Lending a human touch to the science of emotions, Projections is a long-needed work by Karl Deisseroth, famous for his work on optogenetics (literally peering inside the brain). The book trudges along delicately between neuroscience, psychology, and literature—guiding us through the current understanding of emotions and his work, through emotionally touching anecdotes. Did you ever wonder whether psychiatry will ever form a part of pathology or neuroscience texts as we slowly begin to unravel biological connections to the mysterious psychological phenomenon? Can we finally bridge the mind-body dichotomy? If you think it’s possible, this is where to begin!

-Satwik Pasani
Matthew Cobb narrates the history of the study of the brain by way of compelling metaphors that allow for better insight into the discovery for the reader. This understanding through metaphors is not only memorable but also helps to see a new picture that reveals a looming gap in our understanding of the brain, mind, and consciousness. It binds what we know and what are we limited by with each discovery, with occasional cheeky humour.

The author prefers to not unmix science and philosophy and so, his views are generously sprinkled with grains of philosophical salt, if you will? It makes us rethink our definition of ‘intelligence’ and ‘consciousness’ as he frames this evolutionarily through behaviour in shrimp to sharks. Consciousness may be simpler than it is considered or more complex than we can understand but should we be boxing consciousness with any labels at all? A wonderful companion to this book is the documentary ‘My Octopus Teacher’- it’s a much relatable bonus if you haven’t watched it already.

-Madhuri Srinivasan