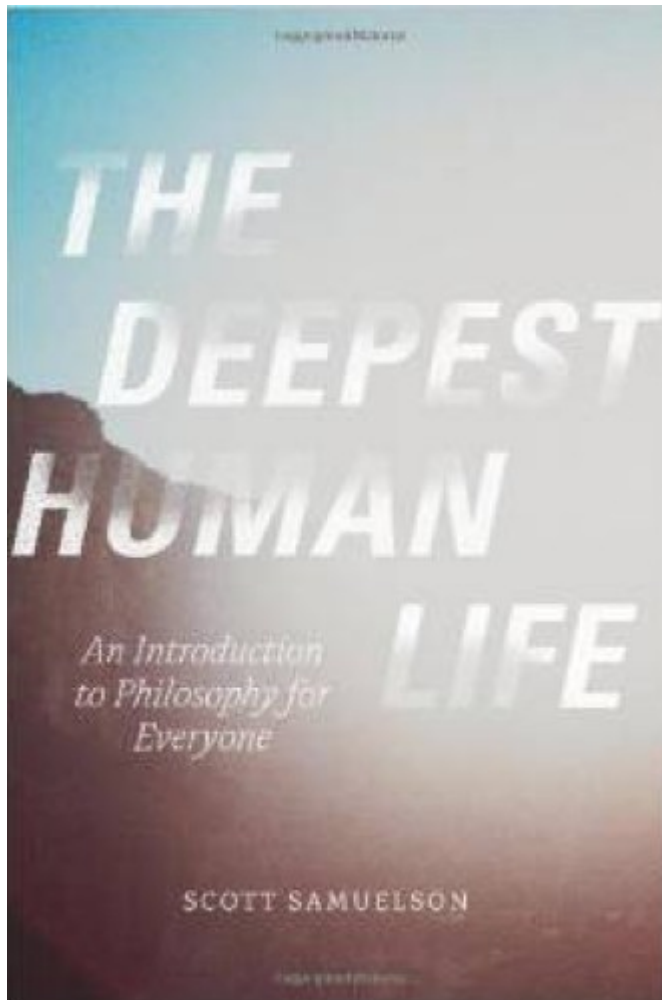


Richard A. Kauffman's Christmas list

by [Richard A. Kauffman](#) in the [December 10, 2014](#) issue

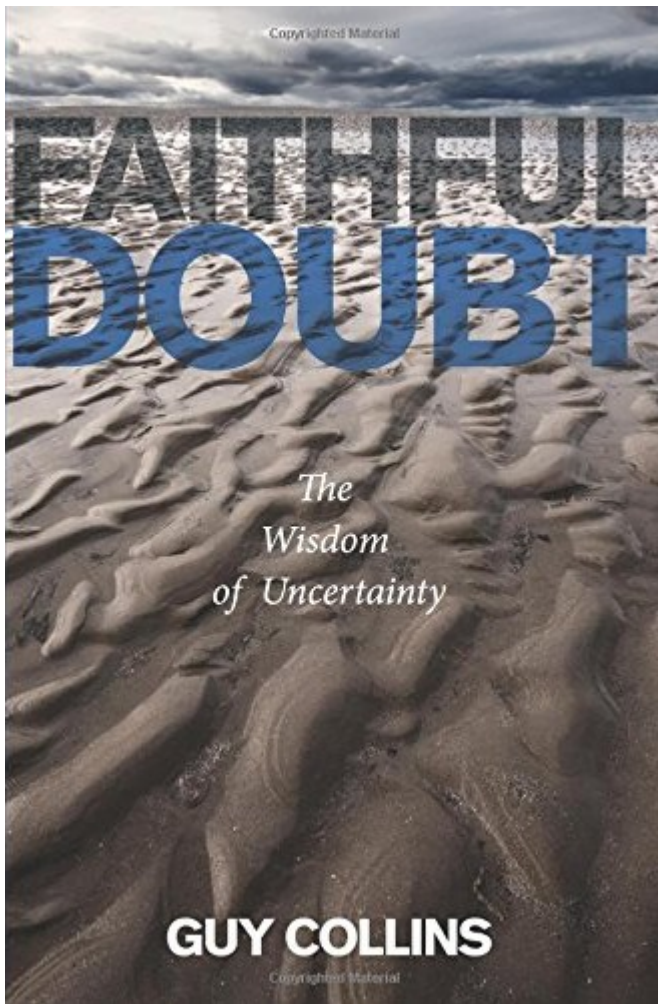
In Review



The Deepest Human Life

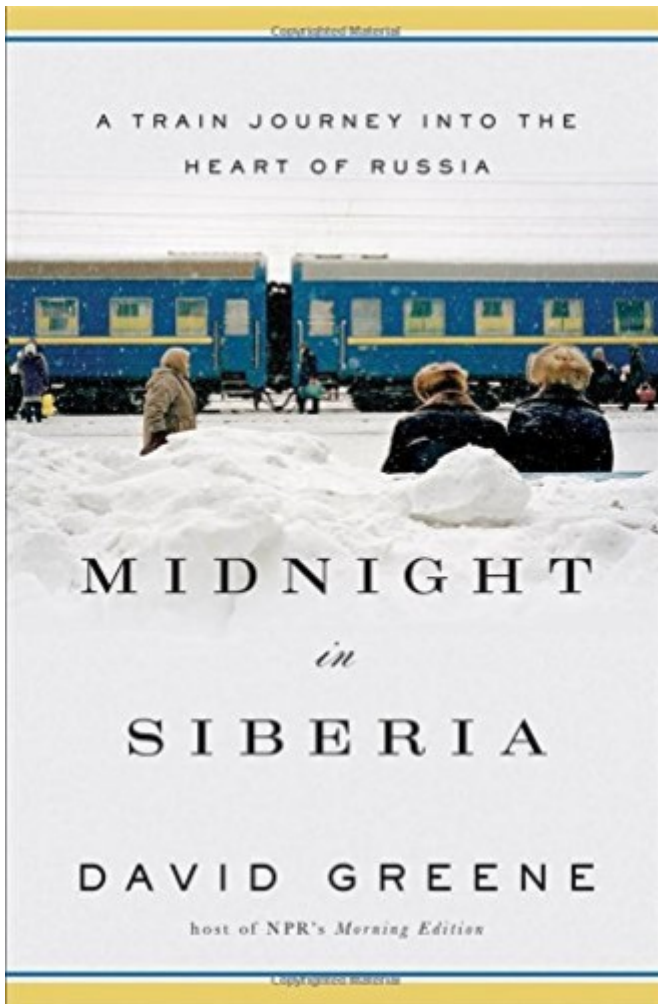
By Scott Samuelson

University of Chicago Press



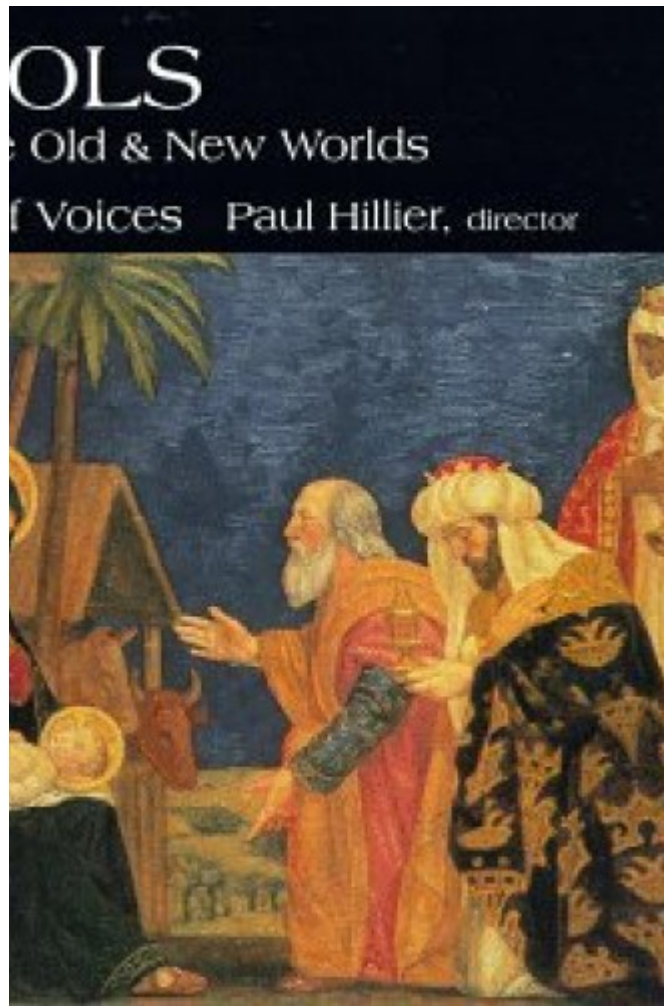
Faithful Doubt

by Guy Collins
Cascade



Midnight in Siberia

by David Greene
W. W. Norton & Co.



Carols from the Old and New Worlds

Theatre of Voices

Harmonia Mundi



Christmas with the Shepherds

by Rory McCleery and Marian Consort
Delphian



Full of Cheer

by Home Free
Sony

To give

The most intriguing book I've read this year is *The Deepest Human Life: An Introduction to Philosophy for Everyone*. Scott Samuelson, who teaches philosophy, has the gift of treating difficult subjects in an accessible manner. From the existence of God to good and evil, he not only connects with his students but also weaves some of their stories into his expositions.

Because people of faith often claim more than they should about what they believe, Guy Collins suggests that a measure of theological modesty is in order. In *Faithful Doubt: The Wisdom of Uncertainty*, he argues that reasonable doubt is not a threat but a goad to better Christian theology. "Faith needs to have looked doubt in the

eyes and seen its own reflection.”

David Greene, co-host of NPR’s *Morning Edition*, was formerly a bureau chief in Russia. His book *Midnight in Siberia: A Train Journey into the Heart of Russia* is based largely on his own experiences. He stitches into his narrative information about Russian history, culture, and its enigmatic people. Did you know, for instance, that the busiest McDonald’s restaurant in the world is near Pushkin Square in Moscow?

To receive

The first two CDs in the series *Carols from the Old & New Worlds* are a treasured part of my Christmas collection. In volume 3, Paul Hillier eschews the standard repertoire of Christmas music and seeks out older and lesser-known carols. “Framed by the seven ‘O’ antiphons for Advent,” according to ArkivMusic’s website, “this collection features carols from Ireland, the USA, Britain, and Alpine regions.”

Christmas with the Shepherds is an album of Renaissance choral music by the Marian Consort. It includes a motet by Jean Mouton that was sung in the Sistine Chapel for 100 years after it was composed in 1515. The motet served as inspiration for other works on this CD: a mass by Cristóbal de Morales and a motet by Annibale Stabile.

Full of Cheer, by Home Free, I will put on my Christmas list as something lighter and peppier to listen to through the holiday season. Home Free, a male a cappella band, is part of a movement of men’s groups that sing popular music in parts, largely without instruments.