believed that there should be no distinction between fine art and applied industrial design. [p126]*
- *Dieter Rams preached the gospel "less but better," Weniger aber besser, and likewise Jobs and Ive wrestled with each new design to see how much they could simplify it. [p343]*
- *As you bring order to complexity, you find a way to make the product defer to you. Simplicity isn't just a visual style. Its not just minimalism or the absence of clutter. It involves diffing through the depth of the complexity. To be truly simple, you have to go really deep … you have to deeply understand the essence of a product in order to be able to get rid of the parts that are not essential. [p343]*

5. Because it **teaches a lot about neuroplasticity and individual creativity**; and the interaction between nutrition and spiritual habits by describing Jobs as a self-chosen guinea pig going to rarely seen extremes. Despite his agnosticism, he lived a life deeply immersed in what developmental psychologist Jane Loevinger called the creative ground and never stopped to transform himself as philosopher David Precht wrote "who am I, and if yes, how many?

   - *Your thoughts construct patterns like scaffolding in your mind. You are really etching chemical patterns. In most cases, people get stuck in those patterns, just like grooves in a record, and they never get out of them. [p189]*
   - *If you want to live your life in a creative way, as an artist, you have to not look back too much. You have to be willing to take whatever you have done and whoever you were and throw them away. The more the outside world tries to reinforce an image of you, the harder it is to continue to be an artist, which is why a lot of times, artists have to say, bye I have to go. I'm going crazy and I'm getting out of here. And they go hibernate somewhere. Maybe later they re-emerge a little differently. [p190]*
   - *He was musing about why folks over thirty develop rigid thought patterns and tend to be less innovative. "people get stuck in those patterns, just like grooves in a record, and they never get out of them," he said. [p379]*
   - *He didn't invent many things outright, but he was a master at putting together ideas, art, and technology in ways that invented the future. [p565]*

6. Because it **provides interesting arguments about open source and closed corporate innovation**; it teaches about systemic settings which drive innovation: between specific individuals, in office spaces, as well as in organizations and in overall society. Jobs set forth – at least partly – a management style which would be later described by Frederik Laloux as TEAL; in particular in regard to the evolutionary purpose of the company.

   - *Jobs did not organize Apple into semiautonomous divisions; he closely controlled all of his teams and pushed them to work as one cohesive and flexible company,*

with one profit-and-loss bottom line. "We don't have "divisions" with their own P&L", said Tim Cook. "we run one P&L for the company." [p408]

- *We all know this is the one we want to do," said Jobs, pointing to the touchscreen. "So, lets make it work." It was he liked to call a bet-the-company moment, high risk and high reward if it succeeded. [p467]*

- *Steve's genius is that he knows how to make things simple, and that sometimes requires controlling everything. [p497]*

- *Jobs soon figured our that there was a way to have the best of both worlds. He would permit outsiders to write apps, but they would have to meet strict standards, be tested and approved by Apple, and be sold only thoruhg the iTunes Store. It was a way to reap the advantage of empowering thousands of software developers while retaining enough control to protect the integrity of the iPhone and the simplicity of the customer experience. "It was an absolutely magical solution that hit the sweet spot," said Levinson. "It gave us the benefits of openness while retaining end-to-end control." [p502]*

- *Was is better, as Apple believed to tie the hardware and software and content handling into one tidy system that assured a simple user experience? Or was it better to give users and manufactures more choice and free up avenues for more innovation, by creating software systems that could be modified and used on different devices? [p513]*

- *His passions, perfectionism, demons, desires, artistry, devilry, and obsession for control were integrally connected to his approach to business and the products that resulted. [p560]*

- *The astronomer Johannes Kepler declared that "nature loves simplicity and unity." So did Steve Jobs. This instinct for integrated systems put him squarely on one side of the most fundamental divide in the digital world: open versus closed. The hacker ethos handed down from the Homebrew Computer Club favored the open approach, in which there was little centralized control and people were free to modify hardware and software, share code, write to open standards, shun proprietary systems, and have content and apps that were compatible with a variety of devices and operating systems. The young Wozniak was in that camp: The Apple II he designed was easily opened and sported plenty of slots and ports that people could jack into as they pleased. With the Macintosh Jobs became a founding father of the other camp. The Macintosh would be like an appliance, with the hardware and software tightly woven together and closed to modifications. The hacker ethos would be sacrificed in order to create a seamless and simple user experience. [p562]*

- *Google took the more open approach, and it made its Android operating system available for use by any maker of tablets or cell phones. By 2011 its hare of the mobile market matched Apple's. The drawback of Android's openness was the fragmentation that resulted. Various handset and tablet makers modified Android into dozens of variants and flavors, making it had for apps to remain consistent or make full use of its features. There were merits to both approached. Some people wanted more freedom to use more open systems ahnd have more choices of hardware; others clearly preferred Apple's tight integration and control, which led*

to products that had simpler interfaces, longer battery life, greater user-friendliness, and easier handling of content. [p563]

7. Because it **teaches in a very personal way that long term planning is indeed what differentiates humans from other animals;** and not only from other animals: planning and the strict execution of plans sets apart the successful from the mediocre. It is also a strategy to stay alive as neurologist and concentration camp survivor Viktor E. Frankl confirmed.

   - *There falls a shadow, as T.S. Elliot noted, between the conception and the creation. In the annals of innovation, new ideas are only part of the equation. Execution is just as important. [p98]*
   - *Living with a disease like this, and all the pain, constantly reminds you of your own mortality, and that can do strange things to your brain if you are not careful," he said. "You don't make plans more than a year out, and that's bad. You need to force yourself to plan as if you will live for many years." [p528]*
   - *I know its possible I will die and leave Laurene [his wife] with a half-built boat," he said. "But I have to keep going on it. If I don't, it's an admission that I'm about to die."*

   1.